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ACADEMIC CULTURAL GUIDES:
SPONSORS OF ACADEMIC LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

By

Luis Balmore Rivas

A DISSERTATION

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ACADEMIC CULTURAL GUIDES:
SPONSORS OF ACADEMIC LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

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University of Nebraska, 2008

Adviser: Chris Gallagher

This dissertation explores Hispanic/Latino students' perceptions about language association and identity, the institution, and white professors at a small Midwestern liberal arts college. Issues addressed include the origin of a stigmatized relationship between Euro-Americans and Hispanics in the U.S. and its spill into academia, negative perceptions that affect students' performance and persistence in the university, discussing the culture of power of the institution with students as a form of sponsorship, and providing academic literacy sponsorship through an Academic Cultural Guide role. The dissertation concludes with examples of strategies I have used in the first-year writing classroom to establish transparency of my role as instructor, teach literacy narratives, and foster relationships with students to meet their academic needs.

To my parents

To my wife and kids

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation argues that the changing demographic of students entering higher education calls for developing a critical multicultural pedagogy that promotes access and inclusion in the university as well as developing multi-culturally engaged students. Research suggests that professors need to take into consideration historical backgrounds and different levels of diverse student identities that may factor into perceptions that influence students' performance and relationships in academia (Brown and Dobbins, Barron, Ogbu and Simon, Rodolfo Acuña, Carmen A. Rolon, Kenneth Gonzalez). Also, works from Matsuda and Canagarajah claim that difference (in language and culture) should be the normative expectations for our classrooms. I extend the argument (as does Jane E. Hindman, Lisa Delpit, Kenneth Oldfield, Anand Marri, Castillo et al.) that we, as professors, have an academic cultural responsibility to our students as practitioners of critical, radical, expressionist, multicultural, democratic pedagogues to guide them in and through their postsecondary education. This process can begin with teaching students to write literacy narratives, which help us to explore with them the need for sponsorship and promote personal agency.

Literacy Narratives

Literacy narratives make students' personal histories available for critical analysis. Mary Soliday states, "In focusing upon those moments when the self is on the threshold of possible intellectual, social, and emotional development, literacy narratives become sites of self-translation where writers can articulate the meanings and the consequences of their passages between language worlds" (511). Students' literacy narratives, therefore, serve to aid in the search for a critical pedagogy that is inclusive of

all ethnicities and genders. It is dangerous to ignore what the writers of literacy narratives have to say, for by discrediting them we refuse to listen, turn our heads the other way, thus turning our backs on what we do not want to hear. “Silencing of these voices, as has been done traditionally, results in sentencing their lived meanings and their representations of lives, conditions, and struggles to exile at the margin,” writes Gloria Swindler Boutte (6). Juan C. Guerra claims that,

As researchers, it is important for us to continue to enter a variety of social settings so that we can better understand how different groups of people cope with life, language, and literacy. It is also important for scholars who specialize in theorizing to understand the implications of what we learn about people’s lived experience in marginalized communities on these theories. (153-154)

The purpose of analyzing literacy narratives is to establish a community that empowers students by inviting professors to enter different communities. It is important to focus on the thought patterns of students and the construction of their texts in order to highlight their critical literacy regarding their literacy development. By creating this kind of analysis, students' narratives can serve as a representation of the “other.” This functions to create and encourage a form of consciousness that will assist Hispanic/Latinos without homogenizing their differences.

Using U.S. Hispanic and International Latino students' literacy narratives continues the process of analysis that scholars have already begun regarding language and language identity for developing an inclusive pedagogy for first-year writing classes in the university as well as dispelling negative perceptions students may have of the

university. I first became interested in exploring literacy narratives while reading Keith Gilyard's *Voice of the Self*, in which he states that his "analysis of [his] autobiographical materials should prove useful to all those concerned with helping African-American students develop their ability to communicate in mainstream settings, for [he has] also dealt with issues of language pedagogy in more universal terms" (13). I looked forward to reading how he had dealt with the issues of language pedagogy. I was especially fascinated at how he used his autobiography and made connections to his argument; how he introduced the term code-switching, his argument for bidialectalism; and how a sense of self is affected by so many exterior forces. What intrigued me most was my ability to relate to several of his experiences.

I began my research with an interest in literacy narratives because Gilyard, along with Mike Rose, Richard Rodriguez and Victor Villanueva, gave insight on the plight of individuals in school. These narratives contain commonalities as well as differences that make their reading interesting and engaging. When I began writing my own narrative I noticed many differences between my narrative and the published ones, such as early academic motivation/success or drive for public identity through public discourse. Because of these differences I recognized the need to study the narratives of students in order to understand their needs. However, the narratives contained in this research are not an accurate representation of all Hispanics/Latinos. These are simply a small sampling of narratives at a small private liberal arts college.

Culture of Power

Because Hispanic/Latino students are entering a different culture as they enter the university, it is important for them to be equipped with the tools necessary to negotiate

the “culture of power” (Delpit). Because social culture and knowledge are situated in the language of the culture in power, the culture in power, and its hierarchical structure, is also constructed by the shared ideologies and the rhetoric of signifying practices; the language of a discourse community. This applies to both issues of class and race. Delpit includes “the power of the teacher over the students...” and “the power of an individual of a group to determine another’s intelligence or ‘normalcy’” as evidence of the culture of power in the classroom (25). Though this culture of power is often rooted in class, race is still implemented as a way to control power. If it were not so, privileged international students with brown skin and Spanish accents would not experience negative confrontations with the culture of power. For this reason I am interested in researching the outcome of having conversations with students on the culture of power with the hypothesis that it would aid them in their negotiation of the culture of the university. I argue that it is important to make students aware of the culture of power in order to empower them in their identity and their negotiation.

Lisa Delpit introduced the term “culture of power” that gives students a new identifier of the environment. As Renee M. Moreno, in *"The Politics of Location": Text as Opposition*, says,

I am convinced that many students (Latinos, African American, Native Americans, Asian Americans) have much awareness to name power relations in this country, but they don’t always have the words to define unequal distributions of power or the consciousness to define their own powerlessness. Through language, students have the power to counter

stereotypical images of their bodies and socially constructed knowledge of their communities. (Moreno 226)

What I found in my research is that students do recognize some kind of dynamic or different types of relationships and tension in the classroom but do not have the vocabulary to define it. Without language, what they perceived was just a feeling they had and not an actual occurrence or existence of the culture of power.

Terminology

In order to avoid homogenizing Hispanic/Latino students, it is important to think carefully about cultural naming. It would make sense to identify international students by their country of origin to avoid homogenization (for example, Argentinean, Bolivian, American, British, Panamanian, ext.) instead of calling all brown skin, or Spanish speaking, individuals Mexican or Spanish. They are not all Mexican or Spanish. The names *Spanish people*, *Hispanics*, *Latino*, *Mexican*, *Mexican-American*, *Latin American*, *Hispano*, *Chicano* are complicated terms that do not encompass the identity of all races and cultures south of the United States' border. For my study I take a similar approach as John Ogbu's use of voluntary and involuntary minorities in which he classifies minorities into two groups; "by (1) *the nature* of white American involvement with their becoming minorities and (2) *the reasons they come or were brought* to the United States"(164). Though he claims there are no strict differences between voluntary and involuntary groups, based on beliefs and behavior, and because in this dissertation I investigate issues of identity, culture, and language, I differentiate between the two by using the umbrella terms *US Hispanic*(USH), to refer to individuals who identify themselves as American, and *International Latino*(IL) for international students who identify themselves by their

country of origin. I allowed all participants to identify themselves regardless of the amount of time in the United States or place of birth. Therefore, some international students who consider themselves more American are referred to as U.S. Hispanics and some, born in the states, are referred to as International Latino if they identify with their parents' culture more than the American culture.

Case Study Methodology

The study was organized to investigate students' literacy narratives and analyze their individual responses after reading Lisa Delpit's chapter "The Silence Dialogue: Power and Pedagogy in Educating Other People's Children," and David Bartholomae's "Inventing the University." After approval from the Institutional Research Board (IRB), I recruited Hispanic/Latino college students who identified themselves as being from the United States and any international students from countries south of the border, such as but not limited to Mexico, Peru, Venezuela and Argentina. The recruiting method was posted flyers in areas allowed by the institution and by word of mouth from other instructors to their students. To those who responded, I explained my interest in the subject of literacy and the Hispanic/Latino student and informed them that they would write their literacy narratives, read two articles, and participate in individual interviews following the writing and reading assignments. Though I imagined the articles were difficult to read I did not explain or review the articles before the interview in order to receive honest responses that were not lead by my opinions on the articles. There were many individuals who were interested but did not participate in the study even after signing the consent form.

The six participants who volunteered for the study were students from a private religious liberal arts college in the Midwest. The Institutional Research Board asked that I do not include students from any of my classes or students that I had personal contact with. Any information obtained, such as audio recordings, was kept confidential and the names of the participants have been changed. I explained to the participants that I would like to study their literacy narrative and conduct two individual interviews. The literacy narratives were explained to the participants as an autobiography that tells stories on issues regarding reading, writing or speaking. I did not want to influence students' reconstruction of whatever accounts they would write of in their narratives so the narratives included here are the only drafts I received. I spent an academic year conducting the research. Some participants were returning college students, and others were first- year students enrolled in a freshman writing course.

I tried to approach this study with an open mind, though I think my identity as an immigrant raised in the US has influenced my reading of the narratives and analysis of the interview data. I tried to step away from my background to explore the individual representation of the authors but saw many personal connections with themes raised. I began by examining individual narratives with the intent of exploring the issues of literacy and identity negotiation via language. Through this exploration I began to recognize several themes across students' experience with language and schooling. First, all students represented themselves as engaged in complex ways of negotiating barriers that exist because of the differences between the language and cultural expectations of the university and the identity and background of the individual. One of these differences is the need to code-switch, through not only public/private voice, but also public/private

Spanish and public/private English languages. This constant switching between languages and voices creates a problem for many students because many professors do not understand the struggle the student faces throughout the day. They see it as a deficiency in the English language, which leads to a negative view of students' intelligence. Second, I noticed that students described different forms of sponsorship/mentorship in their literacy narratives and in their individual interviews. These moments of sponsorship/mentorship came from personal familial relationships, professors, and the ESL department.

Chapter Outlines

Though I've studied published narratives and those of the Hispanic/Latino student participants, I do not intend on meticulously comparing/contrasting the narratives of students. Instead, I focus more on what I have learned through the reading of student narratives and the interviews I conducted regarding first year writing experiences and expectations. For this reason I have included inter-chapters containing two student literacy narratives for chapters two and three. The remaining literacy narratives are appended.

Chapter One

A Retrospection of Euro American and Mexican Relations from the 19th Century to Today

Chapter one uses history to focus on the reciprocal racialized relationship that stigmatizes Hispanic/Latino students, which also affects the perception minority students may have toward white professors. I look at the relationship between white Americans and Mexicans before the Texas Revolution as a starting point of racial stigmatization. I give evidence of its continuation to the present and its spill into academia. The intent is to

demonstrate how historical relations are now being played out in the classroom, especially in student/teacher interactions. My goal for this chapter is to raise awareness of a complex history so that we can re-position ourselves in the present embrace of cultural differences.

Chapter Two

Student Voices: Understanding Student Perceptions

The goal for this chapter is to give examples of the perceptions students, at a small religious liberal arts college in the Midwest, have about language association and identity, the institution, and white professors. Understanding/recognizing students' perception, using John Ogbu's theory of positive and negative frames of references, will set a foundation or approach for sponsoring students' literacy development through the creation of a new community force that displays an environment of access and inclusion.

Chapter Three

Professors as Academic Cultural Guides

In chapter three I try to differentiate between the professor as an authoritative gatekeeper and the professor as a sponsor. I apply Ellen Cushman's gatekeeper concept in *The Struggle and the Tools*, to certain professors who are perceived to have an elitist attitude. Using Deborah Brandt's notion of "sponsorship" in *Literacy in American Lives*, and Cushman's positive gatekeepers' abilities, I call for action that will engender a more intimate relationship between all teacher/student relationships by asking professors to take up the role of an Academic Cultural Guide. From the literacy narratives and the individual interviews I had with the participants, there were four strategies Academic Cultural Guides can use to sponsor literacy development: 1) being attentive to students'

academic needs/desires and giving them support outside of academic expectations; 2) creating a culturally diverse climate where students can learn that their skills, abilities, knowledge and sense of self are applicable to the university; 3) inviting them to readings and other academic events; 4) meeting with students outside of academic settings, on or off campus. It is important to remember that the suggestions in this chapter are not the only ways to help all students. Though it is an incredible idea to devote time to all students, I try to promote a more culturally engaged mindset that will eventually create a culturally diverse climate in the university for many students. The key to all sponsorship is building relationships.

Chapter Four

Opening Dialogues: Conversations on the Culture of Power

In chapter four I argue that expecting students to take on the identity and writing styles of professors sometimes creates an identity/discourse conflict in many students because they do not share a similar historical/cultural background with the instructor. Making the culture of power that Lisa Delpit writes about visible to students through conversation is a form of sponsorship that leads students to a clearer understanding of university expectations. I give evidence that this form of sponsorship benefits students in four ways: (1) the university becomes transparent/accessible as we invite students into our conversations, (2) students can identify the culture of power through a gained vocabulary from these conversations, (3) some students' perceptions of the university are positively altered, and (4) they gain confidence in their persistence and identity.

Epilogue

Sponsorship Strategies

In this section I present three ways this study has altered my teaching practice.

The first is by establishing rapport with students and making my pedagogy transparent by sharing my teaching philosophy as a way to make the classroom accessible to students.

The second is my approach in using literacy narratives in the classroom. And finally, I work on fostering the relationship outside of the classroom by working one-on-one and being able to step out of the teacher/student role.

CHAPTER ONE

A RETROSPECTION OF EURO-AMERICAN AND MEXICAN RELATIONS FROM THE 19TH CENTURY TO TODAY

The immigrant bill debated in the U.S. Senate in early 2006 sparked peaceful demonstrations by people of different countries. I sat at home grading papers as an adjunct instructor, while my family participated in one of the demonstrations less than 20 blocks away. My three year old son and one year old daughter danced to the chants of “si se puede” (it is possible).

Between papers, I watched the news. On the show *The Washington Post* on CSPAN, viewers who called in to share their opinion on the issue spoke negatively about the situation. The more I listened to what I considered inconsiderate and thoughtless remarks, the angrier I became. One caller called to complain about how “Illegals are taking away jobs that we want.” The host asked the caller, “What jobs do these people have?” His response baffled me. He said, “They drive fancier cars than we do.” The host interrupted and asked the same question. “They own fancy homes and fancy restaurants,” the caller responded. Obviously, the caller could not make a distinction between citizens and illegal immigrants. He probably did not know and, more significantly, probably did not care about the variety of Latinos. As these calls kept coming, I became more upset. Continuous racially charged responses came from White and Black, Republicans and Democrats. I could have turned it off, but I was waiting for a call that never came, an understanding caller with a different point of view.

These inconsiderate and thoughtless remarks are perpetuated by public individuals. The racially charged rhetoric of Lou Dobbs and Wolf Blitzer on CNN is an

example of how language is used to continue the stigmatization in society. For example, they use aggressive terms like "invasion" and "infiltration" to describe the migration of illegal immigrants. They do not point out the immigrants' plight, frustration, hardship, or desperation. Instead, they use words to instigate fear in the listener, a fear that has the potential to lead to hate. But this type of fear and hate is not new.

I, with an illegal immigrant background, now a citizen, did not participate in the demonstration because I had a lot to do as an adjunct and a graduate student. I had to grade papers to return to my students while constructing a dissertation. I went back to work: frustrated that an opportunity to demonstrate was several blocks away; frustrated that my children were in the middle of a demonstration, wearing white t-shirts of peaceful protest, happily dancing to the chanting of an unprivileged people; frustrated that my children are unaware of the disrespect and judgment they will face as Latinos.

The disrespect and stereotypical judgment found today comes from an attitude of racial superiority that was established long ago by the displacement and colonization of the Southwest. The disrespect and judgment spilled over into academic institutions and continues at some level today. Academia does not always differentiate the multitude of U.S. Hispanic, Mexican, Mexican American, Latin American, and South American cultures that are entering colleges and universities. Though United States Hispanics (USH) and International Latinos (IL) combined are a large minority, there is only a small percentage of college graduates due to the low retention and "persistence" of this group. To better understand this current situation and to consider ways to change it, especially for H/L students, we need to reflect back on this history.

The goal for this chapter is to show historical evidence of a racial superiority ideology that contributes to the present tension between USH/IL students and some White American professors that perpetuates a reciprocal stigmatization of all groups within institutions of education, which ultimately muddies the climate for democratic education. It is important to recognize the harm stereotyping has inflicted on the relationship between USH and IL minority groups and much of mainstream society, especially in educational institutions. On the one side, many US Hispanic students have adopted a self-defeating identity placed on them by White mainstream academia, and on the other, International Latino students face similar stigmatization from a society that cannot or will not differentiate between US Hispanic citizens, International Latinos and illegal immigrants.

Revisiting History

History provides a venue to understand what type of relationships both teachers and students have today. History tells thousands of stories that have established the foundations of these relationships. Stephen Kinzer's book, *Overthrow*, tells of how American imperialism was grounded on the presupposition of White superiority. At the same time anti-imperialism was also based on the racial notion that more non-White territory gained would allow more non-White citizens within a White nation. Kinzer also claims anti-imperialists feared that more territories would bring non-White representatives into Congress. Kinzer gives examples of US involvement in nations such as Hawaii, Philippines, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, and Honduras.

According to Kinzer, American imperialism began with the attempted eradication of the "savage Indian," and continued with the establishment of slavery, the Americans'

involvement in the South West that subjugated Mexicans, during the Reconstruction of the South that brought on Jim Crow laws, and the Spanish-American war, which involved many other countries. These historical developments were all based on American Imperialism, which was based on the principle of racial superiority. This forgotten American history engendered reciprocal stigmatization from generation to generation.

Rodolfo Acuña, in *Occupied America*, gives a general history of the stigmatized Mexican/ Latino people. Within his book, Acuña also lays out the argument that the racial stigmatization of Hispanics began during the period of “Manifest Destiny” (49) and continues to this day.

Part of my frustration with the issue of illegal immigration of today comes from people forgetting the fact that close to two hundred years ago there existed a different illegal immigration problem. There was a time when “Mexico [was]... alarmed at the flood of immigrants from the United States”(49). The White Euro-American immigrants did not want to conform to Mexican laws and had grown resentful. There existed racial tension between the U.S. immigrants and the citizens of that land before the war with Mexico. Americans “saw themselves in danger of becoming the alien subjects of a people to whom they deliberately believed themselves morally, intellectually, and politically superior”(46). A letter to a cousin from Stephen F. Austin, known as The Father of Texas, reveals a domineering mentality when he called “for a massive immigration of Euroamericans, ‘*each man with his rifle,*’ who he hoped would come with ‘passports or no passports, *anyhow*”(as cited in Acuña 45). In his letter, Austin states, “For fourteen years I have had a hard time of it, but nothing shall daunt my courage or abate my...object...to *Americanize* Texas” (45). Austin’s words about white immigrants

resonate more of “invasion” and “infiltration” than what we hear from the migrant workers of today. This is a stark contrast to the motives of many present day immigrants, who are looking to escape poverty with the hope of employment and the opportunity for education and a better future for their children.

After the Mexican-American war, there grew a greater level of mistrust towards White Americans by Mexicans, as well as reinforcing negative views towards Mexicans by U.S. whites. Acuña writes that after the war,

[the] attitude of self-righteousness on the part of government officials and historians toward U.S. aggressions spilled over to the relationships between the majority and minority groups in society... If Mexicans and Euroamericans clash, the reasoning runs, that it is naturally because Mexicans cannot understand or appreciate the merits of a free society, which must be defended against ingrates. (50)

Nothing expressed the negative attitude more than the actions carried out by Americans toward Mexicans after the war. Several forms of documentation (memoirs, diaries, and news articles) reveal “the reign of terror” (52). Letters from Ulysses S. Grant and George Gordon Meade, who later became generals during the American Civil War, describe the situation and attitude displayed towards Mexicans. Grant states that countless murders were committed and that the Americans thought it “perfectly right to impose on the people of a conquered city to any extent, and even to murder them where the act can be covered by dark. And how much they seem to enjoy acts of violence too!” (51). Meade wrote that the American volunteers “killed five or six innocent people walking in the street, for no other object than their own amusement... They rob and steal the cattle and

corn of the poor farmers, and in fact act more like a body of hostile Indians than civilized Whites” (51).

The details of these actions are not my focus, but instead the attitude of racial superiority that fostered those actions, an attitude of racial superiority that was evident after the civil war, through the Jim Crow laws of the south, during the civil rights movement and assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. Still today there are local bills being passed that limit or cut federal funds to locations and programs that assist or “harbor” illegal immigrants.

Both Kinzer and Acuña recognize that these are forgotten historical events. The general public ignores that, in the present global landscape, US involvement in Latin American countries is the greatest contributor to the immigration problem it is now facing. As Mary Pipher states, in *Middle of Everywhere: Helping Refugees Enter the American Community*:

...Latinos are not legally refugees and therefore do not qualify for many of the services in our community.

Of all Latino populations, only Cubans are considered refugees by our government. Colombians are not considered refugees, even though their country has 2 million displaced people and is rapidly becoming unlivable. This classification system is a remnant of the cold war. The United States government destabilized governments in Chile, Argentina, Bolivia, Uruguay, and Brazil and helped build death squads in Honduras and Nicaragua. People fleeing those places couldn't be called refugees without acknowledging our government's foreign-policy errors. (19)

But mainstream America does not like to think of these parts of history. Instead there is a desire to forget. However, the “others” remember. This history is carried on the backs of Whites and non-Whites so much so that the issues of the past are being played out in the classroom of today; American imperialism, founded on racial superiority and the stigmatization of Hispanics/Latinos, has carried over into schools and the effects of ignoring history leads to false expectations and racial and linguistic tensions.

History and Academia

The attitude of racial superiority spilled over into academic institutions after the Mexican American war. By the turn of the 20th century, students were segregated into “Mexican” schools. Acuña states that, “the Chicano community fought segregation, inferior schools and education, the discrimination of IQ exams, poor teaching, the lack of Mexican teachers, and the socialization process that condemned them to failure and then conditioned them to accept it” (171). The idea remained that “Mexicans were ill-clad, unclean, and immoral; interracial contact would lead to other relationships; they were not White and learned more slowly; and so forth”(171). By 1910, Mexicans were seen as foreigners and, though the minority community in San Angelo protested, their demands for improved education were refused by the educational board, who stated “to admit the Mexicans into White schools would be to demoralize the entire system and they will not under any pressure consider such a thing” (171). In retelling this history, Acuña recognizes that education is “an important vehicle in the maintenance of class,” as has been told by Michel Foucault:

Education may well be, as of right, the instrument whereby every individual, in a society like our own, can gain access to any kind of

discourse. But we well know that in its distribution, in what it permits and in what it prevents, it follows the well-trodden battle-lines of social conflict. Every educational system is a political means of maintaining or of modifying the appropriation of discourse, with the knowledge and the powers it carries with it. (226)

If administrators, faculty and staff enforced negative perceptions of and attitudes towards minorities in schools, such as segregation, then it was felt and accepted as correct by students, regardless of age, who later developed the same fear as described by the board members' statement. Some children took on the same ideas and attitudes as those expressed by influential adults: White administrators, White teachers, White parents, etc. The next generation grew up to be parents, teachers, and administrators who perpetuated racial discrimination.

In her article, *Helping Latino Students Learn*, Carmen A. Rolon writes, "The educational history of Latino students in the U.S. is characterized by a pervasive misunderstanding of the role of language and culture in learning"(32). She claims administrators and faculty have continually categorized Hispanic/Latino culture and language as a stumbling block for their learning, thus the push for assimilation, full English language immersion, and the eradication of any difference from the mainstream culture. Rolon continues her claim that:

As early as the 1920s, school officials used IQ testing in English to 'scientifically assess' Mexican students' lack of academic progress. The test results were then used to label thousands of Mexican students 'culturally deprived' and 'educable mentally retarded,' and to prescribe

remedial education in segregated schools with English-only instruction and even corporal punishment for speaking Spanish. (32)

What is most disheartening is that "Although this is seen as deplorable after decades of civil rights progress and mounting research evidence on the advantages of native-language instruction, it continues in today's schools" (32). According to Rolon, studies have shown that USH and IL students "still are seen as 'disadvantaged' because of their language and culture" (32).

Sandra J. Altshuler and Tresa Schmautz, in their article *No Hispanic Student Left Behind: The Consequences of "High Stakes" Testing*, assert that current studies show that standardized testing used today continues to reveal "consistent racial and ethnic group differences" (7). Helen Moore examines "the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) as a manifest social policy that imbeds racial formation practices centered around whiteness into a national movement of standardized testing" (174). The consequence of the test scores may lead to "lowered academic self-concept" (Altshuler and Schmautz 8), which affect students' self-perception and performance. Though the Educational Testing Service (ETS) claims to have been working in addressing issues of biases, according to Roberto Rodriguez:

Eleanor Home, corporate secretary and executive assistant to the president of ETS... believes that standardized tests, which show different average scores between racial/ethnic groups and genders indicate that the exams, are doing their job which is to show the differences in what the groups know and can do. The tests, she says, do not create the differences (Rodriguez Academic Search Premier).

Into the Present

Because testing has become a means to measure the intellectual distance between ethnic groups, Hispanic/Latino students face stigmatization from discriminating standardized exams and a "lowered academic self-concept" that affects social and academic relationships. In the *Journal of Social Issues*, the authors of the article titled *Students of Color and European American Students' Stigma-Relevant Perceptions of University Instructors*, Lisa Brown and Heather Dobbins, demonstrate that lowered academic self-concept and negative social and academic relations/perceptions continue in the university. Furthermore, John Ogbu claims "it is a group's history—how and why a group became a minority and the role of the dominant group in society in their acquisition of minority status—that determines its voluntary or involuntary status rather than its race and ethnicity" (167). Yet, many White Americans can not distinguish between Mexicans, Mexican-American or any other Hispanic/Latino group, therefore stigmatizing based on race and ethnicity.

Administrators, faculty, staff and student organizations need to recognize the importance of a new relationship dynamic that is founded on contemporary movements away from stigmatization based on archaic ideologies. Many researchers, such as Kenneth Gonzalez in *Campus Culture and the Experiences of Chicano Students in Predominantly White Colleges and Universities*, identify that "the very elements of the campus culture which can [be changed] need to be changed" (23). Gonzales claims "the social, physical, and epistemological worlds of the campus environment" should change and that:

Much of this change will involve transforming these worlds so that a more adequate representation of the Chicano culture exists: (a) the number of Chicano students, staff, and faculty on campus; (b) the political power these groups possess; and (c) the use of the Spanish language on campus (Gonzales 23).

To meet the need for change, I argue in the chapters to come, that administrators, faculty, and staff must first understand the perception of the group in order to create a change in the university community by adopting the role of sponsorship.

The Study

The study conducted for this project examines the way the historically stigmatized relationship is being playing out today and explores ways of sponsoring students by having conversations about their perceptions and the existing culture of the university. Six students from a liberal arts college of 1200 participated in this case study. I initially divided the group into the categories US Hispanic (USH) and International Latino (IL) based on the participants who volunteered. I identified USH as the students who felt a great part of their identity was based on a US cultural influence. Gilberto, Silvia and Eva were placed in this group (even though Gilberto was not born in the States and Eva had a strong Peruvian background). IL students were categorized as those who identified strongly with their country of origin. Omar, Andrea, Veronica were placed in this category because they associated most with their country of origin and/or entered academia through an international recruitment program. Though my intention is not to compare/contrast between these groups, I did see some common trends and some major differences.

Gilberto was born in Mexico and immigrated to the Mid-West when he was 11. He considers himself a U.S. Hispanic and not a traditional international Latino student because he did not go through the international student process of recruitment and the ESL Program. He felt under-prepared for college writing. He was soft spoken and seemed cynical about many things including this case study.

Silvia is a second generation immigrant from Mexico. Born in Southern California she easily identified herself in the U.S Hispanic category. She lived in California and only spoke Spanish until she and her family moved to the Midwest. Silvia seemed quiet and unmotivated, and, if it were not for her accent and real name, she could probably pass as white.

Eva is a second generation immigrant from Peru. She was born and raised in the Midwest, but as she stated in conversation, her parents raised her to see herself as Peruvian. She attended a small private religious high school before entering a small private religious college. She thought herself a good student who would struggle at times.

Omar is a student from Peru who was highly motivated to talk about the importance of education. Though he was never my student, he was encouraged to see a Latino professor teaching English in a position to assist other Latino students. Though he and his entire family had lived in the US since he attended high school, he considered him self an international student. He was very involved with the ESL department through activities and a work-study job as a teacher's aid.

Andrea is a student from Venezuela who had also been involved in the ESL program. Though she was not as active as Omar, she did recognize the role the faculty played in preparing her for the Freshman English courses.

Veronica was born in Argentina, lived in the US after her third grade, learned English in the South and later returned to Argentina. Veronica returned to the US to attend college at age 24. After establishing her English competence, she tried to distance herself from the ESL program. Though she considered herself bilingual, she felt she struggled with both languages.

Final Thoughts

Ogbu states that understanding multiple students' "perceptions of and responses to education"(157) sheds light on "their 'collective solutions,' to the collective problems" (160). Exploring students' perceptions may also give insight to strategies we as professors can implement for sponsoring students' literacy development and encourage a dialogue that challenges power structures that have been historically structured in the university.

Historically, Hispanics and Latinos have been seen as intellectually lesser because of the idea of racial and language superiority. This idea is evident in the judgment and stereotyping based on language. Too often, the intellect of an individual is prejudged because of the lack English skills or presence of a Spanish accent. This prejudgment comes from the inability to communicate. Because of history, Hispanic students also stigmatize White Americans as racist. History has influenced the relationships between Hispanic students and White teachers and it is evident in the classrooms today. Barron claims that, "when these sites are staffed by academics suffering not only from historical amnesia but from a blind arrogance of their own sense of self, these places can easily remain stagnant, tense, difficult to deal with..." (21). Institutions need to create a culturally inclusive environment by creating a community that sponsors cultural

education for all students and faculty. None of us were there fighting for or against slavery, annexing the south west, or enforcing Jim Crow laws. I am not blaming the people of today for what happened in the past. But it is our responsibility to leave hegemonic ideologies evident in history behind and start representing the modern culturally-inclusive side of the democratic university.

That day in March of 2006 the calls on C-SPAN came from places like Texas, Florida, Arizona, and New York. The callers wanted to share their concern over the issue of immigration. A retired woman from San Antonio complained how Mexicans were ruining her city. She stated that the city became dirty after they moved into certain neighborhoods. Other people complained that the crime rate rose, or that Americans do want the jobs that immigrants take. Some callers even argued that immigrants should not be allowed the public resources like hospitals and schools because they do not pay taxes.

I had a conversation with a White American friend that implied that the immigrants and the countries from which they hail have some sort of flaw: the immigrants are uneducated, poor, criminals, while their governments are corrupt and oppressive. So, when the US gets involved with other governments, it is based on the concept that the people under those governments are in need of help. Regardless of where we stand on the politics of US involvement in other countries, history shows that we are products of those histories. I am, for example, a product of my parents' illegal immigration to the United States. I'm not the first immigrant and I am not the last. But I want to be part of creating a better academic future for my children who, several months later, remember and chant, "si se puede." It is possible.

INTERCHAPTER ONE:

Gilberto and Silvia (unedited)*Gilberto's Literacy Narrative:*

While I was growing up I struggled with many issues dealing with being a Latino. When I was about 11 years old I moved to the U.S., I had a basic knowledge of the English language. But at this point and time of my life I didn't speak enough English to interact with kids my age. My mom enrolled me in school as fast as possible, and soon I began school. At first I wasn't used to the way school worked, because I spent most of my elementary years in another country where the teaching techniques were a lot different than here in the States. I slowly began making friends and I began to speak up to get to places, people and things. Later on, when the friends I met began to know me a little bit better, and as they gained a bit of trust with me the more they would disrespect me in ways I didn't enjoy so much. I noticed that some of these so called friends would be somewhat fake or not at all sincere with me, because they joked around when I was there, but talked other things that I didn't know behind my back, because I couldn't quite make the jokes or understand completely what they meant by some to the things they would say. I was enrolled in a school where most of the students were Latinos or African American, so it helped me accommodate a little bit easier to the way I interacted with most students and faculty, but I didn't quite noticed that when I was 11 years old.

When I moved to high school, my family moved to another town. So the only thing I knew was that I was going to go to a different school. Soon school began and I had to start all over with the accommodation experience again. I didn't think accommodating to this school would be any different than accommodating to my

previous schools, since it wasn't the first time that I changed schools. But in the end it sure was different from my previous experiences changing schools, because I didn't know that it would be different moving into a school where most of the students didn't have anything in common with me, nor could I take the chance to speak Spanish with some of them. I had moved to a much bigger school, and I didn't know plenty of things about high schools that would affect me, like how the seniors treated the freshmen, and other typical pranks, and especially I didn't know about football being such a big sport. There were so many things I had to find out about high school the hard way, because not only did I had to deal with everything freshman has to deal with trough high school but I also had to face things as being different as a Latino. In a way I felt foreign to the things I had already gotten used to, and accommodated to.

After a couple of months into school I began to feel intimidated by some people, like my bus driver for example, that once said to me while I was getting on the bus "The local middle school is two blocks away from here son!" with a raised and serious voice, and some of my class mates that were around began to laugh; I didn't have a full eye contact with the driver and I kept walking towards the inside of the bus to find a seat, while most of the students inside the bus were laughing at me as I felt ashamed and lost. I knew less about what the driver really meant by those words, but he really intimidated me with the words he said. While at home I only spoke Spanish with my parents, and they wouldn't ask whether I did good or o not at school.

As time passed by I started to build a different character, and I began to be more serious, because I wanted to earn people's respect. So I began to respect people as I wanted them to respect me. But every once in a while someone would always cross that

line of respect that I would try to draw. Sometimes I felt as though some teachers would raise their voice when they talked to me, or when I didn't fully comprehend what they had said either in class or just in a personal conversation with me. Some of the teachers would actually be patient and they would spend some good time with me trying to make sure that I fully understood what they had said, or for example, they would make sure that I knew exactly what they wanted for a required assignment, and about the strictness of turning the assignment on time. At this point I was able to communicate with everyone in English, but there were words and phrases that I didn't exactly know what they meant, for example things like "though", "pimp", "due", "scoot over", "back off", and "nasty", or mainly slang words and phrases. Terms like these and others I was required to imagine what they meant or figure out what exactly they were used for. I was in a way forced to speak and learn everything there's to know about English, but yet I had so succeed in every aspect of my life and in every subject from school while accommodating completely to the English language. Everything just seemed a little harder for me, and a step ahead of me.

I continued high school in this same school until halfway through my sophomore year, when I moved to another town. Again I had to start from scratch; but luckily I moved to a private school from my church, and I didn't end up liking it at all. At first I thought I would like this school, and that it would be a lot easier since it was a private school owned by our church and since it only had about sixty students in total. But I ended up being wrong about this school, and it wasn't anything I had thought about this school being. This school was a lot harder than what I thought and I was treated worst than in my public school. There were only 25 students in the high school section, and I

was one of the most outgoing persons in my class. Sometimes the principle of the school would stay after school for math tutoring, and I would stay mostly everyday for some help, but from the two or three students she would end up tutoring I was the one with the most questions, and every once in a while I would feel as though as if I was the student that she would spend the less time with. But the only reason was because I wouldn't ask most of my questions. I would keep my questions to myself because I was shy, and I was afraid of asking a stupid question. I only looked at things different because I wanted to justify them to the way I wanted things to look like. The principle was a very serious lady and that was just her personality. I always had a lot of questions about my homework, and slowly got rid of that shame I had. Now, I might still get shy sometimes and I won't ask a question, but mainly I'll try to drop the shame and ask whatever bothers my mind anyways.

By the end of my junior year in high school I would consider myself to be fully bilingual. I was already assisting to another school, and had accommodated to this school also. I could handle both languages completely, and I was able to translate anything in English to Spanish, and vice versa. Then I found myself thinking in English in my head the whole time, so I didn't have to translate everything in my head to Spanish anymore, but instead I could switch my mind to the language I would speak with someone. I thought that this was pretty neat.

I then decided to challenge myself to learn another language. I had always had the desire to learn to speak Italian, but the school I was going to didn't have Italian as one of their courses. The only courses for languages in this school were Spanish and French, so I got enrolled in a French class, where I began to learn a lot quicker than I thought. I soon

was helping the instructor to teach the class because French was so similar to my base language Spanish. The teacher for the Spanish class and for the French class was the same one, so later on I asked if I could be the teacher assistant. She allowed me to help her out with the Spanish and French class, and now it was my turn to see what it was like for the other side of the mirror, when people try to learn your own language. I began experimenting with the students, because they had lots of difficulties with the pronunciation of certain words in Spanish, and sounds that they had never heard before. I could see the struggle they would go through to figure out how to conjugate some of the phrases in Spanish. Then I would tell them some of my experiences while I was learning to speak English. Soon I met some students who helped me out with my French, and it was a whole new adventure. Now I'm in college and I'm open to more experiences.

Silvia's Literacy Narrative:

English for me has been a big part of my life. When I was younger I didn't learn English until I was about eight years old. Since I lived in Pomona California English wasn't something I needed to know. Even though I went to school there I didn't learn English because there was always someone that you could ask in Spanish therefore it was not needed. When I was seven I moved to Kansas to a little town called Great Bend. In Great Bend we were basically the only Spanish speaking family. Because we were one of the few Spanish speaking families English was then something that I needed to learn. I started as soon as I got there; it was a small school because it was private. When I started school in Great Bend Kansas I didn't want to learn English I was just so used to not having to use it. While I was in school my mom started working at a nursing home. Since none of my family knew English we all struggled but mostly my mom. At work my mom worked with mostly all Caucasians and I think that was the only race there and then she was the only Hispanic. Because her English was broke she was always made fun of and humiliated. When I would get home from school I would always cry to her about how I didn't want to learn English but she always would tell me to try my best even if I didn't want to. At school I was always made to speak English and I wasn't allowed to speak Spanish to my sister even. I always complained because in my mind I didn't comprehend that I needed English. One day when I was complaining to my mom about school and how they wouldn't let me speak Spanish to my sister, around this time we had been in Kansas about two or three months, she told me about how she was always made fun of at work and how she was humiliated because she didn't know the English language very well. From that day I decided that I would work hard to learn English and so that I

wouldn't be made fun of. As the years went by I learned English as well as my family my mom left the nursing home and moved up in the world. My mom has been a big inspiration for me. Because she was humiliated and made fun of she was determined to be better than all those people that made humiliated her. She worked hard and went back to school to learn English and she finally left the nursing home and got a better job. As for me I saw how hard my mom worked to be better and that made me want to be better too. When I started high school I went with the determination to be the best that I could be. I believe that if English is your first language it is easier to understand the subject as opposed to some someone who's first language isn't English. Being Hispanic I believe that I have to work harder for the things that I want. When I study I have to study harder than most people because it's harder for me to understand grammar but even then I don't believe that I should be accommodated I should be treated equally as all the other student's in my class. When I was in grade school and middle school I usually didn't have any trouble in English classes. My freshman year in High School my English teacher would often accuse me of plagiarism and it would make me so mad that I would that some times I would think it was because I was Hispanic because I was the only Hispanic in the class. The first time she accused me of plagiarism I was astonished I couldn't believe it I mean it was own work I didn't copy it from anyone she told me that it's sound like something that I wouldn't have written. I didn't know what to say because I mean she just assuming it she didn't even have a program or anything to tell her whether I was plagiarizing or not. I talked to my teacher but she wouldn't listen to what I had to say I talked my mom and she called the school and talked to them but she wouldn't hear anything about it. That experience made me what to write better but the

more I tried to make my papers better it got worse. My teacher never accused me of plagiarism just once she accused me about three more times that year. My sophomore, junior and senior year was the same. There was nothing that I could do about but try to talk to her but she just wouldn't listen. My first semester as a sophomore she failed me and I had to retake the first semester in the summer I was so upset I couldn't believe it how was she going to fail me I didn't take the class in the summer and she failed because she said I had plagiarized too many papers I had so much pride that I didn't want to take the class I talked to the principal but he didn't do anything about it I ended up swallowing my pride and retaking the class in the summer. In high school I struggled to get good grades on my English tests I always averaged about a B in every test I took I got a couple of C's but mostly B's because the only tests that we would take were on grammar and I was bad grammar but I studied hard to average a B. Towards the end of my Junior year I we had a semester test on grammar. I studied hard just so that I could get an A. I found someone that could help me study for the test so that I could understand everything. I took the test and I was the last one in the classroom taking test. When I got my test results back I saw that I had an F for cheating and she wrote a note on my paper that said "If you wouldn't have cheated you would have had an A- but your eyes wandered and that's why you have an F. Cheating is not tolerated in this class." I was dumbfounded I couldn't believe it here I had studied so hard to get an A and I had but she failed me I was mad I called my mom and she decided that she had, had enough so she called a meeting and she came in to talk her and she had the girl that helped me study for the test go in there. In the end I got my and I was proud of myself I had just won a battle. It was the year of 2005, the year I had been looking forward too for four years it was the year I would graduate.

My first semester went well towards the end of my second semester I our teacher asked us to write a ten page research paper on British literature I chose to research Jane Austen, because I went to a boarding high school I got to go home once a month, even though the research paper wasn't due till a month or two later I still read the book. It came to write the paper and I still remember everything I read about the book I filled out resource cards and note cards and handed them in to be graded I got good grades on them. When I wrote the note cards I did them without looking in the book I wrote them all out by what I remembered. I put my note cards all together on how I wanted to write my paper and I wrote it, I had an English tutor at home that would help me with my homework when I would go home, I sent my paper to my tutor so he could edit it and revise it. I had two other students edit and revise my paper and I handed in feeling like it was a good paper. When I got the paper back it had an F on it for plagiarizing it. Again I was astonished I didn't understand because I had read the book a month in advance and I didn't use it when I was writing my paper the only time I looked in was when I was writing my resources out and I had to look on the internet to get the information of the book because I had already returned the book to the library so in other words I didn't have to look at all. I was so mad because just getting that F on that paper meant that I wouldn't graduate because that grade brought me down to an F in the class didn't know what to do so I went and talked to her I said "listen ever since I have been here you have given me hell about anything I write. You always accuse me of plagiarism when it's not true. I always take because I know that talking to you won't help me. You giving me this F on this paper gives me an F in the class meaning that I can't graduate. Please reconsider my paper." I explained to her about the book I read and how I didn't even look at it while I was

writing the paper. She looked over my paper again and handed it back to me. When she handed it back to me she said, "I am not going to change that grade that I gave you because I honestly believe that you have cheated on this paper. I will give you the chance to redo it though. You will have to read another book and rewrite the paper if you want to graduate," I had no other choice but to rewrite the paper. It was three weeks before graduation and I read another book and rewrote the paper. It took for ever and I had no life all I did was work on my paper. In the end I got a B on my paper bringing me up to a B in the class. To say the least I did graduate and I was so happy because I thought I would have to deal with hardships in the English language like I did in high school. In the fall of 2005 I started school at [the college]. When I took my ACT's, before coming to college, I scored one point below what I needed to take College Writing One meaning that I had to be in basic English and I didn't want to be. Because Spanish is my first language I was allowed to take the TOEFL test to test out of Basic English. I took the test and passed with a high score but I was told that I had to still be in Basic English I was mad so I never went to class because I didn't think that the class was challenging and I had an F in the class I had a really bad attitude about it and I tried to talk to some people around the college to try to switch to a college writing class but it never happened. At semester the teacher asked me to drop the class because I was failing. I dropped the class so then I didn't take English for the rest of the semester. When I reregistered for classes before December I found that the whole time I was in Basic English I should have been in College Writing One. I am now in a College Writing One and I am loving the class it challenges me in so many ways. As for my family they all know the English language and my mom has a great job in the court where she is as translator for the court and for

the school district. Who would have thought that when we first moved to Kansas we would all end up where we are now?

CHAPTER TWO

STUDENT VOICES: UNDERSTANDING STUDENT PERCEPTIONS

A racial superiority ideology, since before the Texas Revolution of the 1830's, has continued to stigmatize relationships between Hispanics/Latinos and White Americans. This tension is evident in how US Hispanic and International Latino students negotiate language and identity according to their perceptions of institutionalized expectations and their professors. In this chapter I give examples of the perceptions students have at a small religious liberal arts college in the Midwest. This chapter also illustrates how the history of a stigmatized relationship plays out today through my research participants' negative perceptions of language association of some white professors and in the classroom.

Though I find it important to look at the negative perceptions and stigmatized relationship, I have some reservations. There is a risk, as Nancy Barron states, of "sounding like a baby, someone who isn't mature enough for higher education" (21). However, it is important to bring up these issues because as she and many others maintain, there continues to be "students of color who describe classroom and campus experiences in painful glimpses"(21). It is important to explore how students perceive elements of institutional education in order to understand the diversity and commonality between US Hispanic and International Latino students.

Many studies look into understanding minority students' perception of the university. Some argue that many students can only see themselves in the identity the society in power has placed on them. This false consciousness "characterizes individuals who presumably hold as truth the prevailing norms that disadvantage them[...] When

individuals have false consciousness, they evidently lack critical consciousness, or the ability to name, critique, and act in ways that subvert status quo power relations” (Cushman xix). Ellen Cushman admits, “the notion of false consciousness seems to have some validity when one chooses to view public interactions between institutional representatives and community members” (238). However, she and many critics claim that students can readily perceive negative power structures that work against their identity. She says, “with such a notion, we underestimate their critical awareness, obfuscate the political complexities of their everyday lives, and undermine the (potential) potency of their reflection, language, and agency” (239). Renee M. Moreno also states:

I am convinced that many students (Latinos, African American, Native Americans, Asian Americans) have much awareness to name power relations in this country, but they don’t always have the words to define unequal distributions of power or the consciousness to define their own powerlessness. Through language, students have the power to counter stereotypical images of their bodies and socially constructed knowledge of their communities” (Moreno 226).

Though there may be evidence of false consciousness in some of the data gathered from students in this study, I focus my attention on the insightful way students are able to talk about and identify community forces, those “products of sociocultural adaptation... located within the minority community” (Ogbu 157). Though my intention for this case study was not to compare/contrast between the groups, common trends as well as differences among the participants were seen. It may be beneficial to explore the differing attitudes/perceptions to dispel the homogeneity of Hispanic/Latino culture and identity.

Students' Perceptions

On Language and Identity

It was evident to me, through the participants' narratives and the interviews, that the students of this study were interested in establishing a socialized identity with their white U.S. peers. This driving interest in becoming part of or accepted into the structure of their social development motivated US Hispanics and International Latino students to quickly communicate at some level with their white US peers. All students wanted to communicate and desired to be accepted and included within social circles. Therefore, students developed different levels of spoken English to associate with their peers.

However, the way students associate language use and their perception of how people perceive them differed between the two groups. For example, in the U.S. Hispanic group, Eva said she didn't know how others perceived her; she had never thought about it. Silvia said that she never thought about diversity issues nor championed for diversity and would disregard race "all the time" and simply responded, "people don't know me." Gilberto and Silvia, considered Spanish as a weakness in their personal, social, and academic development. These students were more willing to let go of their primary language to the point of not speaking it anymore. In some cases, their attitude is evidence of their negative view toward their original language. Silvia thought that speaking Spanish in public places is rude. Moreover, she said other students labeled her racist for siding with the faculty of her high school who decide to announce that Spanish was no longer allowed at her high school campus.

By contrast, the International Latino students responded with more detail and reflection on how others may perceive them based on their language use. For example,

Andrea, from Venezuela, recognized that, if she does not speak, others would think she was from California (maybe meaning Hispanic American) but noticed people reacted differently toward her when they heard her accent. She felt that because of her accent, White Americans identify her as Mexican. This generalization of the Latino race/identity really upset her; and she felt it is very insulting among non-Mexican Hispanics/Latinos because it is based on assumptions that carry with them negative identifiers.

Similarly, Omar, from Peru, and Veronica, from Argentina, understood that their language usage can give the perception that they are well educated if they attempt to speak "proper English." Omar claimed to avoid using slang and Veronica stated that she did "not have an understanding of American slang." Like Andrea, Veronica stated that some people will no longer speak to her after hearing her accent, making her feel stigmatized and rejected. Veronica said she speaks English in public places because she is embarrassed that others will judge her as uneducated because of her use of Spanish.

Despite the hesitance to use their native language, I noticed that International students were adamant about holding on to their first language, recognizing that their language is a part of their identity. Because Spanish had been the primary language for a longer period (and they were still ELL or ESL students) and they grew up in their culture of origin, it was easier for them to return to the cultural background of their native country. They also did not grow up with negative responses to their language. They, unlike Gilberto and Silvia (along with Richard Rodriguez in *Hunger for Memory*), did not feel shame early on in life due to the language that identifies them.

The awareness of an ability to code switch was another difference that divided the groups' responses to the issue of language and identity. For example, Andrea, the

International Latina student from Venezuela, noticed that outside of the university "nobody cares" how she uses language but, like many students, she understood the importance of identity performance on campus; she felt that in the university she had to "fake her accent," which made it hard for her to read in public. She recognized the need to code switch because, as she puts it, "they [White Americans] don't like it" when others speak with a foreign accent. So she had to adapt to feel accepted. She says, "I'm trying to be like them and not them like me because I'm the minority." Andrea perceived whites to be so resistant to difference that she felt it was her responsibility to adapt because she harbored a fear the she would not be accepted as she was. Omar, an International Latino student from Peru who also recognized that "bad habits" such as speaking American slang made it harder to write well in college, recognized the need to "change vocabulary to someone outside" the university setting because there is a "need to change." Omar also saw that the level of code switching depended on the environment, the person being spoken to (friend or stranger) and mood. There were times when he would be "too tired or upset" and, as he put it, would "not change my language for White Americans."

Veronica was different in that she was committed to speaking Spanish outside the university setting but tried to read in English. Later in the conversation she admitted she was embarrassed to speak Spanish in public places. Veronica realized that she would struggle with both languages, but that intimidation was the biggest factor in the quality of her code switching. Because she was in a university setting for large periods of time, she said "speaking a lot of one language makes speaking the other language more difficult."

It seemed this sample of International Latino students desired to hold on to their first language because it was part of their identity but also recognized the need to code switch because that same language they identify with is used to stigmatize them.

On the other hand, though Gilberto would refrain from using slang with “people in authority,” the trend in the U.S. Hispanic group was that they had not thought about the need to code switch, or did not code switch at all. Gilberto claimed that his friends could tell he spoke differently with authority figures but believed that speaking slang did not affect him. He did however consider word choice in order to show “respect to someone who deserved respect,” someone in authority, but he himself did not recognize any shift in language in or out of the classroom. Eva and Silvia did not know how using language outside the university would affect how they use it in the university. Silvia’s language does not change throughout the day. Eva said she writes the way she speaks and realized that writing that way would explain why “it doesn’t sound good on paper.” The only code switching Eva noticed is when she alternates between English and Spanish.

Understanding students’ differing perceptions about language and language negotiation (code switching) is important because it assists them in acquiring a new foreign language in higher education, that of academic discourse. Though not all participants saw differences in language uses in and out of the university, or the need to code switch, all participants saw the benefit of learning an academic discourse. Students defined academic discourse as the language and method of communication within the university. The participants saw academic discourse as promising the potential of acceptance into academia (Andrea), as a way of preparation to “enter the professional world” (Omar), a way to “improve speech and higher level of communication”

(Veronica), "depth of reading and writing" (Gilberto), the application to "use something you learn from one teacher with another" (Silvia), and a way to "build vocabulary knowledge" (Eva).

Though all said learning academic discourse is a good thing, only two International Latino students saw a potential for harm. Andrea felt that in using academic discourse "you are trying to fake something you are not, putting your culture away from you for acceptance." And Omar said, "It can be elitist."

Based on the interviews, these trends lead me to believe that some students were very much aware of how language identity, and how others see them because of their language use, plays into how they negotiate their use of language(s) in the university. Also, some students stated they have not had, or have not been given, the opportunity to reflect on the relationships between the use of language and their identity in the university.

On the Classroom and Professors

Though International Latino students in my case study believed education in the United States to be an opportunity that could not be wasted—something they could use to help others, which would not be possible in their country of origin (what John Ogbu calls a tourist mentality (174)—they also saw at the same time unequal treatment that affected their persistence and performance in their acquisition of higher education. According to Ogbu, a "Positive Dual Frame of Reference" held by voluntary minorities affects the attitude that International Latinos have towards success that is based on their comparison to the home they left behind. These students see the opportunity of studying in the United States as a means to succeed in a way they would not be allowed "back home"; therefore,

they “are willing to accommodate and to accept less than equal treatment in order to improve their chances for economic success” (Ogbu 170). For example, Andrea, Omar and Veronica struggled with understanding process-based instruction that required them to revise their writing several times. Omar didn't know what to expect entering the class and didn't know what the teacher wanted in each assignment. He felt he did not know the basic requirements yet was expected to do more in his revisions. Veronica and Andrea struggled with too much detail and digression from the thesis/support structure in writing. Andrea claimed to have learned to write about what White instructors want to hear when writing about her country. Asking to revise every assignment meant to these students that their writing was unacceptable in their first and second drafts. Veronica felt she needed to go to the Writing Center for all the drafts to find out what was wrong with them. She, like Omar, felt being asked to revise without direct practical instruction/evidence did not help because they did not know the theory behind revision. Veronica said, “If you don't tell us what you want, we're not going to know.”

Another of Andrea's challenges was that she was made to prove she belonged in the first and second level of English composition. Her first English I instructor, an older White male, asked her if she had passed the TOEFL. Despite answering she had, he asked her to write an essay to see if she was at the right level. And although he questioned the authenticity of one of her assignments during the semester, she passed with an A-. Her English II class was taught by a younger (maybe late 20's) White female, which brought up the issue for her that “White girls [are] always mean to me.” This instructor also asked her if she had passed the TOEFL. Andrea saw this as an ignorant

and ridiculous question because she had to pass English I before entering English II, and had passed the TOEFL before English I.

The most negative perceptions were held by International Latino students towards some of their professors, a contradiction to Ogbu's theory. Several students said they did not speak in class or visit their professors during office hours because of how uncomfortable they felt. Several International Latino students gave examples of how they felt so uncomfortable with/intimidated by some of the White professors that they struggled in their speech and felt dumb speaking English with them. However, with other White professors they had, they felt more at ease, which gave them confidence to speak clearly and articulate what they wanted to say. Omar went on to say,

Teachers need to be more open with students: students see teachers intimidating because they [White professors] want to look that way. After getting close to the individual the relationship changes. If the professor does not change the student takes on the same personality, acting the same way, thinking he has to talk the same or act the same way in order to be accepted into his circle.

Contrary to the International students' responses, the Hispanic students did not identify the university in a negative light, which also goes against Ogbu's claim. The three U.S. Hispanic students' responses did not go beyond a simple no. This immediate response contradicts Ogbu's notion of the "Negative Frame of Reference" held by involuntary minorities. Ogbu argues that HS do not have the "back home" perception of IL students but instead base their minority status on their "social and economic status in the United States" compared to "the social and economic status of middle-class white

Americans" (171). For Ogbu, HS perspective is based on discrimination, and these students "tend to be more critical of the school curriculum and mistrustful of teachers and the school than [international Latino students]" (171). It seems that Hispanic students Gilberto, Silvia and Eva were less aware of cultural barriers that exist in the university. Though Silvia recreates a negative experience in her literacy narrative, when asked she claimed to not encounter negativity from the university when asked directly. She saw it as an issue of conformity because "we are in America" and she should not be resistant to an institutional culture. What Gilberto felt was the greatest challenge to his experience in the university was his lack of "a good foundation from high school," which affected his "arrangement in assignments."

It is unclear as to why there is an inconsistency between Ogbu's theory and the perceptions of participants in this case study. Nancy Barron says, "I'm not sure why involuntary minority students [U.S. Hispanic students] have difficulties seeing beyond the mainstream's systemic power. It's as if we buy into our places as minorities, somehow second, somehow on a lower footing"(Barron 21). Silvia's response throughout the interviews is an example of this appropriation of systemic powers. In conversation, Silvia disregarded culture and language as contributors to her confrontations in school. She also sided with the faculty and staff on the issue of prohibiting students from speaking Spanish in her school because, she says, "we are in America." Barron says it is difficult for U.S Hispanic students to respond to the university "because of unarticulated interpretations and assumptions of the mainstream system." (13). While these students expressed they could not identify negativity during their interviews, they were more

likely to address issues of the racialized social tensions and individual perceptions in their literacy narratives as we see in their narratives.

Visiting the Narratives

Gilberto's narrative demonstrates that he faced disrespect because of a racial tension in his localized community. For example, his literacy narrative shows his less than pleasant encounters with such social issues while demonstrating that language is socially constructed and, without the "proper" language within a society, the individual may feel ostracized, stigmatized, and disrespected. Though a reader can infer and analyze many different issues from this short literacy narrative, I have focused on a recurring theme. Though Gilberto leads the reader through many difficult and uncomfortable moments, a theme he returns to in his literacy narrative is that of respect. He states, as "friends" gained his trust they showed less respect toward him by making off colored remarks and jokes. This leads to his distrust of individuals. Later, he feels disrespected by teachers and the principal. So it is telling that he would not trust those who disrespect him, even if they are those who have the best of intentions, as teachers and principals should. Brown and Dobbins state that "students of color may be concerned that European American instructors are culturally ignorant and potentially prejudiced" (165). The lack of trust in those with authority/control to demonstrate social respect leads to intimidation (as seen in Gilberto's literacy narrative when the bus driver, who does hold a position of power, recognizes the intimidation and uses it to entertain his audience at that time, the other students). Fear of social disrespect is also evident when Gilberto does not ask the principal the many questions he has about his work due to mistrust and a fear of stigmatization.

Though he doesn't give specific examples in his narrative of how he was disrespected by friends, he shared in our conversation how he carried with him the feeling of being disrespected for many years through different schools, until it lead him to change his personality. This is an example of what Barron says, "Their sense of worth takes a beating. Their understanding of who they are no longer stays internal. They begin to believe the external words and behavior instead of seeing Differences" (Barron 21). Because of his experience, Gilberto's personality changes to what he calls "more serious"; if he were social and outgoing before, his story has made him defensive and skeptical of others. Though these events could happen to any child regardless of race, Gilberto feels that it is because of his race that he feels this way. He begins his narrative using the words "growing up," "struggling," "being a Latino," setting the tone to his narrative and connecting his experience to race.

When he describes the opportunity to learn a new language and help others who struggle, he appropriately uses the word "mirror" to describe the shift in power that he experienced. Gilberto realized that he had knowledge and command over the language but did not recognize knowledge as a source of power to be held over others. Unlike those who disrespected him, he does not take the authority that the knowledge of the language affords him and hold it above others; instead he is interested in finding different ways of assisting in their learning. Gilberto's response to this new position of power is productive for the students because he uses it to help and not to judge and disrespect his peers.

Unlike Gilberto, who was born in Mexico, Silvia was born in Southern California. However, both had to make a move to a new location where they had to learn a new

language. Unlike Gilberto, who recognized the racial tension and disrespect in his life, Silvia's second hand experience through her mother shows that, according Brown and Dobbins, "[Students of color] may work to avoid being the target of others' stereotypes of his or her own groups... For students of color, particularly Latinos, Latinas, and African Americans, the latter concern may be salient given the negative stereotype of their intellectual abilities" (158). This fear of stigmatization, evident in Gilberto's desire to be respected and show respect towards others, shows up early in Silvia's narrative when she decided at the age of eight that she "would work hard to learn English and so that [she] wouldn't be made fun of."

Silvia's narrative demonstrates how students enter higher education with what Barron says is a "fear of being placed under the negative stereotypes of the group they identify with (groups can be associated with race, ethnicity, economic status, gender, age, etc.)" (13). "Not surprisingly, some 'involuntary minority' students respond to these possible threats with self-defeating behaviors," (13) Barron writes. Behaviors, like Silvia's frustration and missed classes in college, according to Barron, "show how internalized systemic and institutional expectations become for some individuals, especially when color, with historical significance, becomes a variable to confront and live with" (13). Thus history plays a major part in the relationship between Hispanics/Latinos and White Americans and this tension is evident in how both Gilberto and Silvia negotiate their identity according to the institutional expectations of higher education.

Silvia does not state that the stigmatization was due to racial tension, as Gilberto does; instead, she believes it was a function of language. She believes what brought on the humiliation and disrespect toward her mother and her desire to avoid similar

encounters was the lack of proficiency in the English language. However, she does imagine race being a hindrance to her performance when she states, "Being Hispanic I believe that I have to work harder for the things that I want. When I study I have to study harder than most people because it's harder for me to understand grammar." This historically-based ideology is too commonly placed on the shoulders of domestic Hispanic and sometimes international Latino students who, as Barron puts it, "feel they can't say they feel different because they don't want to whine, to complain, to rock the boat, so they try to convince themselves that everything is okay. It's going to be all right if they only work a little harder" (20). Though we do not know what really happened in Silvia's work, her reconstruction of events would suggest Silvia's struggle was not lack of language proficiency but of White teachers' false expectations and stigmatization based on race and language. During our interview, Silvia was reluctant to classify her experience as a moment of racial tension, saying, "my English teacher would often accuse me of plagiarism and it would make me so mad that some times I would think it was because I was Hispanic because I was the only Hispanic in the class." Instead of recognizing the racial tension during our conversation, Silvia said she tries to ignore racist notions that may exist in an academic setting, though she clearly reconstructed a racial tension in her narrative.

When Silvia was placed in a college Basic English class, her identity, like Gilberto's, had taken a beating to the point of losing the desire to fight as she did with her high school English teacher. Silvia's reconstruction of her experience and behaviors give example of the residue of the history as reflected through students' perception. Silvia writes,

Because Spanish is my first language I was allowed to take the TOEFL test to test out of Basic English. I took the test and passed with a high score but I was told that I had to still be in Basic English I was mad so I never went to class because I didn't think that the class was challenging and I had an F in the class I had a really bad attitude about it and I tried to talk to some people around the college to try to switch to a college writing class but it never happened.

By this time Silvia acted in ways that compromised her education such as not attending classes or doing work because of her frustration towards a systemic power she could not identify. Ogbu claims:

Comparative research suggests that we might discover at least a part of the explanation by closely looking at the histories and social-cultural adaptations of these minorities. More specifically, to understand why minority groups differ among themselves in school performance we have to know two things: the first is their own responses to their history of incorporation into U.S. society and their subsequent treatment or mistreatment by White Americans. The second is how their responses to that history and treatment affect their perceptions of and responses to schooling. (158)

What is also important to consider is the potential danger of having assumptions that Silvia was incapable and dishonest, as well as lazy and irresponsible. Though we do not know exactly how instructors perceived Silvia, we do know ways professors sometimes talk about students. Even more, I have heard ways professors talked about certain

students at this private liberal arts college, including Silvia. Instructors had the potential of having false expectations of her performance as they spoke of her with tones that carried historically based stigmatization of Hispanics/Latinos. A professor shared with me that she felt Silvia had a negative attitude in and out of class and could not do work expected for the class. Silvia's narrative implies that her high school instructor had lower expectations and did not believe that Silvia was capable of the type of work she continually produced through the four years of high school. All the while, the college instructor who did not see Silvia in class could assume that Silvia's performance was stereotypical of all Hispanics without knowing the reason for the lack of interest in the class, the lack of attendance and the perceived indifference for the grade.

Conclusion

Hispanic and Latino students' adaptation to the dominant society may depend on their frame of reference, but more importantly, as Ogbu suggests, "the clue to the differences among minorities in school performance may lie in the differences in their community forces" that may give insight to "minority perceptions of and responses to schooling" (161). The community force affects "the way the minorities perceive and respond to schooling as a consequence of their treatment" (158).

Four factors are hypothesized to constitute the community forces: a frame of minority school comparison (e.g., with schools "back home" or in white suburbs); beliefs about the instrumental value of schooling (for example, role of school credentials in getting ahead); relational interpretations of schooling (e.g., degree of trust of schools and school personnel); and symbolic beliefs about schooling (for example, whether learning school

curriculum, language, et cetera is considered harmful to minority cultural and language identity). (161-162)

Research shows that social treatment and students' negative perception affect students' performance in school (Barron, Castillo, Moreno, Gonzalez, etc.). In order to create a different environment for students, professors need to help alter the way students may perceive types of community forces in the university by acting as sponsors of students' literacy development.

To break the negative cycle of the stigmatized relationships and change students' negative perceptions, we as professors need to be positive community forces in students' encounters in the university. We need to be role models and sponsor their literacy development by creating an environment open to the culture and language these students bring, along with the experiences they share through conversations. Though this study was not intended to research individual community forces, it became apparent that Gilberto and Silvia, though they claimed to not see academia negatively, gave examples throughout their narratives of the negative community force at play. Omar and Andrea, on the other hand, described the ESL department as a positive community force that encouraged and advocated for them in their education. This affiliation with the ESL Department separates students from mainstream students as they recognize they have been labeled since their admittance into the institution. The ESL department then becomes a world within a world, where they can escape for support, reassurance, and motivation. Though some students associate with and are involved in the ESL department, not all International students see the ESL department the same way. Veronica disassociated herself from the ESL department, as evident in her narrative (see

Appendix A). So we should not be too quick to homogenize all students. Assuming homogeneity, like stigmatization, stifles communication between professors and students because of negative perceptions the both carry. Therefore, we need to find ways to know the students who are entering our classrooms and our offices.

INTER-CHAPTER TWO

Omar and Andrea

This chapter features unedited narratives of two students, Omar and Andrea. The second part examines the stigmatization that is currently active/visible in the university and proposes an approach to sponsorship that is needed to break these false/negative relationship dynamics. This approach is marked by taking up several difficult tasks including advocacy, encouragement, recognizing needs and exploring ways to fulfill student needs, keeping in mind the inequalities that exist, and becoming culturally engaged by creating ties with students.

Omar's Literacy Narrative:

I never imagined in my whole life immigrating to a foreign land and start a completely new life. It was difficult and challenging, at times, to adapt to my new culture, life style. The wonderful friends that I had were left behind and slowly replaced by new friends. I never thought how much we, as human, depend upon friends until one needs every bit of help from them. My new friends helped me a lot to adapt into my new culture, my new life style.

The hardest thing of living in this country was learning the new language, English. Being honest I think English is not an easy language because it requires a lot of practice on learning how to pronounce certain words difficult to an individual who spoke most of his or her life Spanish. If you are not careful on the pronunciation of your words, it can lead to misunderstanding or perhaps lead you into trouble. As for example, I caught getting into trouble every time I pronounced the word BEACH. For the people around me it meant something else, the word used to a woman who sleeps with many guys.

Another example is SHEET. Again for the people around me it sounded as the bad word used to describe feces. Fortunately the people around me were patient and comprehensive to understand that I tried my best to learn English, although my pronunciation and "American accent" was misleading. Because of your "accent" people can misjudge you of not being capable to handle difficult or even challenging things that maybe you are capable to handle better than an individual who speaks fluently his or her native language. It is disappointing but rewarding at the same time because those challenges on life help one to be strong and perseverant to work hard and obtain all the knowledge so when the time comes one is ready to handle well the work trusted upon you. I should not be generalizing this comment but I strongly believe many immigrants feel and face with this kind of challenges living on a foreign country. I wonder how society can help to improve this dilemma. Is there any way I should stop feeling this way? I do not truly know but I know if every individual would cooperate together to think and find a solution we would not be facing this kind of problems.

I came to this country when I was thirteen years old. I did not speak any English at all. It was very hard to adapt to my new culture, away from my friends and close relatives. Fortunately I had the support of my beloved parents who helped me during my teenager years to continue striving for the best in this life without mattering where I was living. I was privileged to attend a Boarding Seventh Day Adventist High School Academy. Not knowing too much English the faculty and friends of that Academy helped me tremendously to learn and to adapt to my "new life" away from my parents. It was hard living behind home but gratifying because I was able to learn English fast and make

wonderful lasting friends. Truly it was an answer to a prayer because God saw my suffering and helped me go through those difficult times.

The four years in high school were a lot of fun. It was sad but exciting graduating from high school and preparing for college. After graduation, I worked on Burger King. The manager treated me well and I did not have any trouble at all. Working at Burger King made me think a lot about how important is to pursue a higher education. I met wonderful *Latinos* co-workers who helped me and taught me how to prepare those fast sandwiches. As soon as they found out that, I was going to attend College they were encouraging. I will never forget the wise words regarding on obtaining a higher education that can make a difference in this world. I would not have to worry on working on Burger King or even on another fast food restaurant because as a graduate of college I could pursue any type of good-paying job I wanted to and work on a nicer environment without fearing of getting hurt with a hot machine.

Looking back, all of those encouraging words that I received from my *Latinos amigos* made sense. As a student, I am privilege to work, as a reader to two professors, on a comfortable and nicer environment with educated people. It truly does make a difference pursuing a higher education. Nevertheless, as every good thing occurs in life there is also challenging things that happen. It is not easy, sometimes, to study on a foreign language that can give you terrible headaches. I find it difficult to write, one a good grammatically way, all of my taught I want to share or describe. Even though I tried hard to do so, my best effort appears, as it is not enough because there are always grammatical mistakes I do when writing any paper.

Most of my writing I take to the Writing Center so they can help me organize or check the grammar on my papers. I fully understand the assignment but writing is another story. On one occasion I was told, based upon my writings, that I should consider changing on another mayor because it would bring me many headaches on the future. What did that comment supposed to mean? I was confused and disappointed hearing those suggestions. I am sure they, those who work at the writing center, did not mean it on the wrong way I was thinking of, but it was difficult to accept. I wonder if everything I do in life has to be based upon my writings or because my English was not good enough on the fields I was pursuing of. Why did I struggle so much on writing a "good" English? All I wanted to do is to receive the best education I could get and apply all of the cumulated knowledge to society.

It never crossed my mind of someday pursuing a health care profession in which I could travel around the world to provide my service to those on need. I am aware of my goal that is very high, and perhaps limited to certain individuals, but I strongly believe that if one works hard for it and persevere until the end he or she can reach that goal. I am wondering because English or other language, beside Spanish, as not being my first language I can enjoy or deserve to reach my goal of some day graduating from college as a physician and work. Perhaps I should go back to my country and study what I want to study because here in the States it is difficult to achieve. However, I also wonder, if so many people who came to the States before me become successful individuals why could not I taste the same success? I do not think that language can limited one to achieve their goals. Instead, language can be a powerful tool to the success if one tries hard to learn it. Again, I do not blame those good friends from the writing center commenting about

changing to another career because I lacked some tools needed on my future profession. Time has already gone through since this small incidence at the writing center that taught me important values to apply in my personal life. I am proud to be an International Student here at the States because I am able to practice my English and obtain the best education this country can offer in which, perhaps, other countries do not have. I see a lot of potential on many of my international friends preparing now for the future. Who knows seeing on the future one of the best mathematician, engineer or Bill Gates on international version with a powerful computer company in this world who studied and graduated from a university in Nebraska. Obtaining a higher education is not an easy thing but rewarding at the end.

Andrea's Literacy Narrative:

I don't remember when I actually started to read. All I remember is that my parents always cared about my learning process so they always got me all kinds of toys that would help me learn to read and to spell. My dad got me books for all my early birthdays. These books had information about "science for kids", and other interesting things like how to build things. I don't remember learning to read at school. I remember learning from my dad, who used to spend a few minutes everyday reading with me. I enjoyed reading when I was a child because the material was fun to read. Mom always read stories to me at night, and while she did it, she would also teach me how to read. On Sabbath, she would read stories too. So I learned something everyday.

I don't remember how I started to write, I only remember practicing the letters and words on a "fun" book from school where I had to complete sentences and join the little lines to form letters. I had to do many of these activities everyday, so I guess that helped me learn. I also had color books with stories, those were my favorite! It didn't seem like I was learning to read because all the material that I got from school and from my parents at home was fun and colorful. As time went by, reading and writing got harder. I started to the accent "´" on words, and harder words showed up. During that time, I had really bad teachers so I didn't build a good base on these basic Spanish rules of writing.

These teachers always told me to do homework, but they never taught me the actual "rules" of writing. For example, all I had to do repeat a word and try to figure out where the accent of the word was. I did this so many times until the point I started to

memorize where the accent was in most words and this is the way I still do it today. I don't really know if there is an "accent" rule.

After I learned how to read, my teachers didn't care about reading anymore. I never had to read in front of people during class (High School"). During high school, we had to read certain things to actually learn how to get the main sentence of a page or main idea of a text. This has helped me a lot during my college experience since I have to do this very often when reading my text books. Without this important technique, I wouldn't be able to learn quick while I read.

In high school I remember having to read only one whole book for a class. Other than that, it was only short reading activities. I developed my "love for reading" on my own after my mom gave me as a present two books that changed my life. The development of a teenager, and "*Cuando Muriran Mis Dioses.*" (I have read it 11 times). After I read those books, I started getting books for me to read, and I actually read for fun now.

My writing experience didn't get any better. Teachers never taught me how to organize my thoughts to write them down. I didn't learn about transition words or how to write a good paper, with a good structure. (introduction, body, conclusion). However, I always had to write papers for my psychology class or Spanish class. "Give your personal response to the following text". I developed the ability to write by myself. My dad checked my paper and helped me improve them, but I never took a "composition class".

A good thing my dad always told me to do was to use the dictionary (Spanish) so then, my vocabulary could be better and my understanding of things too. This helped a lot. Then I got to college. I came to learn English so my first classes were in ESL. ESL

changed my life. I can say that I had the best teachers during that period of my life. My best class was writing. The hardest one, but the one that taught me very useful things. I learned in my 3 levels of writing how to write a paper. What the structure of a paper was. I learned to use transition words, which are SUPER USEFUL and how to write without getting your audience bored. I like the fact that I could pick a topic and write about it. I love the free writing style. I could just express myself in paper. Practicing made it happen! The more I wrote, the more I learn new words. Then, I could use these words while talking.

We had POWER WORDS, which were new words that we could add to our vocabulary. I liked those too.

My reading class wasn't very helpful. They always made me read and answer questions from the lecture. This didn't help!

I am almost done with college and I still can't read in public. My teachers didn't develop in me the ability to read in public. My grammar class was also very useful

Formula { Grammar + Writing + Gringo boyfriend = Andrea Speaking
English, writing it and reading it in a year!

My composition class was fun! I had a very creative teacher for writing I. I had a lot of free writing and special papers that helped me develop my writing skills. Thanks to this class, I can write all of my college paper without any problem.

I want to share Andrea's narrative because it is a good example of the sponsors she had in her life that helped her develop her literacy skills. At the same time I want to draw from the previous chapter the stigmatization of Hispanics as seen from mainstream

White America. This narrative is based on the acquisition of reading and writing skills.

But if Andrea had not made reference about learning Spanish, it would seem that she is sharing her English literacy development. I also want to share this to break the stereotype that immigrants are uneducated and are not interested in learning.

CHAPTER THREE

PROFESSORS AS ACADEMIC CULTURAL GUIDES

A problem in many first-year college writing classes is that the current classroom environment is not prepared for student writers with multiple languages because the instructors' "imagined audience" is predominantly white English-proficient students. Matsuda claims this "imagined audience" is problematic when other students are ignored because it "inhibits the teacher's ability to recognize and address the presence of differences" (639). Because of the growing number of Hispanic/Latino students in the university and their historical background (discussed in chapter one), the recognition of cultural differences and students' perceptions of the university (discussed in chapter two), I propose that professors step away from traditional/antiquated gatekeeping roles (a feature of the banking system of education) and toward the role of an Academic Cultural Guide that sponsors students' access/inclusion into the university

Students' Voices

Though the two literacy narratives in this chapter draw out moments where sponsorship played a part in Andrea and Omar's literacy development, they also demonstrate moments of gatekeeping. Omar is quick to recognize the challenges he faced, and the struggles many Hispanic/Latino (H/L) students face when he states, "It was difficult and challenging, at times, to adapt to my new culture, life style." He writes, "The hardest thing of living in this country was learning the new language, English," while at the same time posing the question of "how society can help to improve this dilemma." H/L students encounter gatekeeping throughout their educational careers; professors who hold expectations but, as Andrea points out, "These teachers always told me to do

homework, but they never taught me the actual 'rules' of writing," and later, "My writing experience didn't get any better. Teachers never taught me how to organize my thoughts to write them down." Without having established relationships with students like Omar and Andrea, professors will not know the type of educational background of these students. Instead, professors run a risk of having false expectations that cannot and will not be met. Professors should not assume that all students bring with them the strategies necessary for academic success. Professors should not assume that these students' previous instructor sat down and "explained the rules" to them. We have students in our rooms who may have graduated in the top ten percent of their class but that does not indicate they are well prepared for college. Many times mainstream students enter our classes, having succeeded throughout high school, and they find it difficult to understand college-level writing. Many times a student's response to their first graded assignment is, "but I got A's on all my papers my senior year." So it is more important to recognize that many International Latino students and U.S. Hispanic students have not had enough instruction for the academic writing we expect. Therefore, we may need to reconsider the imagined community to include students who may need slightly more attention with their writing.

Omar's experience of being told by a student in the writing center to consider changing majors because of his language is another example of how gatekeeping can be devastating for many Hispanic/Latino students. These students are left wondering the meaning of such encounters. Such gatekeeping destabilizes students' understanding of their own abilities and makes them question their place in the university. Omar states, "I wonder if everything I do in life has to be based upon my writings or because my English

was not good enough on the fields I was pursuing of," and thus claims he was left "confused and disappointed hearing those suggestions." In his writing he questions if "he should stop feeling this way" and even questions whether he deserves the joy of education or success: "I am wondering because English or other language, beside Spanish, as not being my first language I can enjoy or deserve to reach my goal of some day graduating from college as a physician and work."

Despite the obstacles they have encountered, both student literacy narratives sound optimistic. Both display the theme of an established relationship that helped sponsor their literacy development. Andrea describes the involvement of both her parents in her developing literacy when she remembers that her dad gave her books for her birthdays and her mom read her stories at night. Omar also points out the importance of relationships when he claims, "I never thought how much we, as human, depend upon friends until one needs every bit of help from them," and "My new friends helped me a lot to adapt into my new culture, my new life style."

These relationships function as sponsors of literacy for both students. Though Andrea claims "I developed my 'love for reading' on my own" and "I developed the ability to write by myself," she doesn't realize the advancement came after the fact that her mother and father sponsored her earlier literacy development. Her literacy development came, as she says, "after my mom gave me as a present two books that changed my life," and "My dad checked my paper and helped me improve them."

Omar's narrative is similar because he recognizes the support from family and friends. Despite his struggles with language he states, "Fortunately I had the support of my beloved parents who helped me during my teenager years to continue striving for the

best in this life without mattering where I was living," and also writes, "faculty and friends of that Academy helped me tremendously to learn and to adapt to my 'new life' away from my parents." Omar also goes beyond the familial sponsorship when he recognizes faculty and friends, even to the point of going outside of the university. He found sponsorship through his "Latino *amigos*" who "were encouraging." In his words, "Working at Burger King made me think a lot about how important is to pursue a higher education. I met wonderful *Latinos* co-workers... As soon as they found out that, I was going to attend College they were encouraging. I will never forget the wise words regarding on obtaining a higher education that can make a difference in this world."

It was evident to me that no other network of relationships served students as sponsors more than networks of relationships my informants had with other international students and ESL instructors. It is unfortunate that some argue that international students would do better if they did not fall back on other international students and that full immersion would help students assimilate. This way of thinking ignores the richness of culture that international students bring and the importance of having them retain their culture and identity.

Both Andrea and Omar were international students in the ESL department. Andrea says, "ESL changed my life. I can say that I had the best teachers during that period of my life," and Omar says, "As a student, I am privilege to work, as a reader to two professors, on a comfortable and nicer environment with educated people. It truly does make a difference pursuing a higher education." The professors at this particular ESL department understand the need for advocacy to the point of giving rides, finding jobs, and connecting them with other international students for other countries. The ESL

professors strive to close the cultural gap by developing an understanding of the students' culture and language to validate students' cultural identity within the university.

These student literacy narratives, especially Omar's, also show how Hispanic/Latino students can develop critical literacy as they begin questioning how society can change (a multicultural democratic pedagogy I will address in the following chapter). Omar states, "I do not think that language [should] limited one to achieve their goals." Questioning whether he deserves to enjoy educational success he wonders how society can change the system. By raising the issue Omar begins communicating the need for change. And it is evident through literacy narratives that a sponsorship that moves to a more active role involves recreating a community in and out of the classroom. It is the responsibility of all teachers to commit to academically and culturally guide students through their literacy development in the university. The more present and future educators participate in culturally engaged activities that provide equal access, the more they will practice that sense of sponsorship in their inclusive educational spaces.

Understanding Sponsorship

Students gain access into the university through a sense of inclusion from sponsors. At the same time, the university gains economic growth and cultural/educational recognition. Administrators would benefit from the increasing number of Hispanic/Latino student retention/graduation. Teachers would be more effective in their pedagogical approach to those who need teaching not just the well prepared students who meet the imagined audience profile. Hispanic/Latino students benefit from an all-inclusive road to success.

My current research on Hispanic/Latino students' lived experience shows that substantial (yet incomplete) thinking around Hispanic/Latino students' academic experiences has been done, but too little cultural change in universities has been achieved. Thus, members of the Hispanic/Latino community actually notice no differences in their educational lives. The continual climate of universities is evident through the experience of so many Hispanic/Latino students encountering educators who maintain the traditional climate of the university. Two participants in this study, Eva and Andrea, feel that professors teach for themselves, meaning the White dominant culture, and not for students of different cultures. If professors are driven by pedagogy that meets traditional expectations (professors who adopt the same teacher role as their predecessors, who have also adopted the role for their predecessors, and so on), then it becomes difficult for others to practice in that learning environment.

Sometimes it is too easy for professors to dismiss students and send them to the writing center, as if to say, "No, you may not enter unless YOU go through...THE WRITING CENTER," or "I'm sorry but if you want to come in YOU need to find a different way." For example, Andrea was told by a math instructor she needed more English classes before he would admit her into his class. She went to another math instructor who allowed her in and she passed the class. As Matsuda states, "it is not unusual for teachers who are overwhelmed by the presence of language differences to tell students simply to 'proofread more carefully' or to 'go to the writing center'; those who are not native speakers of dominant varieties of English are thus being held accountable for what is not being taught" (640). Andrea's example demonstrates a professor's difficulty with students who are not part of his imagined audience. He may have not

wanted, or known how, to deal with any difficulty her differences could have made in his class. It is easier for teachers to evaluate and assess students whose language skills and struggles meet teachers' expectations. We spend less time grading, less office hours, and find it easier to respond to their writing because the students have entered the classroom with the "right" experience. But with the growing number of Hispanic/Latino students who struggle to identify with the cultural environment of the university, many instructors need to take up the cultural responsibility, as cultural brokers, and teach those who need teaching, a service that often times extends beyond the classroom. Pipher describes cultural brokers as, "schoolteachers, caseworkers, public health nurses, and American friends who may teach them to make intentional decisions about what to accept and what to reject in America[...] Cultural brokers give newcomers information that directly translates into power" (89).

We should not pretend to be blind to the inequalities that exist in the 21st century. We cannot depend on one individual or think that establishing a multi-cultural program or student association alone will alter years of historically established hegemonic ideologies. A new mindset of the whole institution is needed to create a culturally engaged environment/climate. As Matsuda stated in his concluding sentence, "To work effectively with the student population in the twenty-first century, all composition teachers need to re-imagine the composition classroom as the multilingual space that it is, where the presence of language differences is the default" (649). Our classrooms need to be receptive to cultural differences as well as "international and resident[ial]" (pg 642) language differences.

Part of our responsibility is to teach the curriculum, evaluate students' performance and assess a grade. Underneath these and many other duties (research, publication and service), the greatest impact we have towards our students at liberal arts colleges is to teach. However, many professors have grown so accustomed to their scheduled curriculum that when a student enters a class who needs extra attention they turn them over to the writing center or are quick to assess them a low grade. This approach or reaction resembles a gatekeeper's responsibility. According to Ellen Cushman, in *The Struggle and the Tools*:

...gatekeepers, particularly those in public institutions (education, criminal justice, health, and welfare) deeply and widely contribute to social (in)equalities in daily language activities. An 'institutional gatekeeper...has the responsibility to make decisions about the social mobility' of others within the institution and wider society as well (Erickson and Shultz 1982, 4) (13).

In this sense, the mobility is not of the gatekeeper but of those attempting to gain access. A gatekeeper has a responsibility or duty motivated by authority, to allow or negate admittance into a closed community, allow or negate passage from one location to another. If academics take on this approach, then our responsibility as first-year writing instructors does not extend beyond passing and failing students.

However, Cushman also recognizes that "in all situations the gatekeepers were at the very least maintenance people of institutional standards who sometimes facilitated community members' attempts to better themselves. However, in some *rare* cases... the gatekeeper went beyond the judge and advocate dualism and fleshed out the role" (*italics*

mine, 237). She states there were moments when gatekeepers would become "a host who invited community members to share resources, and a liaison who met community members linguistically halfway in their border crossings" and makes the claim that "representatives of the educational system, teachers, scholars and administrators can, and do, practice civically minded gatekeeping activities"(237). This move away from the gatekeeping role as judge only is needed for the growing community of Hispanic/Latino students entering the university, and professors should head towards a proactive role.

If “students of color experience stigma specifically in a context in which they may be concerned with being judged by an outgroup member according to a negative, context-relevant stereotype” (Brown & Dobbins 161), then everyone in the university must raise the question of what to do with this understanding. Brown and Dobbins ask the question specifically,

How might European American instructors counteract the metastereotype that students of color may have of them? That is, what specific characteristics in European American professors may allay their students’ concerns about being stereotyped? [...]An implication of prior work (e.g., Sigelamn & Tuch, 1997) is that students of color may be concerned that European American instructors are culturally ignorant and potentially prejudiced. It may be that believing an instructor is aware of various cultures may counteract that perception. (Brown & Dobbins 165).

Counteracting such perception becomes the instructors' cultural responsibility throughout the university environment, both in and out of the classroom. As demonstrated in chapter two, one of the many negative perceptions Hispanic/Latino students have is that they

cannot approach professors in or out of the classroom. Some of these students are intimidated to speak formally in class or informally out of class with their instructors. By alleviating students' concerns outside of the classroom through cultural engagement with students, Hispanic/Latino students may abandon the perception that professors are being "culturally ignorant and potentially prejudiced," thus altering some negative perception of the university.

Therefore, in accordance with Castillo, asking students to “adapt to the cultural norms and values of peers and faculty in the university and abide by the formal *and informal structural requirements of the community*” is problematic when it is viewed as the students’ responsibility to overcome “university social and cultural norms and face systemic barriers to integration” on their own (italics mine, Castillo et al. 267). Instead, she claims, “researchers, practitioners, and administrators [should] examine their university environment from the perspective of high ethnically identified Latino college students, because this group is the most sensitive to the environment” (271). Universities, and all educational institutions, need to create a multicultural environment that welcomes diversity, an environment that raises the critical consciousness in all individuals, through engaged faculty.

A methodology for promoting access and inclusion is to take up some of the many forms of sponsorship in and out of the classroom. In *Literacy in American Lives*, Deborah Brandt recognizes a driving force that enables individuals throughout generations to acquire a literacy development that assists them in their understanding of the world around them. Within her exploration she unearths the notion of sponsorship and how it applies to literacy. She states:

Intuitively, *sponsors* seemed a fitting term for the figures who turned up most typically in people's memories of literacy learning: older relatives, teachers, religious leaders, supervisors, military officers, librarians, friends, editors, influential authors. Sponsors, as we ordinarily think of them, are powerful figures who bankroll events or smooth the way for initiates. Usually richer, more knowledgeable, and more entrenched than the sponsored, sponsors nevertheless enter a reciprocal relationship with those they underwrite. They lend their resources or credibility to the sponsored but also stand to gain benefits from their success, whether by direct repayment or, indirectly, by credit of association. (Brandt 19)

Brandt recognizes sponsors as "any agents, local or distant, concrete or abstract, who enable, support, teach, and model, as well as recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold, literacy—and gain advantage by it in some way" (Brandt 19).

I conducted this study with the idea of turning to Hispanic/Latino students' literacy experiences as a means to develop practical methods of sponsorship. What is gained from sponsoring students is an opportunity to learn about the cultural and language differences directly from students instead of from books or mainstream media. Depending on the level of the relationship, professors can acquire rich cultural knowledge from individual students' histories/academic backgrounds in order to establish a foundation for implementing different pedagogical approaches and practices. As professors begin to theorize and practice ways of meeting the needs of students, they can demonstrate their democratic pedagogy.

In one sense, this research calls on professors to take up the role of “Academic Cultural Guide,” a role that draws on Brandt’s idea of literacy sponsors as well as Cushman’s account of positive gatekeepers. As Academic Cultural Guides, professors play a proactive role of advocating access and inclusion for Hispanic/Latino students as well as all students regardless of race, using their institutional power and authority in service to democratizing higher education. I use the term Academic Cultural Guide similar to Mary Pipher's description of the cultural broker, one who educates others outside the mainstream society of the cultural norms and expectations of the dominant society. In the same way, professors can apply this concept in the academic setting (the university being a smaller social community) to become Academic Cultural Guides for those who make up the changing demographics of our colleges and universities. I propose that professors can best sponsor Hispanic/Latino students by adopting the role of an Academic Cultural Guide in their relationships with individual students instead of a gatekeepers' role as described by Cushman. A difference between the gatekeeper and the Academic Cultural Guide is the mobility of the two. A gatekeeper will usually stand at his/her post, sometimes in front of the gate blocking access as an intimidating bouncer, sometimes in a booth looking down at those petitioning for entrance. Whatever their location may be, their purpose is to keep out unwanted “intruders.”

However, an Academic Cultural Guide stands by the open door, waiting to provide a service, waiting to extend an arm to lead the guest through the doors, welcoming students and asking where they intend to go, in order to lead them to the proper location, giving an introduction or tour of all possible destinations through verbal

description or brochure. An Academic Cultural Guide is mobile, alert, active, and attentive to the needs and desires of the student.

From the present study I conducted, through the literacy narratives and interviews, I see four strategies professors can act out the role of Academic Cultural Guide. The first is to make evident that as Academic Cultural Guides, professors are attentive to students' academic needs/desires. They must be able to give support outside of academic expectations, thus increasing students' mobility for education outside of the classroom or discipline. Omar and Andrea both stated that members of the ESL faculty assisted them in different ways. They claimed that ESL instructors would advocate for other students in the ESL program by giving them rides or assisting with student visa forms. There are times that students struggle because of events that have little or nothing to do with their aptitude. All students are entering a new environment, and some Latino students are attending the first school where the student body is predominantly White. Students will experience culture shock at different levels and, though it has nothing to do with the course, culture shock will affect their academic performance. An Academic Cultural Guide demonstrates his/her alertness to the needs of students by recognizing events outside of the classroom and what remains is for the professor to act on the students' needs. A professor cannot be an effective Academic Cultural Guide without first establishing some level of intimacy in the relationship with his/her student. Professors can advise, counsel, and mentor students with the knowledge they have acquired from previous relationships with students of similar and diverse background, which may come after years of being Academic Cultural Guides.

The second strategy available to professors to allow students access to the academy is by creating a culturally diverse climate where students can learn that their skills, ability, knowledge and sense of self is applicable to the university in the classroom. Students need a place where they can be plugged in, and feel connected in some way; not identified as just a work study student who cleans the gym floor but as a member in a department. Gilberto's literacy narrative (inter-chapter one) demonstrates this when he is given a position to assist the professor in Spanish and French class. Omar's literacy narrative (inter-chapter 3) also demonstrates the positive effect of feeling part of the institution. Both international and domestic students expressed their appreciation and sense of honor and responsibility when they were placed in a location where they felt needed as an important member of the university. This may be as simple as designating projects or group leaders in the classroom instead of hoping they will volunteer.

A third strategy is by inviting them to readings and other academic events, to be active members of a community within the university. However, an invitation alone, without the professor's presence, will not necessarily mean the students will attend or participate. Instead, an invitation with the assurance of the professor's presence would be more productive in creating different dynamics of informal and formal events. Though this may ask much more than many professors can afford, in terms of service in the community, it will encourage and motivate the student.

The fourth strategy to sponsor students is an invitation into one's personal life, be it on or off campus. Hispanic/Latino students regardless of race, actually all students, may benefit from spending personal nonacademic time with professors. The instructor

can take this time to learn from the student the cultural background and the students' historical academic struggles while becoming a cultural broker to international students, as well as domestic, by presenting a different/insiders' perspective to the culture and expectations of the university. Because some of the participants stated intimidation as a barrier for communication, they expressed that a less formal environment helps them negotiate their language without having to negotiate their identity as much. Students will recognize the personal gesture, which may help in breaking the stigmatization of White professors, while becoming encouraged by the personal commitment displayed by the professor and feel encouraged and more comfortable in negotiating cultural conflict in the university environment, knowing they have a strong relationship with an insider, who could serve as a model.

It is important to remember/notice that these forms of sponsorship are not as effective without having established a relationship, whether professional or personal, though I would argue that the more personal the relationship, the more effective one can be. Students' literacy narratives demonstrate the importance of relationships that encourage and sponsor academic development.

To ask Hispanic/Latino students to fully assimilate is to ask them to abandon the identity and culture they grew up with and become Americanized even though full assimilation will not mean full acceptance into mainstream dominant American culture. Furthermore, having such expectations homogenizes the institution and further serves to keep individuals out of "our" community.

Sponsorship, on the other hand, opens doors to a different world/culture that cannot always be achieved in the intimidating environment of the classroom or the

professor's office. But demonstrating to students our desire to understand, encourage and assist them will change the perception of an elitist community to an inclusive environment. Brandt says:

Traditional sponsors of African American literacy ask their sponsored to reach deeply into the original sources of American literacy—into human spirituality, solidarity, and citizenship rights. If these ideological contexts for literacy were to be embraced more regularly by schools, workplaces, and other sponsors of literacy, racial equity in access, achievement, and reward for literacy might become more possible. (Brandt 145)

If these are our ideals, we need to show that we are open to establishing a relationship with our students. Students benefit from established ties with instructors who have become mentors. Their relationship extends beyond the stoic teacher and passive student idea of education. This more intimate relationship will make it easier to recognize the students' needs based on performance and open dialogue. Many Latino students are the first in their family to attend college and are, therefore, not familiar with the kind of academic literacy that college-graduated parents might offer. Many times these students are left "on their own," and it is through their own efforts that they find academic advice, it is through their own efforts that they decide on a major and it is through their own efforts that they become involved in both the classroom and the academic social environment. But many students are intimidated or unfamiliar with their new environment and it is through the teacher/student relationship that they will be motivated and encouraged academically and socially. Through this intimate relationship, instructors become advocates for students, are able to connect students into academia without

waiting for them to ask for help. Instructors can introduce or direct the student to groups where they may feel comfortable before the student admit that they feel lonely or homesick. None of this is possible unless instructors establish relationships with their students that grow out of their commitment to students' success.

CHAPTER FOUR

OPENING DIALOGUES: CONVERSATIONS ON THE CULTURE OF POWER

So thoroughly prepared was I for college during my four years of high school that my first two years at the small state university from which I graduated were mostly review... Linda Brodkey

So unprepared was I for college that my performance the first two years at a small Midwestern college seemed like an extension of high school, with low attendance and low grades. I lacked the study skills and academic knowledge necessary to succeed in this new environment. I also encountered social differences in and out of the classroom. Midwestern students could not understand my English and professors who marked my paper with red ink never spoke with me about my writing. It seemed to me that professors and students would flaunt their knowledge in class. For example, on the first day of my freshman English class the professor demonstrated the extent of his vocabulary. He handed a dictionary to a female student in the front row and asked her to point to any highlighted word on any page. He then would spell the word correctly and give its several definitions. The following months were learning moments in and out of class. In class, students would correct my pronunciation of words. Out of class I could not participate in conversations of unfamiliar social and regional topics. I, however, became an English major to continue learning. But it was not until I entered graduate school that I first heard of composition and rhetoric theory. And it was not until my PhD program that I heard of the culture of power.

Studies conducted in predominantly white universities about the negotiation of identity and persistence and performance of minority students continuously argue for a

change in the environment, be it social, physical or pedagogical (Moreno). These studies also demonstrate how negative perceptions affect students' persistence and performance and how the university needs to be aware of minority students' perceptions. By being ethnically/culturally educated/engaged, instructors as Academic Cultural Guides committed to mentoring/sponsoring all students, professors thus create a more welcoming environment in the university that does not continue stigmatizing students based on false expectations and oppressive practices. This chapter aims to demonstrate that having conversation about the culture of power in academia allows students to identify their experience with the culture of power, thus gaining academic cultural capital, such as changing perceptions, transparency of our profession, building vocabulary for further conversations and confidence to negotiate language and identity to succeed in the university.

Before I describe what students can gain from conversations about their confrontation with the culture of power, I want discuss the identity/discourse conflict created by certain academic literacy expectations that hinder literacy development for some Hispanic/Latino students. As Jane Hindman states, “If we want to commit to a literacy that ends oppression, then...[p]erhaps we need to look carefully at our procedures of discourse, the economy driving our discursive practices” (13). As professors we have read the scholarship that argues for or against specialized discourses in our field. Beth Daniell made the argument for theory talk and how it contributes to the academic community:

Since we know that human beings use language to show affiliation with particular groups, why should we expect ourselves, or scholars in our

field, to be any different? As theoretical language proclaims academic allegiances, it establishes membership in a community. Talking and writing, we gain membership in a particular group and thereby define our professional selves. (Daniell 137-138)

Thus,

Engaging in theory talk brings status... Our English department colleagues seldom care if we follow Peter Elbow, Linda Flower, or Kenneth Bruffee in our composition classes, but they do expect us to use theoretical language appropriately. (Daniell 133-134)

Stuckey also claims the validity of a discourse community comes from the social/political affiliations within the community itself:

A theory of literacy is, thus, a theory of society, of social relationships; and the validity of a theory of literacy derives from the actual lives of the people who make the society. It is not the case that literacy provided the key to understanding the connections of a people; it is the case that literacy provides a view from which to survey the history and future of social formation. (Stuckey 64)

Both Daniell and Stuckey make the same claim. However, if professors only take this stand in their practice, they are performing the duties of a gatekeeper and using literacy, as Stuckey later describes, as "a system of oppression that works against entire societies as well as against certain groups within given populations and against individual people" (64).

When I first read Bartholomae's "Inventing the University," I could not get over my uncomfortable feeling and frustration at the way his words did not include me in the conversation. Bartholomae, an academic, identifies himself as part of the academic community and, therefore, protects the interest of the discipline. It appeared to me that the expectations he has of his students disregards all students' backgrounds. I was disturbed by the fact that his statements do not take into account cultural differences. He says:

The student *has to* appropriate (or be appropriated by) a specialized discourse, and *he has to do this* as though he were easily and comfortably one with his audience, as though he were a member of the academy or an historian or an anthropologist or an economist; *he has to invent* the university by *assembling* and *mimicking* its language while finding some compromise between idiosyncrasy, a personal history, on the one hand, and the requirements of convention, the history of a discipline, on the other hand. *He must learn to speak our language*. Or he must dare to speak it or to carry off the bluff, since speaking and writing will most certainly be required long before the skill is "learned."

(Bartholomae 590) (Emphasis mine)

Unfortunately, because minority students' identities are not often affiliated with this particular discourse community, they do not have the specialized language or cultural background, thus are considered illiterate. Assigned this devalued status, they are then

denied the value attached to academic success and all that label might bring. The cycle of oppression builds in this way.

The biggest obstacle in meeting Bartholomae's expectations is not the students' ability to learn the discourse but instead the discourse/identity conflict created by such a demand. As discussed in chapter one, history has stigmatized relationships that perpetuate negative perceptions. Students' identities and thus perceptions, discussed in chapter two, differ from what many professors would expect. Therefore, holding such an elitist view of the discourse community and placing the responsibility on the student to find ways to enter on their own comes from an ideology of superiority, an elitism that is oppressive and normalized.

Bartholomae says "students need to speak our language" (589), thus it is easy to identify Bartholomae as a member of the discourse community. But neglecting the identity/discourse conflict created by Bartholomae's approach to education leaves the impression of an elitist individual protecting the interest of the community, such as a gatekeeper. It is also evident that the responsibility is placed on students without considering the discourse/identity conflict it creates. Many professors, like Bartholomae, believe minority students who do not identify with the specialized discourse community have to learn to speak, as he puts it, "as a person of status or privilege...in the privileged language of university discourse" (593). And he continues:

If my students are going to write for me by knowing who I am—and if this means more than knowing my prejudices, psyching me out—it means knowing what I know; it means having the knowledge of a professor of English. They have, then, to know what I know and how I know what I

know (the interpretive schemes that define the way I would work out the problems I set for them); they have to learn to write what I would write or to offer up some approximation of that discourse. (594)

The problem I see is that there are professors who believe it is the responsibility of minority students to know and to identify with professors in a specialized discourse community. Putting the responsibility on students is a form of maintaining the borders of the academic discourse community, permitting only those who meet academic expectations without a discourse/identity conflict to enter. However, as Barron states, "Our current *cultura* doesn't support schools' expectations of working to be the best, to be number one, to fight for the A, to impress the instructor, partly because those values are aligned with *presumidos que se creen*" (Barron 18); these are self-interested and elitist tendencies that many Hispanic/Latino students are not brought up with. This can explain silence in the part of these students even if they know the answer to the question.

If members of the same community argue for a specialized discourse that establishes affiliation (Daniell, Bartholomae) and others argue that the specialized discourse is an elitist design meant to ostracize those outside the group (Stuckey), how can professors not see the oppression the identity/discourse conflict that arises from Bartholomae's expectations?

In no way do I discredit Standard English in American education; but, instead I point out the oppressive nature of placing the responsibility of academic expectations and standards on Hispanic/Latino students who are not affiliated with the culture of power. Lisa Delpit's comments on the matter support what I believe all educators must understand:

Students must be *taught* the codes needed to participate fully in the mainstream of American life, not by being forced to attend to hollow, inane, decontextualized subskills, but rather within the context of meaningful communicative endeavors; that they must be allowed the resource of the teacher's expert knowledge, while being helped to acknowledge their own "expertness" as well; and that even while students are assisted in learning the culture of power, they must also be helped to learn about the arbitrariness of those codes and about the power relationships they represent. (585)

Delpit's phrases, "allowed the resources," "acknowledge their own 'expertness,'" and "they must also be helped to learn," differ greatly from the word choice of Bartholomae. Both Bartholomae and Delpit argue the importance of presenting the culture of power to students but Bartholomae puts the responsibility on students as well as presenting only one "necessary" culture that does not take into consideration the diversity many in the university want to promote.

If professors want to change the climate of the university to be more inclusive and diverse, the university must stop demanding/expecting Hispanic/Latino students to assimilate. Instead, professors need to develop their engagement by adapting a different approach to advocate and provide access to marginalized students. Examples of this engagement are the conversations professors and students *can* have in which the confrontation with the culture of power is discussed.

Ever since I wrestled with Bartolomae's text, I was interested in Delpits' idea of displaying the culture of power to empower students. Reflecting on my experience in,

and perceptions of, higher education, and knowing other Hispanic/Latino have felt like I have, I saw it important to display the culture of the institution to the participants of this study in order to understand the benefits of such conversations.

While I used literacy narratives as a way to learn from lived experience of the six participants in the first part of the case study, I chose to present them with Bartholomae's and Delpit's text and have individual interviews over the reading. I saw this approach as a way of indirectly presenting the culture of power (that is, published professors as figures of authority participating in an exclusive discourse community).

Displaying the Culture of Power

In order to gain student's perspectives on Bartholomae's and Delpit's text I asked them to read, without me explaining the text to them or talking about the text. Instead, I stuck to the interview questions (see Appendix B) approved by the IRB in order to get unfiltered responses from the participants. I expected students to struggle through the reading of Delpit and Bartholomae. I also expected students to resist Bartholomae's tone of writing or reject the expectation of writing the way he would write. Asking students to read Delpit, I had hoped all students would experience a moment of revelation about their previous experience in the classroom. I thought they would recognize those moments in which they had encountered the culture of power and realize how that moment could have been negotiated differently.

However, as stated in the introduction, the fact that I am faculty of color may have allowed some students to speak more freely than they may have if the study was conducted by a professor not of their ethnic origin. I believed I would find the culture of power at play in students' initial response/reaction to the text and wondered if these texts

might change students' perceptions of the university. I describe this case study as an indirect method of displaying the culture of power because in order to do this directly I would have had to establish a relationship with the students individually. But for the sake of this study I was not allowed by IRB to know the student, personally or academically, to avoid any conflict of interest.

The individual conversations were held in my office after students had read the texts. The U.S. Hispanic students seemed less interested and quiet. This group of students seemed less engaged with the reading or found it too difficult. The International Latino students were generally engaged, motivated and encouraged to have such conversations.

During the six individual conversations, students demonstrated that they were aware of Bartholomae's expectation of having to write what the teachers want; teacher expectations differ in every class. Students also knew that these expectations generally do not have cultural, language and identity differences in mind. As one student put it, "they [professors] teach for them [the White culture] and not for our culture" (Eva). Omar agreed and said, "Sometimes you could see it in their faces...They don't give you an opportunity." Eva also said that reading Bartholomae gave her access to instructors' knowledge that would "help [her] meet more of teacher's expectations now that they are clear."

Gilberto's perspective of the university changed because he realized he was not the only one who felt the way he felt. Gilberto knew students "give them [professors] what they want not what you [students] want." He also identified moments when students were asked to revise according to professors' expectations without having been explained

the expectations of professors. In those moments, students are encountering the culture of power and struggle because they have not been told the rules of the culture of power.

Transparency/or Inviting Students into Conversation

Some students' perspectives were altered because the articles themselves provide a view into the discourse of our discipline. Omar said reading Bartholomae and Delpit in a writing course would have been "more helpful than reading Shakespeare or Frost because it has more meaning that I can apply" and "its shows the entire picture of education."

However, some perspectives did not change but the articles gave room to begin a conversation. Veronica thought the reading was nothing new to her, but added that teacher's expectations are questionable when dealing with ESL students. "Teachers need to be patient," she said. Teachers have higher expectations and she struggles to think of the words Americans would use. Because of high expectations she feels professors expect little of ESL students based on spoken literacy. Because education in her country is free (and very expensive in the US), she sees the culture of power as a way to maintain class structure, "by power structure and access of education." She stated, "If I work I can reach middle class level." These standards, placed on all students, have been established by society to set an example of higher education. And I can not help but think of Foucault, who claimed educational systems are ways of controlling knowledge and power. Veronica was able to give an example of this maintenance of knowledge and power (an example of students' experiencing gatekeeping in other areas of the university due to language, not only in English classes). Veronica wanted to get into a math class but, based on her perception, was told by "an arrogant professor" that she needed to learn the

English language first. She was determined to enroll in a math class because "math is the same in whatever language." The second professor she asked allowed her in the class, and she did well.

Identifying and Building Vocabulary

Having these conversations provides students with a venue to identify their experience. Andrea said, "I couldn't identify it before but now I realize we all need to change." Omar also said reading Delpit and Bartholomae, "changes my vocabulary." These conversations demonstrate that students are aware of the culture of power that surrounds them, but they do not have the vocabulary to gain access into the conversation of the culture of power with those who are in positions of power. Omar adds, "I went to a White academy for high school so going to a White college I thought it was going to be more of the same. But I noticed little things of how people see me when they hear my accent." The reading has made him "more aware of what I have noticed entering a white college."

Gaining Confidence

Another trend I observed in this study was how students who recognized the culture of power came across as confident in their previous knowledge of its existence, though they lacked the vocabulary to identify it. "I already changed," Andrea said, "more professors need to read this so they can change." Andrea also said she will continue to do what she has been doing because it seemed to help her get through different courses. Omar also gained confidence in reading these texts and decided to "speak out in class no matter what."

Final Thoughts

A recurring point noted during this case study was that some systems of education, or cultures of power, are undemocratic when expectations, such as Bartholomae's choice of words indicates, are placed on minority students who do not identify with the culture of power. It is problematic when the identity/discourse conflict minority students encounter is not taken into consideration. It is oppressive when minority students have to negotiate their identity/discourse conflict without the academic cultural capital that educators can provide by displaying the culture of power. When the culture of power is displayed through conversations, Hispanic/Latino students are given the vocabulary to identify those encounters. And being able to recognize future moments will help them negotiate around those obstacles. Having conversations with students begins a dialogue where we as professors learn from their struggles and can then adjust to meet our cultural responsibility of educating our students in our area while engaging the culture of power together.

Ira Shor states that "students of all ages need adult coalitions to help them win language rights to free speech and to social criticism" (3). Without this adult support, or sponsorship, Hispanic/Latino students do not have proactive advocates in the university. Sponsorship is needed to advocate for students' literacy and identity development within the university. Professors should not want to restrict or reform cultural differences in order to maintain homogeny/hegemony, but instead foster cultural differences in order to create a more accurate representation of the present and future ethnic, racial and cultural diversity of the community.

Critical literacy is a way of sponsoring students' literacy in the classroom because, as Shor states, it questions "power relations, discourses, and identities in a world not yet finished, just, or humane" (1). Professors can create an environment that incorporates critical consciousness into classroom conversations in relation to social environment of mainstream society and how it plays into the culture of the university. For example, they can help students question representations of minorities in media and academic expectations. Within this same exploration, the topic of identity can be dissected to investigate the relevance of different levels of acculturation. In doing so, "critical literacy thus challenges the status quo in an effort to discover alternative paths for self and social development" (Shor 1). Because writing involves "questioning ["roles and beliefs offered by social situation"], searching for new connections, building ideas that may be in conflict with accepted ways of thinking and acting" (Brooke as qtd in Shor 13), then writing should permit Hispanic/Latino students to rethink social/cultural injustices that exist in society, more specifically, in the university.

Sponsorship plays out in the classroom through critical literacy by "foregrounding the personal and the social as the subject matters Dewey called for in his reference to 'vital impressions and convictions'" (Shor 8). As Shor states, "Critical literacy can be thought of as a social practice in itself and as a tool for the study of other social practices. That is, critical literacy is reflective and reflexive: Language use and education are social practices used to critically study all social practices including the social practices of language use and education" (8), therefore legitimizing different social practices and language uses that can be accomplished by re-imagining the "imagined community" as mentioned by Matsuda.

What is evident in the literacy narratives and interviews of these students is that their lived experience demonstrates the continuing clash between their culture/language/identity and academic institutions. What is also relevant is how students are able to describe moments of this clash but unable to define what they are confronting. What is beneficial to learn from Hispanic/Latino students' lived experience is the profit of sponsorship in their lives, whether it is during their early literacy development or during their transition into college from American high schools or from other countries. These literacy narratives and conversations also demonstrate that students are able to think critically about their encounters with the culture of power as well as their literacy development.

We should not continue creating an exclusive elitist environment and claim to practice democratic pedagogy. Placing the responsibility solely on Hispanic/Latino students perpetuates the maintenance of the culture of power. The climate of the university will not change through student body organizations or pedagogical theories alone. The biggest catalyst for change comes from the ability and agreement of the professor in power to participate, as an Academic Cultural Guide, in conversations with all students about the culture of power. As Academic Cultural Guides, professors can then change Hispanic/Latino students' negative perceptions of the university. Hispanic/Latino students will not know we are changing the university without us first showing who we are. Veronica understands "there are teachers who care and those that don't, those that help and those that don't. It is nice when people will help and encourage you, understanding where you are coming from and how you are doing."

EPILOGUE:

SPONSORSHIP STRATEGIES

Conducting this research for the dissertation has strengthened my resolve to become an effective Academic Cultural Guide by continuing to develop my pedagogical practices in the first- year writing classroom. Many new students struggle and become frustrated when they encounter cultural resistance in their new environment. Felix Padilla's *The Struggle of Latino/Latina University Students* best illustrates my belief that some kind of cultural representation is needed:

Today's class meeting was most revealing of Latino/a students' ongoing frustration with attempting to find, within the University environment, sources of information with which to readily identify. Even in cases when works are on Latinos/as and by Latinos/as, the language used by writers, the language of the different academic disciplines, is alienating for Latino/a students who mostly come from working-class backgrounds. Not able to puncture the difficult idiom of academic jargon, Latino/a students find the intellectual journey for self and social realization doubly difficult and unfair. While not giving up, they feel cheated by their own "people" for selling out to the establishment, for not considering the academic needs and interests for Latino/a students, for not working to change the practices of the very same institution where Latino/a students have been relegated to the status of second-class citizens at best. For others, trying to read and understand conventional academic works make them feel inadequate, incompetent, like not belonging to the University's academic world. This

self-doubt can be seriously destructive when you consider the many years of academic and personal frustration Latino/a students have suffered.

(118)

With an Academic Cultural Guide to sponsor their academic literacy development, students have a resource that encourages and motivates success and persistence. I feel that it is my cultural responsibility to be able to teach students the skills and knowledge that will empower them to negotiate language and identity and give them hope in their struggles within the university. I need to remain accessible to them as someone who has stood tests they now face; someone who understands their needs and struggles and not someone who has made it past their level and left everyone behind.

Making academic culture transparent, not only to Latino students but to all students who are entering the new culture of the university, contributes to assisting students negotiate their own identity and language for academic success. Without someone helping students understand that which exists outside their immediate surrounding, they may not see the benefit of the liberal arts education universities offer. The three aspects I have changed in my practice are first, I establish a transparent relationship with students, secondly, I promote students' critical thinking about their own literacy development through their literacy narratives, and third, I foster a relationship outside of the classroom to accommodate students' needs.

Establish a Transparent Relationship

Because informants in my case study expressed fear and intimidation as a contributor of their negative perceptions of professors, perceptions that led some students to think professors teach for an established community that does not include difference, I

have attempted to connect with students early in the semester. As an Academic Cultural Guide, it is necessary for me to prevent any stigmatized relationship between students and professors by establishing a transparent relationship with students. I not only cover the syllabus on the first day of class, but I try to establish a transparent relationship by sharing my teaching philosophy so that students get an idea of my approach to the classroom and also my views on the types of relationship I want us to have. (Though I have not handed out my teaching statement, I am considering handing it out or maybe including a version of it in my syllabus.) I've found that speaking to students about my philosophy and teaching practice creates a sense of openness with students. Some of the topics I touch on lightly during those early conversations are the relationship between power and authority and the negotiation of language and identity of individuals who enter new or different environments. Spending time talking about my academic self allows students to inquire into who I am. I spend part of the time talking to students about Freire's liberating pedagogy and the banking system of education. I explain how my approach will work to meet the goals stated in the course description and my syllabus.

Since I spend some time in class talking about my teaching, students sometimes ask questions about teaching practices. During this time, I also present Lisa Delpit's five aspects of the culture of power. I explain to them that there are cultures of power in all areas of our lives. As an example, I ask students to reflect on how they speak of a party they had gone to that weekend to different members of their family, people from their church, individuals in their classrooms and figures in the university. This conversation allows me to address rhetorical conventions of audience awareness as we talk about the private/public voice used within these different locations. I explain to them that what they

are doing is negotiating their identity and language within the culture of power in order to succeed in whatever purpose they have with their given audience.

Promote Critical Thinking about Students' Literacy Narratives

This study has also contributed to the way I use literacy narratives in the classroom. Though I am still developing ways to promote students' thinking about their experience, I find what I am doing helps students develop different views as they revise their drafts. Susan DeRosa, claims:

To challenge prescriptive ideas about literacy, writers need to become active participants in the construction of their literacy development, and concepts about literacy need to be reconfigured by the writers themselves. By expanding their definitions of literacy, students can understand literacy as a fluid construct, one that is continuous, contextually and socially informed, and dependent on a particular rhetorical situation. (2)

By reconstructing moments of their lived experience, students attempt to participate in conversations about literacy development. Students are able to “recognize the potential for change in their literacy development” while they “question previous ways of thinking about their literacy as a static event” and learn to see “literacy as knowledge-making practices” (3).

I approach literacy narratives by asking students to choose a moment from their literate lives and draft out a short version that will be developed later on. After they have drafted their text, I ask them to post their first draft online on a discussion board so that other students can respond with questions. I ask them to respond to 3 – 5 drafts, depending on the class schedule. I also ask students to read more than the ones they

responded to and most students have shared with me that they enjoyed reading others' accounts that were similar and different from their own experience.

While they are responding to each others' drafts, I have students read excerpts of published authors (Richard Rodriguez and Linda Brodkey) as a way to see their literacy narratives as a conversation alongside other narratives. We then discuss the different styles of writing and any connections students can make with their reading of these texts. We discuss issues of class, race, public/private voice, language and education, assimilation, topics we had discussed on the first few days of the semester and any other topic students want to address. I then ask students to reflect on the student literacy narratives they had read and to think of the topics raised by their peers.

During the conferences, I ask students what direction they plan to take with their revision. During this time students talk about the underlying issues they wish to address and also how to develop their reconstruction of events. For example, one student wrote about his development in a speech class. He shared how early in the class he had fainted and continued to dread public speaking. It was not until his last speech in which he delivered it with a fake British accent that he felt in control of his performance and the audience. Though in his first draft he ends by explicating his success as coming from hard work and perseverance, in our conference we talked about the manner in which he presents that last event and the way he used the word performance. Through our conversation we talked about the importance of that word and that section of his narrative. In later drafts he ends with a reflection section where he recognizes the importance of how he was able change his language and identity and how it is necessary for him to change them in different situations. When students recognize this concept as

this student has, they seem to take up their responsibility of their literacy development, finding ways of negotiating their language and identity. Other topics I've encountered in such conversations were of sponsorship, mentorship, perseverance, and identity negotiation. Students demonstrate that they can go beyond telling a story and enter into a conversation on literacy and learning.

Many times students want to revise their text to do more than tell a story. Students want their literacy narratives to participate in conversation with published text, addressing their point of view by reconstructing moments where they developed their current attitudes toward literacy. Though I devote just over two weeks of class time to working on literacy narratives, I plan to expand this section, including articles and other readings about the topics discussed in some of the students' literacy narratives. This way, students will be able to incorporate secondary sources into a reflection portion of their later drafts.

Build on the Relationship Outside of the Classroom to Accommodate Students' Needs

Because the most effective sponsorship in my study seemed to be outside of the classroom, I am more inclined to cancel a class meeting for individual conferences with students. Working in the Writing Center has also contributed to understanding different ways of speaking with and listening to students as students and I conference on their texts. Many Writing Centers have adopted a strategy of establishing a collaborative environment. Similarly, I want my students to know that when we talk about their drafts, we work through concerns each of us may have.

But many times students' performance may be affected by things outside of the classroom or the office. Having established a relationship that moves away from the traditional teacher/student roles, I have tried to meet students' needs that at times have nothing to do with my classroom practice or assignments. For example, I had a returning student in her late 20's who had failed all her classes one semester several years ago and dropped out. The semester she was in the class, she was trying to be admitted back into school. She came to my office to discuss her first draft, which I had commented on. During that time she seemed to be very uncomfortable. She said that because she had failed all her classes many years ago she felt she was unable to do the work. When she began to cry, she apologized and said she felt overwhelmed with personal issues at home while trying to be readmitted into the university. I tried to be productive and talk to her about my comments on her draft but she would become upset again. Though I only had a half hour to meet with each student, there was an open spot between our meeting and the next. I suggested to her that we walk to a local coffee shop off campus to get some fresh air and talk about other things besides her work. Our walk took less than ten minutes but because we were in public and no longer having to focus on her text, we talked about the things that were upsetting her. When we arrived at the coffee shop and got our drinks we continued our conversation. After a short while I suggested we return to her text there at the coffee house. In that time we were able to work on her text and form a connection.

Establishing this type of connection helps students to know me on a more personal level and allows them to feel comfortable with me. They then are able to converse and ask questions in class or after class. In many of my teaching evaluations, students express that they enjoyed the class, felt comfortable with me as their instructor

because I was able to connect with students, and felt they learned most because of the individual attention they received during our conferences. Though the constraints of academic life may limit our time and energy, holding office hours outside of the office (such as in a coffee shop) may help establish personal connections with students without requiring more time.

These are only a few of the teaching practices I have developed or expanded as a result of what I learned from the students in this study. The most important thing I have learned from this study is that it is very important to establish a relationship with students. Academic Cultural Guides need to continue learning from students to establish forms of sponsorships that will be most effective in their institutions.

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APENDIX A OTHER PARTICIPANTS LITERACY NARRATIVES

Veronica's Literacy Narrative:

Date: 11-20-05

My Learning Experience

I was born in Entre Rios, Argentina, in a small town called Villa Libertador San Martin. This town had two big entities, a hospital and a university, that were the mayor labor resources of the town. My mother, a Paraguayan immigrant that first went to Argentina when she was 14 years old to study, worked in the hospital as a cytologist. My father, born and raised in Argentina with a strong influence of European costumes inherited from his parents, had his own business. Together, my parents, lived a middle class life, and worked hard to build their own house and provide for my education-- or what they thought was adequate and in their ranged-- which included private schools, piano lessons, and English classes.

Elementary School

When I was 5 years old, I started Pre-school. Even though was not obligatory, my mother believed that it set a good foundation for first grade. I do not remember much except for a couple of things that made an impression on me, like the puppets, every Friday, and the great room in which our activities took place because it had a lot of games and colorful pictures.

First grade was very exiting, I had classes from 8:00am until noon, the day was divided in hours, and each hour was for a different class. For my literature class I started to use note books and pencils of different colors to write letters that with time formed

sentences. Phrases became more complicated and the words that we, as a class, did not understand we spelled it. If we came across a word that was too long and difficult, besides spelling it, the teacher broke it in parts; we repeated the word until we could say it all together. I also had a calligraphy notebook in which I practice the proper way to write each letter. In this segment of the class the teacher drew the correct way in which we had to write down either vocal or consonant, uppercase or lowercase letter. In specific days of the week the teacher made us practice our reading. My homework consisted in calligraphy, reading, math, and poetry. I remember doing some homework with my mother and some with my father, depending in homework, for example, calligraphy and math I did it with my father, reading and poetry was with my mother so she could teach me how to expressed and emphasized adequately.

In second and third grade I started to learn the different rules for grammar; also math became harder. I believed that the only problem I encounter was in reading. I had a distraction problem. I saw the first letter of a word and said the first word that came to my mind; obviously it did not make any sense. These kinds of mistake continue throughout the years, raising the frustration levels of my mother and teachers. I still do experience the same problem that is why I try to pay attention when I read or read the text twice.

At the end of the third grade my mother had the opportunity to come to the United States for training in cytology at the Virginia Hospital University. I was eight years old, and I did not know a word in English. My mother and I stayed with my aunt Isabel, my mother's oldest sister, and her husband Charles. Later due to a distance problem, my mother lived in the dorm of the university during the week and came to my aunt's house

during the weekends. During the week I attended a Kiddy College. At the beginning, I did not understand anything, so I stayed in the babies' room. We arrived to the States in the winter, after Christmas, so most of the kids of my age were in school during the morning and part of the afternoon. I used to watch them through a window, when they got out of school, because I was very timid. Somehow I was introduced to a group of kids of my age and I started to learn English. Three month later, I was talking in English without any problem; nobody thought I was from Argentina. I was able to talk without any accent. In the house, my uncle was the only one who did not speak Spanish, so I thought that it was a good idea if we did not speak Spanish at all --beside my mother needed to brush up her English also-- so we did. I never attended school here in the States, even though the plans were to attend as an observer, which did not happen. I lived in the States for only 9 month, enough time to read somewhat and speak quiet well, but I never learned grammar rules.

Returning to Argentina, I had to remember my language. I had problems recollecting words and putting phrases together, that lasted only a couple of weeks. In that time I met a girl from the States. We spoke only English. My mother spoke to me in English all the time regardless of were we were. The only way I was practicing my Spanish was in school or with my relatives. I started to have problems in school with my spelling. For some reason I knew the rules, but if I was not concentrated in what I was doing I had terrible spelling and grammar errors. Other then that and I did not have any problem with my speech or writing, even so my brad vocabulary helped me expressed my thoughts in a way that many teachers did not expect. For some reason a year after my arrival, I decided to stop talking in English, especially in public. I was embarrassed

because every time I spoke in English people looked at me and I was not comfortable. Around that time my friend from the States left, so I lost the daily practice.

High School

In High school, I decided to move to another Province, so I went away from my house. The only chance to speak English was when my mother called, every Sunday, and sometimes I was not alone so we spoke in English to keep our conversation private. Obviously with time I started to lose the language, but that did not reflect on my English class in any way because I always had good grades. Also the materials were pretty easy for me.

University

Years went by and I did not care about my level of English until, I started working in places where the knowledge of English was more than necessary. Even then, my level of English was enough to go by with whatever the task was. So beside learning English in the University, I started looking for some private schools, where they placed me in higher levels, just because I could speak but in the area of grammar I was completely lost.

When I was 24 years old my mother offered me the possibility to come to United States and learn the language while having the experience of studying here. So a couple of months later I was on my way to Lincoln Nebraska for that reason. When I arrived to Union College my level of English-- compare to other international students that were in the same position as I was-- was not bad because I was able to register by

myself and communicate with some people and they were able to understand me without problem, or so I thought. ESL classes started and I was placed in level 1B, beginning level. Ironically, in the first semester I was speaking more Spanish than English. I isolated myself from the students that spoke Spanish, that helped me a lot, and my English improved significantly.

The problems that I experienced now, with my level of English, are several. Starting with my speech, I get really nervous when I have to talk in public, to a teacher that I do not know, or if for some reason I have to ask for directions. On the contrary, when I feel comfortable and secure I can speak without thinking and organizing my thoughts. Also, if I speak more Spanish than English, it is hard for me to focus and have the right word or used the right tens, and vise versa. Every time I write, I have problems with my grammar because I do not pay enough attention; even though, I have learned the rules and pass the TOEFL. Another thing is that when I write I tend to replaced words that I am thinking for words that are similar but with a total different meaning and I only realized my mistake when people point them to me.

Eva's Literacy Narrative:

I was born in Texas, in Huston, my parents were from Peru. When I was two we moved to Lincoln so I don't remember Texas at all and my parents grew up teaching me both English and Spanish at the same time. I don't remember learning either of them I just grew up my parents speak Spanish at home, that's all they speak. They just put me in Holland high I started kindergarten it is the Adventist school that's how I started and it's all English there but I knew English. I really don't remember too much from when I was little. We learned Spanish because my parents talked to us in Spanish all the time, my parents had already taken English classes by that time. That's how we picked it up; we picked it up from watching television and friends. But I don't remember any of it. My parents just talked to us both English and Spanish.

High school is when we began getting into writing mainly writing narratives and I never really had a hard time with it. I always went well English I'm really fluent in it and everything I never had any trouble with my English. I don't like writing and stuff like that but I write pretty well. The only class I didn't like in high school was when we did speeches public speaking but that's because I get nervous. We really didn't do too much of writing in high school I think we probably should have done more but they didn't teach us that much.

APPENDIX B

CASE STUDY ASSIGNMENT AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Writing Assignment:

Tell me how your literacy developed. Write a short literacy narrative that touches on your early literacy development, your literacy experience in high school and how it plays into your college experience. (3-7 pages in Times New Roman font 12 point font size).

First Interview Questions (to be asked after the narrative is written):

1. Tell me about your first year writing class. What was/is it like? Did/do you notice certain dynamics in your writing classroom?
2. What challenges have you faced as a writer in first year writing? What do you struggle with? Please explain.
3. What is the difference between college writing and high school writing? Is college writing easier than high school writing or is it more difficult than you thought it would be?
4. What are the demands of college writing that you had not anticipated? How do you feel about that?
5. How does the way you use literacy outside the university affect the work you are able to do within the university?
6. How does the way you speak tell individuals who you are? Can you give examples?
7. Does the way you speak change throughout the day? If so, then why? Can you give example?

8. What would be a good thing or bad thing about learning academic discourse? Can you explain?
9. What other things would you like to share regarding your experience with writing your literacy narrative?

Second Interview Questions (to be asked after reading Lisa Delpits' "The Silenced Dialogue: Power and Pedagogy in Educating Other People's Children" and David Bartholomae's "Inventing the University," probably 1-2 weeks later):

1. After reading Delpit's and Bartholomae's article, has your perspective of the classroom changed? If so, can you explain.
2. Has understanding the reading changed your expectations of the university? If so, can you explain?
3. How do you think understanding the reading will affect your performance in the classroom?
4. How will it affect your performance as a writer?
5. What other things would you like to share regarding the reading?
6. Would you like to share some thoughts regarding this research experience?