

Stony Brook University



OFFICIAL COPY

The official electronic file of this thesis or dissertation is maintained by the University Libraries on behalf of The Graduate School at Stony Brook University.

© All Rights Reserved by Author.

Cultural and Language Change of Spanish Native Speakers Living in the USA

A Thesis Presented

by

Blanca Estela Calderón

to

The Graduate School

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in

Hispanic Languages and Linguistics

Stony Brook University

August/ 2016

Stony Brook University

The Graduate School

Blanca Estela Calderón

We, the thesis committee for the above candidate for the
Master of Arts degree, hereby recommend
acceptance of this thesis.

Dr. Lilia Delfina Ruiz-Debbe
Director of Spanish Language Program
Department of Hispanic Languages and Literature

Dr. Elena Davidiak – Second Reader
Lecturer
Department of Hispanic Language and Literature

This thesis is accepted by the Graduate School

Nancy Goroff
Interim Dean of the Graduate School

Abstract of the Thesis

Cultural and Language Change of Spanish Native Speakers Living in the USA

by

Blanca Estela Calderón

Master of Arts

in

Hispanic Languages and Linguistics

Stony Brook University

2016

Beginning with the reality that the participants in this study arrived to this country as children and were in their early stages of acquisition of their first language and culture, this paper seeks to find some of the factors that can influence the different language abilities for nine bilingual speakers. With a range of researches serving as a foundation, some of the factors that will be explored in this research are: age, education, profession, past and present language use, bilingual community factors, psychological reasons affecting attitude toward the Spanish language, cultural awareness and cultural identity.

Table of Contents

Thesis Title Presentation Page	i
Thesis Acceptance Page	ii
Abstract	iii
Table of Contents	
List of Tables	vi
List of Abbreviations	vii
Introduction	viii
1 Chapter 1: Bilingualism and Language Acquisition	1
1.2 Spanish People Living in the United States	5
1.3 Hispanics in the United States	9
1.4 Language Maintenance and Language Shift	10
2 Chapter 2: Bilingualism and Factors that Influence Language Acquisition and Learning...	13
2.1 Bilinguals and Competence	18
2.2 Bilingual Development	22
3 Chapter 3: Methodology	28
3.1 Data Collection	29
3.1.1 Interview	29
3.1.2 Survey	30
3.1.3 Short Movie Clip	31
3.1.4 Writing Sample	31
3.2 The Participants	31
3.2.1 Group 1	32
3.2.2 Group 2	33
3.2.3 Group 3	34
4 Chapter 4: Data Analysis	40
4.1 Data I	41
4.1.1 Initial Interview Group 1	41
4.1.2 Initial Interview Group 2	43

4.1.3 Initial Interview Group 3	46
4.2 Data II	50
4.2.1 Survey Group 1	50
4.2.2 Survey Group 2	54
4.2.3 Survey Group 3	59
4.3 Data III	64
4.3.1 Movie Clip Group 1	64
4.3.2 Movie Clip Group 2	65
4.3.3 Movie Clip Group 3	67
4.4 Data IV	68
4.4.1 Writing Sample Group 1	69
4.4.2 Writing Sample Group 2	70
4.4.3 Writing Sample Group 3	72
4.5 Conclusions by Group	73
4.5.1 Group 1 Conclusions	73
4.5.2 Group 2 Conclusions	74
4.5.3 Group 3 Conclusions	75
5 Chapter 5: Final Discussion	77
6 Bibliography	82

List of Figures/Tables/Illustrations

Table 1 Background Information Group 1	37
Table 1A Background Information Group 2	38
Table 1B Background Information Group 3	39
Table 2 Self-Assessment for English Proficiency Group 1	52
Table 2A Self-Assessment for Spanish Proficiency Group 1	52
Table 3 Self-Assessment for English Proficiency Group 2	56
Table 3A Self-Assessment for Spanish Proficiency Group 2	57
Table 4 Self-Assessment for English Proficiency Group 3	62
Table 4A Self-Assessment for Spanish Proficiency Group 3	62

List of Abbreviations

U. = University

US., U.S. = United States

EE.UU. = Estados Unidos (United States)

gouv. = Gouvernement (Government)

qc. = Québec

ca. = Canada

NYSED = New York State Education Department

INS = Immigration and Naturalization Service

CDC = Center for Disease Control

ESL = English as a Second Language

ENL = English as a New Language

TESOL = Teach English of Speakers of other Language

L1 = Language 1 (or first language, or native language)

L2 = Language 2 (or second language)

Introduction

This study seeks to find the language and cultural change of nine bilingual participants, who arrived to the United States as children and grew up in communities, where their language and culture was nurtured by family members, friends, and others. At the beginning of the study there were several questions to be answered; questions like: (1) how did the age of arrival contribute to the loss or maintenance of the participant's native Language? (2) Did the fact that some of the participants received formal elementary education in their native country help or not with their native language maintenance (3) Did their level of education determine their level of knowledge of the Spanish language? (4) Was their Spanish culture preserved or did these participants exhibit some changes and adaptations of their newly adopted country?

Before obtaining the answers to those questions, it was necessary to take a journey of discovery. Many different factors played an important role in the language and cultural changes that these nine participants encountered as they became permanent residents in a country that had many differences with the one they left behind; differences in language, culture, and people in general. For a child who is not familiar with the language and culture of the United States it could be overwhelming at first, but as time passes their memories of their native land become faded and changes start happening. These changes were the driving force of this research.

It was very significant to delineate the history of bilingualism in the United States, because although the participants might not have been exposed to the hardships that Spanish speakers suffered in the past, it was relevant to the topic of bilingualism. It was important to bring awareness to some of the unpleasant circumstances that people like union leader for migrant workers Cesar Chávez encountered in School, or the plight of hundreds of thousands of citizens of the United States, that because of their Spanish cultural background were sent out of this country and relocated to Mexico. These are just a few incidents that in one way or another continue to influence the way Spanish people living in the United States are seen.

This research work consists of five chapters. Chapter I starts with the definition of who is a bilingual speaker. Followed by the process of becoming bilingual, how it happens and what are some of the reasons why a person becomes bilingual. After that there are some examples of the disadvantage of languages that are not considered standard and occupy a lower status in the country where they are spoken. Here as well some of the reasons why a person becomes bilingual are explored. Data about the number of speakers of other languages living in the United States is presented in this chapter. With the large influx of people of different backgrounds, a historical line is traced to bring into perspective of how Spanish people first became part of the United States, the treatment that they received once they lost their land, followed by examples of current discriminations that Spanish people still experience here in the US. To demonstrate some of the progress that Spanish people have made in the field of politics an up to date list of representatives in congress and senators is presented here. Spanish people living in the U.S. come from many different countries, a breakdown of the different Spanish population and the states where some of them reside is provided for a quick guide. At the end of the chapter, some of the factors that could influence language maintenance or language shift are carefully examined.

Chapter II starts with some of the factors that can influence acquisition of a second language. General overviews of some of the theories of second language acquisition are introduced. The effect that environmental, social, and communication interactions have in the acquisition of a second language is discussed as well. Bilingual speakers have been known to produce certain errors during the acquisition of a second language, and because of that, code switching and code mixing are considered in this study. Lastly in this chapter there is an introduction of heritage speakers; who they are and how they are classified according to their level of functionality.

Chapter III covers the design of this research. An explanation of how the participants were selected and grouped, followed by the initial interview questions that were asked to all the participants. A survey was given to be completed by the participants in order to collect more information needed to evaluate the participant's language, culture, level of education, and other important information. A video clip depicting the suffering of young Spanish children making the trip alone from their native country in order to relocate to the United States was selected. The goal was to find the connection between the participants and the main character of the video clip. Questions related to the video clip were asked immediately after the participants watched the movie clip. The participants were asked to provide a writing sample in Spanish, in order to analyze their writing skill in their native language. A description of all the participants and their assigned group is provided in this chapter, with charts that provide a quick glance of all the participants.

Chapter IV is the analysis of all the data collected during this research. The data was collected through an initial interview, followed by a survey which includes self-assessment charts of the participants English and Spanish ability. There is also an analysis of the participants' cultural perspective of a movie clip and last is their writing sample. The findings are organized in a way that it is easy to compare each member's data within their assigned group.

Chapter V is the conclusion of this study, where some of the questions that were proposed at the beginning of this study will be answered based on the data from the research. At the end, evidence will be presented that supports whether or not the participants' native language fully developed. The end will also discuss if the participants assimilated to the new culture or still kept strong ties to their Hispanic culture. To analyze the development of the Spanish language and the cultural ties amongst the participants some of the factors that were considered were their age of arrival, their education and their profession. Their native language writing ability was also critical in determining some of their language change.

Chapter 1 Bilingualism and Language Acquisition

This chapter defines bilingualism, the process of becoming bilingual, and reasons why a person becomes bilingual. This chapter also covers some data on the number of non-English speakers living in the United States, and explores the history of Spanish speakers in particular within the US. The relationship between the dominant language, English and Spanish is explored here, based on historical context. At the end of the chapter, some of the factors that influence language maintenance are carefully examined.

Bilingualism and Language Related Issues

As stated by Grosjean, bilingualism is “the regular use of two or more languages” (Grosjean 1). This is rather a simplistic statement, but it encompasses a wide variety of different parameters that other researchers find it important to define of what is to be a bilingual speaker. For example Bloomfield has a much greater implication of what being a bilingual is: The bilingualism implies “an equal dominion of two languages like a native speaker”. In other words, bilingualism is the ability to speak two languages at the level of the mother tongue, (Bloomfield 43). Bloomfield position is more critical, due to the fact that many bilingual are in fact stronger in one language over the second one. It is very hard to be able to master both languages as a native speaker; research has shown that “one language tends to be stronger and better developed” (Baker et al. 3). A person is able to reach a near native speaker ability of using a second language in different settings, but not be able to attain 100% capability. Because of these complications, when it comes to defining what a bilingual speaker is Grosjean definition is more inclusive and less restrictive. Many people will tend to agree with the broader term that Grosjean has defined.

With the exception of some remote tribal locations or extremely isolated places, bilingualism, Hoffmann writes, “influence[s] the speech behavior of the people involved” (Hoffmann 1). In the United States for example there are multitude of languages spoken everywhere; for example, Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese, German the list goes on and on. Early settlers from different European nations came into contact with speakers of the native languages that were already spoken here (“Native American languages”). Languages like the “Navajo, Lakota, Cherokee” and many more, and of course also Spanish; because at one point certain states like California, New Mexico, Texas, Nevada and others that are now part of the union, were in fact part of Mexico during the 1800’s. With the influx of new people the language expansion continued, and not just English but many different languages like French, Italian, German and Swedish. These languages were brought in by the new residents into the country. Spanish speakers in the United States are for the most part the working class, which includes laborers, specialized fields like electricians, plumbers, carpenters, and so on. Of course there will be a small minority that comes to the country because of political, and religious persecutions, or people that possess a specialization that the country embraces with open arms, for example: Scientists, doctors, athletes, and more.

Language in Contact

When it comes to border area between two language groups Grosjean quotes Mackey who explains that “between Spanish-speaking Mexico and English-speaking America, economic

and commercial factors lead many people to use both languages on a regular basis” (Grosjean 2). For example if a company wants to expand their profits it will cater to the population that is trying to buy its products. Restaurants in Mexico have English translated menus, and they prefer to hire people that are able to communicate in both languages. The same is true for businesses in The United States, supermarkets have people that speak both languages to provide assistance to its customers from south of the border.

In the area between Brazil-Colombia borders Grosjean points at the example from Sorensen where he writes “a mere 10, 000 people speak some twenty-five languages and most individuals are bi- or trilingual” (Grosjean 3). This exposure is what creates awareness of other cultures, and it is possible for the individual to appreciate the language of the other groups. In order to conduct business the groups will learn each others language or as Grosjean also mentions they could create a new language also known as Lingua Franca.

Another example of bilingualism is in Canada, which borders the United States, and has the primary languages of French and English. In certain areas like the Province of Quebec and in other small packets French is the primary language used, while in most of the country it is English. In order to accommodate the French minority the federal government passed the Official Language Act in 1968-1969. the Act reads “The English and French languages are the official languages of Canada for all purposes of the Parliament and Government of Canada, and possess and enjoy equality of Status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all the institutions of the Parliament and Government of Canada” (Beer, Jacob 47). Not every one was in favor when the act passed, Chaput a Quebecois, wrote in 1961 “The more bilingual our children become, the more they use English; the more they use English, the less they find French useful; the less they find French useful, the more they use English: the more we become bilingual, the less it is necessary to be bilingual” (Grosjean 18). This statement can be applied to any other language. In the case of bilingual English and Spanish speakers in the United States this statement will also apply.

Quebec tries to limit this language dilemma and in order to maintain their language, and culture the school system does not allow newly arrived citizens of other countries to enroll their children in the all English learning programs, unless they meet certain requirements as specified in their French language charter mandate. For example one of the parents needs to be a Canadian citizen (“Education: Instruction in English”). The students must first learn French and later on they are introduced to the English language. By then the children prefer to speak French. The parents that were born in Canada and have received their education in English are given the choice to send their kids to an all English school program. Although this limits the citizen it is done to preserve the language and the culture.

It is inevitable that when two languages come in to contact one could have more prestige than the other. Grosjean writes that “the most influenced is the less prestigious” (Grosjean 20). Spanish speakers in the United States borrow many words from English. For example when they pick up the phone they will say “hello” instead of “bueno”, or “diga.” If they want to give the seal of approval to someone they will say “ok” rather than “muy bien”, “vale”, “chévere.” It is hard for a Spanish speaker not to be influenced by English when he or she is surrounded by English everywhere: work, news, music, friends, and even members of their own family.

Grosjean also points out that “speakers of major language are rarely bilinguals” (Grosjean 23). He mentions of how in Canada it is the French speakers who learn English, and that the English speakers do not choose to learn French. The same happens here in The United States; descendants of English speakers do not choose to learn Spanish it is the other way around, Spanish speakers have more to gain by learning English. They can get better jobs; they will be able to enjoy other activities that offered in English, for example dance lessons where the teacher gives instructions only in English, or computer classes at the local library where again the teacher only speaks English; these are only a few examples.

Disadvantages of Competing Languages

Around the world there are countries that protect their language with all their might, and in doing so, the language group that will be assimilated suffers with the passing of years. For example, in the times of the Soviet Union expansion, the countries that were made part of the Union were forced to learn Russian. A perfect example is Moldova a small eastern European country neighboring Romania to the west and Ukraine to the North. Moldovan students whose first language was Romanian were taught in Russian at school, and in fact they became bilinguals. Another example is Spain and the City of Barcelona, located in the north east part of Spain, bordering the Mediterranean Sea. In Barcelona the language spoken by the people is Catalan, but before 2009 children were taught in Spanish. Mexico has a similar a situation with the indigenous population; when children attend schools they are taught in Spanish, becoming then bilinguals.

The United States has long had a policy of assimilation; Students have either none, one or three years to learn English, before they are placed in regular classes. There are certain exceptions in order to extend the years. There are many stories of students having negative experiences while trying to learn English. For example, Cesar Chávez recalls his school experiences: “They said that if we were Americans, then we should speak the language, and if we wanted to speak Spanish we should go back to Mexico” (Levy 24). These words still resonate in school hallways, places of employment, and against pro immigration-reform protesters. When the news media shows scenes of controversies between pro and against immigration parties, they are in fact creating a negative self image of the oppressed group. Little by little they are diminishing the individual. The individual then becomes self-aware of his/her status within the country. He/she is made to feel lesser, and that his/her language has no value. Escamilla writes that “It has been well established that Spanish and English do not share equal status in U.S. schools or in the larger U.S. society” (Escamilla 101).

The resilient Spanish speaker has to overcome the rejection of his/her language and culture, and try on his/her own to continue to grow the language after arrival to the United States; there is no support in school to do this. It is left to the parents or other family members to continue teaching the Spanish language, and culture at home. The communities where Spanish speakers of many different Spanish countries coexist cannot accommodate or are not willing to accommodate their culture, and because of this the individuals cannot celebrate their cultural heritage as a group.

Tracing the Origin of Bilingualism

There are many reasons why people become bilingual; people's personal circumstances as well as communal or even global issues can place people in a situation where they may need to learn a second language. Hoffman writes that in Europe, after war world II, group mobility, temporary work, intermarriage, new initiatives for political, military and economic cooperation changed people's view on bilingualism for the positive (Hoffman 140); prior, people were very nationalistic and only felt the need to know their mother tongue. Political issues, economic issues, globalization and intermarriage are three areas in which one can see the importance of being bilingual.

Analyzing El Salvador's history, more specifically the political turmoil that occurred within the country, one can see how the masses were put in a situation where the need for a second language became a necessity. In the 1980's an internal war began in El Salvador between the government and the leftists. The Government policy at the time was to kill males between the ages of 12 years old and older. The excuse was that they had subversive mentality, and because of that they needed to be eliminated. Many families left the country, and those who could not afford to travel together, sent out their children alone.

When it comes to economic reasons, many Latin American countries share the same calamities. The governments are not able to provide job opportunities, and for this reason the citizen cannot buy food for themselves or their family, or afford to rent or buy a home. The medical care is minimal and out of reach for many. If someone is diagnosed with a major medical problem like heart complications or cancer is like receiving a death sentence, because the treatments are not affordable. Being confronted with these problems many decide to make the trip north to the United States in search of a better life. When they arrive to the United States they are presented with the hard realities, of the language barrier, lack of employment, and discrimination. When it comes to the cultural and educational factors, those who can afford it, pay for expensive schools. They apply to places where they feel that their diplomas will allow them to go back to their native countries and attain good positions in a corporation or the government. For example, the presidents of El Salvador Napoleon Duarte (1984-1989) studied engineering in Notre Dame University, and Francisco Guillermo Flores (1999-2004) studied in universities of Connecticut and Massachusetts.

The process of "internationalization" (Hoffman 162) or "globalization" (a more current word), in which commodities are traded among nations, forces the people to learn another language and become bilinguals or multilingual. Throughout the world many people learn a second language in order to advance their commerce, for example the people from Colombia will want to sell their famous coffee to companies in the United States. So they hire personnel that are fluent in both languages in order to have access to that market. Because of the free trade agreement with the United States many US. Companies are moving their production to Mexico. Again bilingual personnel are what they want to hire because English has become the language of business. Bilinguals are sought by future employers especially in the restaurant field; there was advertising for bilingual waiters and general helpers in the San Diego, California area ("jobs.oodle") just to illustrate the need for bilingual workers.

Intermarriages may require or give people the desire to become bilingual. Hoffmann gives examples of intermarriages among members of the crown, which she calls “political marriages” (Hoffmann 158), but similar situations exist nowadays in all parts of the world with whether royalty or the average person. There are many Spanish countries where many tourists travel from around the world to visit the beautiful places that these countries have, such as Iguazú falls in Argentina, Machu Picchu in Peru, Cancun in Mexico, and these are just a few places. Some time a tourist falls in love with a local man or woman, they marry and they share their language and culture with their children. However, intermarriage is not just limited to traveling; the same situation happens here in the U.S. for example in the big cities there are people with different ethnic backgrounds, who marry or live together and learn the language of the partner in order to communicate.

1.2 Spanish People Living in the United States

According to the data collected in 2010 by the Bureau of the Census, there were as many as 258,267,944 people without a Hispanic or Latino language background (“Community Facts, Hispanic or Latino by type: 2010”), of that number a little bit over 50.4 million (16.3%) were people with Spanish background, if we take into consideration that the population has increased since 2010 we can estimate that the figure is even larger now in 2016. Spanish people live all over the United States, but there are several states that because of the historic event of land grab expansion they have been living in those areas for many generations. For example, some of these States are: Texas, New Mexico, and California. There are also many Spanish living in New York, New Jersey, Florida, and more recently in Virginia, Maryland, Georgia, and the Carolinas.

Contrary to the belief that speakers of a language other than English come from outside the United States, 2010 Census data showed that there were a large percentage of Spanish people born in the United States. There are many Spanish speaking parents in the United States, that for many different reasons have not been able to learn English, and consequently those children learn Spanish from their parents first, and later on when they start school they are introduced to the English language as a second language.

It is worth noting that when a monolingual Spanish speaker enters schools as a child and is introduced to the English language, soon after this individual becomes a bilingual. As Fishman states, the education of these children is “transitional”, it is intended for the children to “adjust to school and/or to master the subject” (Fishman 4). Although Spanish people have an extensive history in the United States, there are still issues with the way the United States deals with the education of bilingual children. The New York State Department of Education, before October 2015 stipulated that students with a non English background be provided with a maximum of three years of bilingual education, or English as a new language education in order for them to acquire the English language, after that the students were to attend regular classes; unless they had a learning disability (“Amendments of Regulation”). Learning English will give the students the opportunity to compete in the business world, but at the expense of losing their cultural and language use. Accommodating other culture should not be left just to the parents, friends and family, but the school could in fact nurture the culture heritage of the children that enter their programs. When it comes to Spanish and some other reasons that were previously mentioned like: lack of support for the Spanish language, schools giving only a year or three to become

proficient in the English language, and children own culture being ignored; only help to speed up the process to abandon the use of the mother tongue.

Past and Present Spanish People Related Issues

Some of the reasons that add to the abandonment of the Spanish language are closely related to the treatment that Spanish speakers have endured since the annexation of the areas that used to be part of Mexico in 1848, the past and present immigration issues, or the discrimination that people of Spanish background have endured over the years. Although many are the reasons; the most prevalent are deportations, unfair treatment, and discriminations. These three previously mentioned are closely related to the abandonment of the Spanish language and culture by the children of immigrants.

Starting with the unfair treatment that Mexican Americans endured since the annexation Grosjean wrote “Mexican American lost their land through extortion, bribery, and physical violence. And during the depression about half a million Mexican Americans were deported to Mexico, even though many had been born in the United States and were American Citizens” (Grosjean 60). The Mexican population in the west was often mistreated by white settlers, the existing laws gave them little protection, and many were forced out of their haciendas, or homes. It is comforting to know that the extreme instances of abuse that were perpetuated in the past have been abandoned. People are losing their homes now because of economic issues, bad planning, or misleading loans by the banks.

The depression era, left an everlasting impression on those that experienced it. When times are tough it is always easy to try to find an escape goat, and in that era it was the Mexican American population. Spanish people continue to suffer deportations; in the 1980’s in California I witnessed first-hand the suffering of the undocumented people, and their life with constant fear of “la migra” as they call the immigration officers. The Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) had different tactics that were used to entrap illegal immigrants. They used to send letters to the parents of U.S. citizens with appointments to renew Medicaid insurance cards. When the parents arrived to the address given in the letter, they were arrested by the INS, and processed for deportation. This is what happened to my cousin, we found out that she had been arrested by Immigration when we watched the news on television and saw her, carrying her U.S. born child in her arms. Similar example was the letter sent to Antonio Martinez where Immigration promised him a work permit, the letter read: “Come to the Federal Building, bring some identification and we’ll give you a work permit good for a year” (Reza, “Immigrants Deported”). Another tactic was the massive round outs on the streets, or places of employments. It was bizarre that the news of rounding for deportation was passed from word of mouth, from person to person. Sometimes the media announced when it was going to happen, and suddenly the streets that were buzzing with people were deserted, virtually a ghost town. Those without proper work permits did not dare to go out of their houses, and risked to be deported.

In the United States as a whole, there are many residents without the proper paper work to stay in the country, but it is the Spanish people that are easier to pick from the crowd. A person with Caucasian feature is less likely to be harassed on the streets by immigration officials. It is this type of discrimination that makes a Hispanic self-aware of his/her condition in this

country. Today we hear in the news, especially in the Spanish news media of children born in this country and being deported with their parents because the parents did not have the proper paper work to stay in this country. Those kids will not have the same opportunities that are afforded to children living in the US. Many Spanish young people early in their 20's and 30's may not have been exposed to the above immigration tactics, but their parents, family members or friends, if they were asked and if they are willing to talk about they will have stories to tell about their immigration experiences.

Parents try hard to shelter their children from the realities of discrimination against their race. They want only the best for their kids, and they will try to Americanize their children in hopes that they will have a much better life than they did. Some want their children to lose their Spanish accent in order to fair better when they grow up and look for employment. They speak to their young children in their broken English, rather than Spanish in order to ensure a better future for their children.

Bilingualism in the United States

Bilingualism has not been favored in this country. "In 1917 Theodore Roosevelt wrote that any person who comes to the United States must adopt the institutions of the country and therefore its language" (Grosjean 62). This rhetoric was entrenched in the minds of US. citizens of the time and because of it, some older US. citizens resent the use of a language other than English in public places. They often say how their parents made the effort to learn the English language, and insisted that their kids learn it as well.

There have been efforts to make English the only language of the United States. When such efforts have not been successful Local Government Offices have tackled the issued. For example in 1996 The Suffolk County, New York Legislature was debating a bill to make English the official language of the county. (NY/Region, "Legislature's Intent in backing "the Primacy of English") The bill did not have enough votes to pass, but some legislators and people speaking in favor of passing of the bill, were for the most part very negative against the Latino community. Others have noticed the hostility toward the Spanish people. Grosjean quotes an example from McLaughlin, and writes: "The hostility is directed not at a language, but at a culture" (Grosjean 65). What are the choices left for a bilingual? One is to abandon his/her language and culture and adopt the culture of the United States. Another choice is to try to maintain their language and culture by going against the great majority. When it comes to advantages because of knowing another language, is almost non existent, however there are certain fields where knowing a second language is advantageous, for example: in the field of nursing, police officers, and business in general. It is helpful to speak more than one language in order to excel in the profession, still "most bilinguals are not in high power position, political or economic" (Grosjean 67). Because of this reality, there is not much change in attitude toward bilingualism in the United States.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth century Schools "punished children for talking to one another in their mother tongue" (Grosjean 70). Many children do not tell their parents all incidents that they have in school. Many parents are not aware that the difficulties that children encounter in school. Some children choose to shy away from conflicts between teachers and their

desire to communicate with their friends in their native language. One of the participants of this study had a similar experience when she attended the Brentwood School District, in New York. She was talking to her friend in Spanish, as she was walking in the hallway; suddenly a teacher told her “this is the United States, we speak English here! This demonstrates first-hand what bilingual children go through in their school.

Grosjean writes about an example of a Japanese student that has difficulties in the classroom, because he does not understand English, and “during the entire academic year the child must solve his problems by himself or not at all” (Grosjean 71). Many students in this country have similar problems; their parents are not able to help them with their homework because they have not learned English. These students do not have the motivation that other students have because they are unable to perform, due to the lack of understanding of the teacher directions in the classroom. Many times they cannot complete their homework; they do not have the academic assistance at home, or resources. Teachers do not take into consideration the disadvantages that this type of student has.

To help students who are not able to speak the English language when they enter the school system here in the U.S., Congress passed The Bilingual Education Act, or Title VII of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, signed into law on January 2, 1968, by President Johnson. The declaration of policy states:

In recognition of the special educational needs of the large numbers of children of limited English speaking ability in the United States, Congress hereby declares it to be the policy of the United States to provide financial assistance to local educational agencies to develop and carry out new and imaginative elementary and secondary school programs designed to meet these special educational needs (González 923).

Congress may have authorized to provide assistance to this type of students, but in reality the school districts are the ones that set the programs that will be offered to their students. In the case of participant Néstor, he attended school after 1968 in California, and he was denied the opportunity to attend a bilingual program. His school did not offer bilingual classes, because of this he stated that when he first entered school, he had a hard time understanding what the teacher was saying. He said that it was hard being there and not being able to participate in class discussions.

The laws of bilingual education in the United States began to change after the law suit involving Chinese parents and their children. In an effort to help their kids a group of Chinese parents sued the San Francisco School System in 1974, because they were not providing instructions to their children in their native language, and as a result their children were not performing up to their standards. This case is known as *Lau vs. Nichols*. The plaintiffs won, and it was decided that “the government would assist state and local authorities to establish bilingual educational programs...and create an Office of Bilingual Education and a National Advisory Council on Bilingual Education” (McLaughlin 94).

The bilingual education program is constantly being revamped. While the programs are offered nationally, it is up to each of the states to decide how the programs will be implemented.

For example in New York, the Department of Education is in charge of implementing the policies of what the students should learn when they attend a bilingual program, and for how long they should be in the program. Not all school districts offer the program; it is up to the district to decide if they will offer an ESL or a bilingual program. Similar to the insertion of the program, the goal has always been that of assimilation. Students need to be able to enter regular school programs at the end of their English Language learning programs.

Not everyone is on board of having bilingual education offered to students. Some argue that immigrants choose to come to the United States; they should therefore accept its language and education. Bilingual Education is expensive and in these hard times the society cannot effort it. Some who argue against the program may say, "I didn't get bilingual education when I went to school, why should my child?" (Grosjean 79). These comments have resonance, when those needing the help, are not able to advocate for these programs. Instead the opposing majority have the legal power to impose their will over the less fortunate, and try to limit or stop the English language learning programs. Many of the families in need of these programs may not even be here in the country legally. This is the sad reality that plays in the poor towns of the United States over and over. We cannot turn our backs on children that need to attend these programs; it is beneficial to them in order to make the transition from their native language into the new language that they are trying to acquire.

1.3 Hispanics in the United States

In 2013 there were approximately 54 million Hispanics living in the United States. ("Minority Health: Hispanic or Latino Populations"). Hispanics have made strides; their great majority has given them the opportunity to be vocal, and to voice their concern about the policies that affect their daily life, and to try to improve the life of many living in this county.

Hispanics living in this country come from different countries. According to the 2012 U.S. Census Bureau, Mexicans are the largest group living in the United States. The Latino break down in the United States include, 64.3% of the population being of Mexican descent, 9.4% of Puerto Ricans descent, 14.9% are from Central and South America, and 3.7% are Cubans (U.S. Department of Health). As of now the numbers have increased due to the growth of the population. The same office lists the concentration of Spanish people by states within the United States. California has the largest Spanish population (14.5 million), followed by Texas (10 million), then Florida with (4.5 million), New York (3.5 million), and Illinois with (2.5 million). Although there are a great percentage of Spanish people living within this country, they are not represented in the country when it comes to politics. As of 2015, only three out of the 100 senators were Hispanic, representing Florida, Texas and New Jersey (U.S. Senate). When it comes to Congress, twenty-nine were of Hispanic background in 2015, representing the states of California, New York, New Jersey, Arizona, Texas, New Mexico, West Virginia, Florida, Idaho, Washington, and Colorado (United House of Representatives). It is true that the congress has a larger number of Hispanic representatives, but it does not represent the large majority of the Hispanic population living in this country. One can say that the Hispanic population is being under represented in the political stage of the United States, and that their needs are not being advanced. Some of the Needs are immigration reforms, education opportunities, or lack of opportunity for high paying jobs.

PUERTORICANS – Their history began when “The first Spaniards landed in Puerto Rico in 1493”, the island was under Spaniard control until 1898, at the end of the Spanish American War Spain lost the Island to the United States. In 1946 the island became a commonwealth (Grosjean 97). Puerto Ricans have benefited from this status and travel back and forth to visit their relatives, and “In 1970 1 ½ million travel in each direction each year” (Grosjean 98). The low cost travel fare helps to make this trip more affordable.

Due to the language barrier, Puerto Ricans have difficulties getting high paying jobs, especially the older generation. Before the introduction of bilingual education, many students in NYC used to drop out of high school because they could not understand the language. Puerto Ricans are Citizens, but because of their race they suffer the same “discriminations on jobs, housing, and education” (Grosjean 98). Many would like to think that these are issues of the past, but in reality the problems still continue to plague the Puerto Rican population. Being more united and advocating for the same causes will help solve or alleviate these issues.

MEXICAN AMERICANS – Mexican Americans were the original settlers of the southwest, when the area was part of Mexico. “It was only in 1845 when Texas was annexed by the United States, that the Mexicans first came under American rule... The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo put an end to the Mexican-American war” and the south west states were annexed to the U.S.A. (Grosjean 100). Those who write the history, choose to present it in a manner that is convenient to them. Many in this country choose to ignore the fact that Spanish people were living in those places before the great migration. Their land was taken by force, bribery or extortion. The legal system did not protect them, their children were segregated in school, and in general they faced racial discrimination and even lynching (Grosjean 100).

If one wishes to examine what is going on today’s everyday life of Mexican Americans, one can see that the conditions have improved, but not by much. School continued to be segregated by economics. The lower income earners are forced to live in communities that in fact become racially segregated. Because of language barrier, and the inability to go to school, they are forced to take low paying jobs, work longer hours, and take sometimes two jobs to just make ends meet. Because they don’t speak the language well, they are unable to understand legal documents or legal proceedings. One can only hope that the country will make progress and that Mexican Americans, and other Spanish are treated with respect, and not overlooked for job promotions or better labor opportunities.

1.4 Language Maintenance and Language Shift

According to Fishman in his book, *Language and Sociocultural Change*, “language maintenance and ethnicity ... must remain voluntaristic behaviors in the United States” (Fishman 22). From the start it is the parents who have the task of teaching the native language to their children. At the beginning the need to communicate with his/her parents will give him/her the opportunity to use the familial language. As time passes the child acquires the new English language and grammar and that is where the other influences come into play. If the child feels that the first language is not valued in the school, or by friends. The child will develop resentment toward the language, and will try to disassociate from it. In the other hand if the child gets enough support from home, and he feels that his language is special, and the child has

positive attitudes by family members, community and friends that he values, then the child will continue to cultivate the knowledge of his or her first language. Grosjean writes that if “the child has enough psychosocial factors encouraging this language, such as the concentration and size of the group, its religion, and its cultural activism”, then these factors will definitely influence the child, and in fact will help the child to fully develop in the two or three languages use around the child (Grosjean 105).

Grosjean writes about Fishman’s findings that “older children are more retentive of native language than younger children” (Grosjean 105). There are several factors that support this finding: for example, older children have been exposed to the native language for a longer period, and hence they have practiced it more. They have acquired mental grammar for that language, the set of parameter that intuitively tells the speaker what is possible or not in said language. They have acquired the structure, vocabulary, and in some cases have attended early years of school on their native land. In the other hand younger children have not fully developed all the vocabulary or language structure. They have not received the necessary input in their native language, so when they are expose to the new language, they really are acquiring it as if it was their first language, gaining all the grammar and vocabulary and forgetting faster what they knew of their first language.

Cultivating both languages is a difficult task for parents; sometimes there is not enough support to continue developing the native language. Most media is geared toward the dominant language and young children prefer to watch shows that are appealing to them and their friends. For example, Spanish television channels have limited shows for children; most are geared toward the adults, like “telenovelas”, and news media. Hoffman writes that children of parents with low socioeconomic standing encounter greater difficulties acquiring a second language. These children, she writes are under intense “external pressure” to acquire the second language in school, and at the same time they are under extreme “internal pressure to learn the family language, in order to socialize with members of the same linguistic group. She states that these types of children run the greatest risk of not becoming bilinguals (Hoffman 47). This is the reality of many families that have to try really hard to compete with all that surround them in the day by day English dominant society.

Some of the social factors that affect language maintenance and language shifts are the following: Size of group, isolation, birth rate of the group, and intermarriage (Grosjean 107). In term of size, in the case of Spanish group, there are heavy concentrations by state or towns throughout the United States. Perfect examples of the states are: California, Texas, New York and many others. Birth rate of group refers to, if a particular group is more fertile, that group will have a larger number of speakers of that language; therefore the language will take longer to become assimilated. Groups that join their friends and family or just members of the same speaking community constitute a Continued Immigration, that provide a constant supply of speakers of such language. It strengthens the ties and guarantees that the language is constantly replenishing with the new comers. Intermarriage: Could affect the language shift both ways, meaning that the monolingual could with the pass of time become bilingual, or the one that is already bilingual could abandon the use of one of the language and just join the other monolingual.

“Isolation might favor either maintenance or shift” (Grosjean 109). In the case of the Basque language in the north of Spain, being isolated gave them the chance to continue using their language. A shift will occur when a particular group comes into contact with speakers of other language that the group considers will give them an advantage. If learned, gradually a shift will take place. The social aspects of size of the group, birth rate of group, and intermarriage are found in a chart that Grosjean put together on his book *Life with Two Languages* (Grosjean 107). Many other reasons were also listed, but those were the ones that were found make the greater impact.

Attitudes also affect language maintenance and language shift. When it comes to attitudes, Fishman mentions in his book, *Language in Sociocultural Change*, how children enrolled in ethnic group schools “become less interested in their mother tongue as they advanced through the grades” (Fishman 50). It is of great importance what the speaker thinks of his or her language. For example, if the speaker loves his/her language, he/she will try to keep it and use it with others. If for the contrary, the language has made the speaker feel of lesser value, or it reminds him of negative experiences, he/she will not to use it, and will replace it by the one that brings him/her greater satisfaction.

Two factors that affect the use of languages are the following: “for what and with whom” (Grosjean 107). The function that the language is used for is to get information, and provide information. Sometimes there are specialized fields that if the language is learned using a particular language the knowledge acquired can more easily be explained in the language that it was acquired. Such is the case of specialized electronic field, construction, or being trained how to overcome a language disability like stutter. The terminology used will be familiar only in the particular language that it was used.

A bilingual speaker will choose when to use the language and also with whom. For example in a case of bilinguals Spanish and English; if the person uses Spanish to communicate with a particular group that only speaks Spanish, then English will not be used. An example could be when small kids try to communicate with their grandparents that are monolingual Spanish speakers. Children tend to use Spanish with them, but use English with others that speak either just English, or both. Another example is the case of bilingual teachers. In their classroom they are trying to teach English to the students, but they have not yet learned enough vocabulary to communicate in that language, so the teacher uses the common language in the classroom which for this example is Spanish in order to clarify what he or she is trying to teach, and or to check for understanding.

Fishman also mentions in the previously named book, that “cultural and linguistic diversity must be publicly recognized ...supported and effectively reinforced” in order to ensure language maintenance (Fishman 25). Although, at times the new language may seem to be taking over the old language and culture, there are things that help the language to be preserved. For example, when parents leave their country, they try to hold on to what they loved about their land, their language and culture. It is that love for their country that is passed on to their children through stories, pictures, or songs. The children then learned to cherish what their parents hold dear. Children want to please their parents, and one way of doing it is to keep their language and culture.

Chapter 2

This chapter covers some theories on second language acquisition as well as factors that can influence learning a second language. These factors include the effects of environmental, social, and communication interaction. In this chapter the common errors made by Bilingual speakers inherent to the acquisition of a second language are explored, and related to that, code switching and code mixing. Lastly in this chapter there is an introduction of heritage speakers; who they are and how they are classified according to their level of functionality.

Bilingualism and Factors that Influence Language Acquisition and Learning

The age factor for language acquisition has been explored in research work performed by Lennenberg. He writes that “automatic acquisition from mere exposure to a given language seems to disappear after this age [puberty] and foreign language has to be taught and learned through a conscious and labored effort” (Lennenberg 176). A similar view is shared by Johnson and Newport; they write that the ability to acquire languages “will disappear or decline with maturation. If the capacity is exercised, however, further language learning abilities will remain intact throughout life” (Johnson et al. 64). Taking into consideration the positions of the aforementioned research works, at the end of this study it will be determined if age played a major role in the Spanish language ability of the participants.

García did a study on a group of Puerto Ricans living in the midtown Manhattan area, part of her goal was to find the correlation between education and Spanish language maintenance. García’s findings shows that the “more education predicts the better language ability (oracy and literacy skills)” (García 188). To accept her findings that the more education predicts a better oral and literacy skills could be a little problematic, because the higher degree of education does not guarantee that the person will be a better bilingual. In fact, in this research it was found not to be the case. Continuing with her study, she also mentions a correlation between education and profession. García mentions that in her study of the twenty-six Nuyoricans, as she calls her study group. Those whom had more schooling were working as bilingual teachers, bilingual social workers or bilingual secretaries. In her study she also mentions that those with less education were using less of their Spanish language (García 188). She focuses on a supermarket stock-boy as an example. García mentions how this worker has a minimal use of Spanish, but some may disagree with this assertion, because the stock person perhaps could have another co-worker that also speaks Spanish and they could communicate throughout the day. One can agree that perhaps the language use from a professional will be more advanced, but none the less they are both performing at the level that they need in order to communicate with the people that surround them. The professions of the participants will be considered to see if it is a major factor in their Spanish language maintenance.

The researcher Baker confirms the importance of education in the learning of a second language. Baker finds that, if children do not have formal education in their native language, it takes the students seven to ten years to reach English proficiency, but if they received two or three years of education it takes them five to seven years (Baker 293). His study illustrates the importance of the native language in relationship with the learning of a new language. Similar

views are shared by Krashem: “Literacy developed in the home language will transfer to the second language” (Responding to Linguistic and Cultural Diversity).

Language learning plays an important role in the development of a child. Centro Virtual Cervantes has a very interesting article written by Garrido, where she mentions that at an early age children have the “desire to communicate,” and it is this desire that contributes to the development of the language capability (Garrido 482). Family members, friends, and others contribute to the gradual progress of the acquisition of language in young children. Children that are introduced to a new language do not obtain the necessary “input” in their native language, meaning that they are no longer being exposed to the vocabulary and structure of their native language. Silva Corvalán studied this lack of the necessary input in children and adults living in Los Angeles, her results is what she calls an “incomplete process of language learning” (Silva Corvalán, “El español de Los Ángeles”). Her study illustrates that exposure to the native language is important in order to acquire all aspects of the language. The incomplete process is part of the developmental process for L1 learners. During the incomplete acquisition “there is omission, substitution, and misplacement errors in phonology, syntax, and semantics... Like L1 learners, L2 learners also fail to use, or (unconsciously) avoid, structures they find difficult or that have not become internalized in their internal languages” (Montrul 255). At the end of this study a determination will be made if past language acquisition was the most important factor for these participants.

Second Language Acquisition

In order to understand the process of second language learning, it is imperative to learn a little of how the brain works. Jedynak in her books goes in great detail explaining the different areas of the brain that through past and present discoveries are specific to language. Once she details of this process, she introduces the critical period hypothesis and she goes on to write that, supporters of the critical period hypothesis believe that L1 and L2 acquisition is a behavioral manifestation of underlying neurobiology and gradual development of synapses (Jedynak 22). In simple terms she details how the brain cells carry information since birth, and once they reach their destination they create new lines of communication. Some information gets discarded and replaced by the new information.

Jedynak also mentions how children go from the stage of babbling, then acquiring words and next combining them. She writes that an L2 learner passes through similar processing with the exemption of babbling. The L2 learner creates new synapses and loses some as well (Jedynak 22). An example of how the process might happen with an L2 learner is when an individual is beginning to learn the second language, the learner has some errors due to the lack of vocabulary knowledge, here the erroneous words are stored in the brain, but with the past of time the erroneous vocabulary is replaced with correct one. It is then that the new lines are formed and the old ones replaced.

The critical period hypothesis proposes that the critical period for language acquisition begins from early infancy and ends at about the age of puberty. Based off of this hypothesis it is commonly drawn “that any language learning which occurs after the age of puberty will be slower and less successful than normal first language learning” (Snow et al. 1114). It was

observed that throughout this research that the participants in this study were introduced to the second language before the onset of puberty. Being that the participants were all able to acquire the new language during the critical period their L2 language skills are similar to that of a native speaker.

The linguist Noam Chomsky is credited for laying the foundation of language learning. Noam Chomsky introduced the universal grammar theory (UG), that is to say the innate, biological grammatical categories. Chomsky proposed the idea that children learn by categorizing nouns and verbs and that helps children with the development of language, and the overall processing of language in adults. The innate ability that speakers of a language have allows them to know what is or is not possible in his or her language. That nature plays a role in language acquisition, and as Bialystok mentions, these categories is what gave birth to many other theories that have tried to resolve some of the “lacunae” that were left in Chomsky theory (Bialystok 31).

Bialystok explores Chomsky’s theory in which he uses “principles” and “parameters” to explain how language acquisition works. The principles Bialystok writes are “the universal properties of any language” She continues with examples of the “X-Bar principle that control the structure of a language, and parameters are variant of these principle” (Bialystok 38). These are the essence of Chomsky’s proposition of language acquisition. The X-Bar principles for example have three parts: head, complement, and specifier. The head determines the main syntactic structure of the sentence. An example of a complement for English is (that) and examples of a specifier is a determiner (the, a, this). Parameters are the differences that exist in every language. For example, in the Spanish language most of the nouns that end with “a” are feminine and the ones that end with “o” are masculine. Because in Spanish sentences need to agree in gender and in number, non-native Spanish speakers sometimes form sentences that are not grammatically correct. A native speaker does not make these types of errors because gender agreement was acquired from the very beginning when the language was learned. The same way that one peels a banana before eating it, the concept was learned early in life. The speaker doesn’t think about it, the speaker just does it.

The pro-drop parameter, which determines if the subject pronoun is eliminated without having any problems with semantics, works differently in English than in Spanish. The subject pronoun is not optional in English, but it is in Spanish. It would be wrong for a speaker of English to say “went to the movies”. The hearer needs to know who went to the movies; it is not implied in the sentence. In Spanish, one can say “fue al cine” (went to the movies). Although it’s not specified, a Spanish speaker knows that either he or she went to the movies. Based on the conversation, one will be able to determine who went to the movies. This difference is what creates difficulties for Spanish speakers when learning English.

Bialystok points out that “children come to language learning as biological beings with distinctively human brains, interacting in a social context, and receiving massive linguistic input.” She goes on to say that these “ingredients” as she called it, do not explain how language is acquired. (Bialystok 31) Bialystok feels that to understand language acquisition, it is important to explore the different theories that have been proposed. Some of them are: universal grammar theory, hybrid theory, biolinguistic theory, learnability theory, and lastly functional theory. She,

of course, lists others, but those prior mentioned are the ones that will be considered in this research.

Bialystok lists the very important issues related to every linguistic theory and distinguishes between the formal and functional approaches. Coming “first is the independence between language and cognitive functions.” She goes on to write that, in formal approaches, language is independent from other cognitive domains and it carries its own universal grammar. However, in functional conceptions, language is connected with the rest of cognition. Second is the role of linguistic input. She explains that, in formal generative theories, input is needed to trigger the grammar outcome, but it does not have that much influence in the linguistic result. In functional approaches, the input is obtained through social interactions. The third issue listed is the nature of linguistic knowledge. She clarifies that in formal grammars linguistic structures are represented by abstract grammar rules and for functional approaches where rules do exist, it starts with specific, more bound to word surrounding knowledge that ends with inventory knowledge (Bialystok 33).

She also mentions another hybrid theory proposed by Bruner in 1983. He proposed that the language acquisition device (LAD), the engine of learning for generative linguistics, is accompanied by the language acquisition support system (LASS), the social, interactive and cognitive structures that brings the child to language, assures appropriate interactions take place, and present the information to the child conceptual system in a manner that is conducive to learning (Bialystok 33).

Another person that Bialystok quotes is Locke’s 1983 “biolinguistic” approach, which has two equally important components of human information processing: a grammatical analysis module (GAM) and a specialization in social cognition (SSC). “Regarding (1) independence, at least some of language is modular; meaning subdivided and specialized, specifically phonetics and generative morphology...; (2) regarding input the environment is needed to shape up the nonmodular aspects of language, but the core, including the specialization in social cognition (SSC) is universal and automatic; (3) regarding rules, some parts of morphology are governed by abstract rules, but others, such as irregular forms, are simply associative” (Bialystok 33).

As far as the second language acquisition, Bialystok goes into detailing some of the theories proposed by Chomsky, Pinker, and others. She quotes Pinker when she writes that we learn language because it is an “instinct” that we have. She adds that “we learn language because we are prepared to learn language” (Bialystok 37). Her statement is in fact true, regarding that the individual does not have any language impairment, or mental disability.

A different theory that Bialystok mentions in her book is the one proposed by Pinker and is under the “learnability theory.” She mentions that Pinker does not believe that children learn a language based on the “input” that they received. She goes on to list researches such as Bahannon et al., and Hirsh-Pasek et al. who hold a different opinion (Bialystok 39). According to the research work performed by Bahannon et al., where they study the interactions between adults, parents, and their children, they found that adults provided more corrective feedback to the children compared to the children’s’ parents. Parents of two year olds, were found to repeat more frequently the non-correct speech that the child produces, and also frequently stopped the

conversation to ask for clarification when the child's speech was not easy to understand (Bahannon et al. 684). Based on the research work provided by those before mentioned, Bialystok adds that "the way that adults respond to children['s] utterance", and the way they repeat the children's speech, help them to extract the necessary feedback regarding the acceptability of what they said (Bialystok 39). Some Spanish children learning English are not provided with the corrections needed to improve their vocabulary. Some parents have yet to master the second language and it is not possible to correct what they don't perceive as being wrong.

When it comes to making corrections of children's first language speech, the process becomes difficult due to the fact that some parents work all day and sometimes even have two jobs just to make ends meet. Children who are not provided proper guidance are not able to grow their language. Because children spend a long time in school, they begin to develop preference for the language that they are exposed to in school. In the case of bilingual English and Spanish children, English is the language that replaces their Spanish; they develop a better understanding of the English grammar usage and vocabulary.

Bialystok points out that Pinker disagrees with the corrections provided to the children because they were sporadic and not sufficient in quantity. Instead, the more modeled language acquisition is favored by him and others, like Berwick, Weller et al. This model is what is used in many classrooms across the United States. There are four components in the learnability theory: "class of languages, learning environment, learning strategy, success criterion." (Bialystok 39) In the classroom, the teacher teaches a particular language and provides a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. The teacher provides different strategies to aid his/her students, and evaluates the degree of language acquisition by students. Evaluation of students or language learner could be formal, by a way of test, class presentation, project, and more. Informal evaluation could happen during student group interaction with other classmates, or during teacher guided questions and answers. The formal or informal evaluation provides both teacher and student information of where the student is at during particular point of learning a language, either their first or second language.

One more theory that Bialystok explores on her book is functional theory. She writes that this theory emerges from the children's experiences to fulfill cognitive, social and, communicative function. She points out that language is part of cognitive development, and as such it is limited by cognition or enhanced by the same. (Bialystok 41) Children learning a second language are limited to the exposure of such language. This is a problem for many second language learners that do not have ample opportunities to communicate with native speakers of the language that they are trying to learn.

Learning a second language could have an adverse reaction against the first language. Edwards for example writes that the learning of a second language adds to the linguistic repertoire, but it could lead to the replacement of the first language (Edwards 10). There are several issues with the acquisition of a second language. Those who investigate the process of learning a second language offer different theories of how it is done: Competence is one of them.

2.1 Bilinguals and Competence

There are many issues that can be considered if one is to measure the language competence of bilingual speakers. Peter Auer et al. in their handbook of multilingualism and multilingual communication explores, in great detail, the pros and cons of trying to accomplish this challenge. They start by listing the many terms that different researches have given to this task: “ideal vs. partial bilingualism”, “receptive bilingualism and semi bilingualism” and many more, but they prefer the “minimalist” approach that Haugen takes. (Auer et al. 247)

To start, they write that Haugen’s position is that “bilingualism start[s] with the early state of second language acquisition.” They clarify that Haugen does not compare the “bilingual individual with the monolingual norms of the language.” Instead he describes the process of acquiring the first or second language. (Auer et al. 247) Most language researches if they are trying to find differences between bilinguals L1 and L2 abilities it is only normal to compare one language against the other.

Auer et al. ponders whether using a proficiency rating scale provides an accurate representation of the linguistic competence of the bilingual speaker, or if the partial results that accuracy-based proficiency produce a better representation. (Auer et al. 248) Auer et al. mention that the proficiency rating scale is not conducted in operational settings to be able to measure “phonological, lexical, morphological, syntactic discourse and interactional level in a manner that is typological plausible” (Auer et al. 247) If none of the two methods measures all the needed aspects of the language, when deciding which method to use, the researcher needs to decide what specific variance he or she is trying to investigate.

Auer et al. also brings to the attention of the reader that, depending on the discipline, all have their own interest in measuring the degree of bilingualism of the speaker. Some of the disciplines listed are: education, psychology, sociology, cognitive psychology, and others. They mention that the field of education is interested in the “effect of different educational approaches in bilingualism and the assessment of bilingual school populations for the purpose of streaming students into different classes” (Auer et al. 248). Schools in the United States follow their State and Federal Government policies to make sure that they are providing the required aid to those bilingual students enrolled in their programs.

Common Core is a new standard introduced in the educational system in the United States. By 2012 every school district needed to put in place their own procedures, and submitted for approval to the Education Department in their respective states. The more controversial part of the standard is the link of student’s performance to teacher’s evaluations. Teachers also are required to test students before the class subject is taught. Data is recorded. At the end of the school year, the students are tested again and the initial test is compared to the final test grade to check if the student attained the teacher’s projected gain in the particular subject. Some bilingual students are not able to perform well in this type of testing, but the teachers cannot exclude them from their rosters when submitting teacher evaluation data, even if they have not been in the programs long enough to be able to perform well.

When writing about the field of psychology and psycholinguistics, Auer et al. mentions that the main goal for these experts is to study “how two languages are processed in one mind.” This, they write, is one of the old reasons in their interest of “linguistic dominance in bilinguals.” (Auer et al. 259) According to Auer et al. some of the tests used to measure dominance are the following: word naming, self-rating, fluency in picture naming, and others. Self rating is an approach that could produce valuable data, but at the same time the bilingual individual could be biased of one language over the other and give a greater scale to the more favored language. (Auer et al. 253) Psycholinguistic experts are interested in “gaining understanding of specific bilingual language processes.” (Auer et al. 260) and they develop tests or computer aided tests to help them with the research of their particular interests.

A problem with the research on bilingual competence has to do with the specific findings from each of the disciplines conducting the research. Their study is narrowed to a specific field. It will be hard to find a unique method of measuring bilingual competence that will satisfy all, but the results from each of the disciplines provide valuable data related to how bilinguals’ abilities are measured by either educators, cognitive psychologists, or others.

L2 Acquisition Modified by the Environment, Social and Communication

The environment, coupled with social interactions and the conversational context, seems to play a major role in the acquisition of native-like second language acquisition in young children. (Hamers et al. 71) To expand more about these topics Hamers et al. cite the research work performed by Wong Fillmore, her research emphasizes the importance that social interaction has in the acquisition on a second language. The L2 learner needs to feel comfortable with the person with whom he or she is trying to engage in a conversation. Based on her research, they write that the child takes cues from the social communicative interactions to guess meaning and respond to it. (Hamers et al.71) If such relation has not been established, the child will shy away, and will not engage in meaningful interactions.

Hamers et al. also write that the context of the second language acquisition is very important. They quote Larson-Freeman et al. who find that native speakers of L2, when talking with a non-native speaker, will use a more simplified language to communicate. Their speech is more repetitive and redundant. (Hamers et al. 71) Also mentioned was that native-like input was also important and they list the work of Swain and Wesche to describe children that attended immersion programs and never attained native-like second language production. What Hamers failed to explain was the reason why the children did not acquire native-like production in the second language. So one is left to wonder if the particular teacher was lacking the vocabulary knowledge, teaching methodology, or the class was not conducive for learning.

Another researcher that Hamers et al. cite in their book is Peck, who insists that child interactions during play are very relevant to the second language acquisition. The importance of turn taking is stressed in her study. Children learn a second language through social interactions with other children and adults. (Hamers et al. 71) When children play, they feel happy. When playing with another child, they accommodate each other to continue the game.

The environment plays an important role in the second language development; Hamers et al. introduce Long's interactional hypothesis that "environmental contributions to acquisition are mediated between selective attention and the development of L2 capacity." When the child is exposed to a second language, the child has the opportunity to gain knowledge on that language.

There are of course other factors that are as important as the social interactions and nature, such as: culture, gender, age, motivation and others. López Montero et al. did a study in second language acquisition where they focused their investigations on the effect that age, gender, culture and motivation had in the acquisition of a second language.

In their study they agree with the proposition that Saddeghi makes that "the starting age has an effect in the ultimate level of achievement" others like Singleton et al. share similar views. There are many studies that present different perspectives of how age is relevant to second language acquisition. In their book "Language Acquisition: The Age Factor", Singleton et al. present different studies of the relationship between young children's second language acquisition compared with later ages of acquisition. One of the five propositions that he listed is:

1. "L2 learners whose exposure to the L2 begins in childhood are globally more efficient and successful than older learner" (Singleton et al. 61).

Singleton et al. Write about a study conducted by Asher and García in 1969 in which they study the relationship of age of arrival against length of residency. Those researchers discovered that age of arrival was better for the acquisition of pronunciation. (Singleton et al. 61) When children are exposed to a second language at an early age, they have not yet fully acquired their first language, so when the second language is introduced their first language is paused and the new language, especially if it is the standard language used, is practiced more.

Another study that Singleton et al. mention is one conducted by Ramsey and Wright in 1974 about immigrant children arriving to the country and their acquisition of the English language. Five thousand students from the Toronto school system between the 5th, 7th and 9th grade were selected for the study. They acquired background information and test results for their analyses. The test checked for "vocabulary and language skills." Ramsey and Wright arrived to the conclusion that if the child had immigrated at the age of seven or later it had a "clear negative relationship between age of arrival and performance" (Singleton et al. 63) These results and the ones attained by Singleton support that younger children fair better in the acquisition of L2.

Singleton et al. also mention of a study performed by Selinger et al. in 1975 of 394 adults that had immigrated to the United States and Israel; they were asked to rate their English and Hebrew proficiency respectively. The questions asked were country of birth, age, age of arrival to the host country, and distinction between their L1 and L2. The study showed that those speakers that arrived on or about nine years of age reported speaking like a native speaker, but those who arrived between the ages of ten and fifteen felt that they had a foreign accent. Selinger et al. reported that in fact the accent of the late group was almost identical of the group who arrived on or about nine years old. (Singleton et al. 64) The contradiction here is how the participants perceived themselves. Comparing this study with the one performed by Ramsey and

Wright where the data used was taken from actual tests taken by the participants. The results from Ramsey and Wright provide actual performance taken from data, and not estimates reported by the participants. Because actual data was used, their study has more weight than the personal estimations done by the participants in Selinger research.

Going back to López Montero's et al. work in which they mention a study conducted by Rezaee in 2011, in that study she concluded that in order to learn or teach a second language, aside from teaching "vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar," it was important to consider the "socio cultural" aspect too. The reason was that sometimes there is a difference in the social and cultural aspect of one language, which does not exist in the other (López Montero et al. 436, "Social factors involved in second language learning").

When people are learning a second language, they are in fact also learning some of the culture associated with such language. It is then that the new culture can influence the learner. It is then that they adopt some of the cultural features of the language learned. At times the new culture could be in conflict with their own culture.

López Montero et al. also writes about a study conducted by Bernaus et al. from the University of Barcelona in 2004, where they study the effect of the immigrant student's cultural background in their language learning process. In this study according to López Montero et al., they assessed their attitude, motivation, and anxiety toward their language learning. At the end, they concluded that there were no significant differences that could be attributed to the immigrant's cultural background (López Montero et al. 437, "Social factors involved in second language learning").

Another factor considered by López Montero et al. in their second language acquisition investigation was motivation. They report about a study performed by Masanori Matsumoto from Bond University in Australia. In the study of one hundred and forty students taking a twelve week second language acquisition course, he discovered that "the culture of the educational environment when second language learning occurs, has some effect whether positive or negative on the learners' motivation." In the same study, Matsumoto reports the results of students of four different cultural backgrounds and he concluded that the more distant the language, the more positive results it has in the second language acquisition. (López Montero et al. 437, "Social factors involved in second language learning") Part of the reason could be that people love to discover new things, and if the language does not resemble their own, the students will be more inclined to learn the new language.

The social background in which learners learn a second language is as important as age. López Montero et al. write how Pishghadan quotes Williams and Burden about the impact that context learning has on the learner because the learning environment will influence the learning process. The learner's method of learning; similar to computers, pictures, painting, books; are classified under "Cultural capital", and the learner's relationships with teachers, parents, siblings and peers "social capital" may have a profound influence on whether, what, and how an individual learns a language. (López Montero et al. 439, "Social factors involved in second language learning") If the learner dislikes the teacher, it is possible that this individual will not be committed to fully learning the language. If the parents do not value education, the student

will not get the support he or she needs to gain academic progress, and acquire the second language. Peers can have a positive or negative influence in young learners. If their friends don't care about the second language learning, the learner will have a conflict with the acquisition.

Social context encompasses many different forms - López Montero et al. again mention. Pishghadan, who writes that, under social capital, it could be included, the number of friends, the presence of two parents, number of siblings, extra curriculum activities, church attendance, and many others. And the more cultural goods the learner possesses, coupled with the larger network of friends, increases the chances the learner will have better academic success. (López Montero et al. 439, "Social factors involved in second language learning") The social capital, without a doubt, will have a positive influence in the learner if the learner values everything that is afforded to him or her by their parents, church, friends and community.

The other factor influencing second language acquisition is the learner's native language. López Montero et al. highlight Brown's findings, that the first language will have a "facilitating and interfering effect." The first language, if it shares some similarities with the second language, will be easier to make the connection between the two languages. But if the languages do not share much in common, the interfering effect will be greater. (López Montero et al. 440, "Social factors involved in second language learning") Some of the language interference is code switching and code mixing which will be explored next.

2.2 Bilingual Development

In simplistic terms code switching is the alternating switching from language one (L1) to language two (L2). There are different studies that seek to find the reasons why people perform the switch from one language to the other. Hamers et al. establish that code mixing and code switching is part of bilingual development. They detail what they consider as code mixing, and they mention what Taylor identifies as code mixing, which is the "deviation from the norm of each language." Taylor positions this mixing as "interference." Taylor recognizes that all bilinguals do it, but this writer points out that inappropriate language-mixing is more permanent with late bilinguals. (Hamers et al. 58) Hamers et al. reject some of Taylor's view, they write that language-mixing is not at interference, but it could be a strategy specific by the bilingual speaker. Hamers et al. opposing views are less harsh and those who do it probably will be more in favor of their description.

Hamers et al. consider a phenomenon in code mixing of 'loaning of a word' and adapting it to the language use. They use an example of the English word "mail" which has added the French suffix "er", to form the word "mailer" which is used by French-English speakers, and as they explain it "conforms to the French verb-formation rules." (Hamers et al. 58) They also contrast the position of Swain and Wesche with the position of Malakoff and Hakuta when it comes to language mixing. Swain et al. describe it as "lexical duplication" or "spontaneous translations" The example provided from Swain is that children use the words as synonyms, and that the child is aware of the mixing, and is using it as a communication strategy and, when needed, he acts as an interpreter. Hamers et al. rebut his findings and instead point out a study done by Malakoff et al. where they found that elementary Spanish- English school children are able to translate material relevant to their level of understanding in both directions, with very few

errors. Bialystok includes their work in her book of *Language Processing in Bilingual Children* (Bialystok 141).

When it comes to code switching, Hamers et al. suggest making the distinction between switching among communicative competence and code switching because of a lack of competence of L2. They go on to label the first as “bilingual code switching” and the second one as “restrictive code switching.” (Hamers et al. 267) The different labels do offer a contrast from one another, but there will be others that will disagree and offer their own labels for similar occurrences. It is hard to come up with labels that all can agree on, because many are not willing to accept what other researchers suggest, and are quick to change it a little bit to give it their own spin.

An example that Hamers et al. provide for the restrictive code switching is that of a child that has acquired a limited use of the second language and has to use his first language to compensate for the lack of knowledge of the L2. Opposite of that scenario is the one of immigrants who have lost some of the competence on their L1, and have to call upon their newly acquired L2, to communicate. They call this scenario code-switching. (Hamers et al. 267) Their examples have different languages being switched, but some will not embrace these labeling methods, because regardless of the reason why the languages were switched, it does not change the outcome that the speaker needed help to complete his/her train of thought, and a language switch was necessary, and for that reason calling both code-switching perfectly describes the action.

Similar to code switching, code mixing is an alteration between two or more languages. Hamers et al. explain how code mixing is produced by a bilingual speaker. They write that a speaker of a language, (LX) who they call base language (LX), transfers elements or rules of another language (LY) to the base language (Hamers et al. 270).

They provide in their example a sentence formed by a French English speaker. Following their example, a sentence formed by a Spanish English speaker, using a different meaning, could look like this: “When I get home te llamo” (When I get home, I will call you.) In this particular sentence, the Spanish portion in the sentence follows the norms of the Spanish language and is easy to distinguish from the rest of the sentence. A bilingual speaker will understand the meaning of the sentence. The sentence does not necessarily follow the norms of the English language: the literal translation is “when I get home you I will call” this example is similar to their French and English (Hamers et al. 270).

Hamers et al. also point to research by Clyne and Kachru where they list that a code mixing can trigger a code switch, but not the reverse. (Hamers 270) It appears that using the previous sentence as an example “When I get home te llamo”, the ending of the sentence exited the part of the brain that is in charge of turning the switch to the Spanish language. Being that the last utterance was in Spanish, it’s easy to continue the flow of the Spanish language without much effort. It takes an extra click in the brain to go back to English.

Similar to code switching, code mixing can be used to compensate for the lack of language knowledge. It can also be used by bilinguals to express attitudes, intentions, roles, and

to identify with a particular group (Hamers 270). An example to express attitude might be when an individual is having a conversation with a friend or family member and perceives that another person is hostile toward his language, the individual could utter a negative word during the conversation that such individual will not be able to understand. At times an individual will pick up expressions that a particular group uses and will repeat them when they are together. This would be a use of code mixing to identify with a particular group. An example that comes to mind is the Spanish word “ese” (that). Young individuals of Mexican background use this expression when addressing another young person in the downtown California area and its surroundings. When Spanish speakers of other nationalities come in contact with these speakers, they too start using the expression to identify with this group. The next group: heritage speakers share some of the language deficiencies observed with the speakers who engage in code mixing and code switching.

A heritage speaker is a type of bilingual speaker who has been exposed to a language at home that is in competition with a language used around him or her. A heritage speaker, according to Acosta Corte, has been exposed to his native tongue for a long time, but this speaker lacks the linguistic communicative competence possessed by a native speaker (Acosta Corte, A, 131, “II Congreso de Español como lengua extranjera en Asia-Pacífico”).

Acosta Corte compares the language acquisition of a heritage speaker with that of a L1 and L2 speaker. He writes that a heritage speaker is similar with the L1 speaker in a sense that like an L1 speaker; he receives a language input that has opened the gate for the language acquisition, although it has received “poor stimuli” (Acosta Corte, A, 133, “II Congreso de Español como lengua extranjera en Asia-Pacífico”) He also mentions that a heritage speaker has good control of all the characteristics of language acquisition during the early stages of acquisition. (Phonology, basic structure...) Similar to the L1 speakers Acosta Corte points out that heritage speakers also make errors related to language acquisition (overgeneralization, hyper-correction, simplification errors and others) (Acosta Corte, A, 134, “II Congreso de Español como lengua extranjera en Asia-Pacífico”).

The similarity with the L2 and a heritage speaker that Acosta Corte mentions is that the input that the heritage speaker has received has been variable and that the internal grammar is incomplete; they produced transfer errors, acquisition errors, and fossilized errors (Acosta Corte, A, 134, “II Congreso de Español como lengua extranjera en Asia-Pacífico”).

Once Acosta Corte establishes the similarities between the heritage speaker and the L1 and L2 speaker he goes on to contrast the processes of language acquisition. He mentions that heritage speakers differ from L1 in their input. The input for a heritage speaker is variable, and is not received long enough to cement its acquisition. This author also points out that heritage speakers do not have ample knowledge of grammar and sociopragmatics that is acquired during social interactions during childhood (Acosta Corte, A, 134, “II Congreso Español como lengua extranjera en Asia-Pacífico”). To be able to express fluently and to follow the cultural norms of the people that speak a particular language is part of having good command of the language and culture.

A sociopragmatic difference between a native Spanish and a native English speaker in the United States is that native English speakers tend to over apologize. An example would be in showing an over-concern for another person's well-being after a minor bump between friends or strangers. A native English speaker asks, "are you all right?", while a native Spanish speaker just says, "I am sorry". Another sociopragmatic difference is the use of the formal and informal form in Spanish. A native Spanish speaker will request permission to address someone they have just met in the informal form rather than the formal form of the language. Meanwhile, the formal form is not used in the English language. These sociopragmatic differences are what the heritage speaker must become aware of as they develop their language.

Acosta Corte writes that a difference between an L2 speaker and a heritage speaker is that a heritage speaker is exposed to the language early in life, and that L2 is acquired later in life. This statement is a little problematic because there are cases where some are exposed to a second language early in life as well. A difference that the author finds between the L2 and the heritage speaker is that, for most part, a second language is acquired during formal education, but a heritage speaker, at least at the beginning, the language acquisition is done in a more natural informal setting and among family members (Acosta Corte, A, 134, "II Congreso de Español como lengua extranjera en Asia-Pacífico").

Referring to Heritage Speakers, Acosta Corte mentions that in many occasions these speakers are not balanced bilinguals, and that the language deficiencies are not due to forgetfulness of the first language because they stopped using it. He writes that these speakers had an incomplete development of their first language coupled with some elements that showed a decrease of their L1. All these, Acosta Corte, points out are the reasons why a heritage speaker is more at ease using English, or the dominant language of the country that has become his or her own (Acosta Corte, A, 134, "II Congreso de Español como lengua extranjera en Asia-Pacífico").

Acosta Corte presents a chart for heritage speaker's classification in accordance with their linguistic capabilities. He mentions that he has adapted the same from the parameters proposed by Valdés et al. in her book. These authors provide a list of eleven "proficiency scales" as they describe them, adapted from the one made by Halamma (Valdés et al. 243). The chart presented by Acosta Corte has eight different classifications to cover the type of heritage speakers according to different criteria. Under the heading of those who are eloquent speakers and have a good understanding of the heritage language, Acosta Corte and Valdés et al. have placed at the very top, a heritage speaker that is an eloquent speaker in both languages and has good knowledge of the language used at home, and in the academic circle (Acosta Corte, A, 136, "II Congreso de Español como lengua extranjera en Asia-Pacífico"). A speaker that will be able to meet these criteria is one in which their parent's value education and make an effort to teach the language at home, and the speaker has received formal education to acquire the necessary grammar and language structure to perform at an elevated academic language proficiency.

The next two classifications show those speakers that have been educated in one language or the two languages; they are eloquent speakers with a good knowledge of the familial language. The difference between the two has is that one speaker comes from the urban area, while the other comes from a rural area (Acosta Corte, A, 138, "II Congreso de Español como lengua extranjera en Asia-Pacífico"). For obvious reasons, the speaker from the urban area has

more prestige than the one from the rural area. In many of the Spanish countries people living in the country side are discriminated by those living in the big cities. Many make fun of their rural vocabulary and accent.

Continuing with Acosta Corte classification of heritage speakers, he lists the particulars for the fourth group which is similar to the heritage speaker descriptions of groups two and three, with the difference being that instead of listing whether this speaker comes from a rural or urban setting, He limits the description of this speaker to one who has good control of a variety of the contact language (Acosta Corte, A, 138, "II Congreso de Español como lengua extranjera en Asia-Pacífico").

Under the heading of fluent speakers according to their preference in the use of the languages, Acosta Corte continues to present the classification of heritage speakers. This speaker is similar to groups two and three, he or she can come from the rural or urban setting, or from language contact, but the speaker prefers to use the heritage language. There are many reasons why someone chooses to continue to use the mother tongue. One of them could be the connection with the country of origin; another could be pride for their native language.

The last heading in the chart is reserved for those heritage speakers that produce, as he calls it, a "defective language" of their own heritage language. There are two classifications under the so called "defective language." The first one corresponds to number seven in the chart. And is said of the heritage speaker who has doubts of the language, produces defective speech, it shows an incomplete acquisition of the categories obligatory of the language and or limited vocabulary. (Acosta Corte, A, 138, "II Congreso de Español como lengua extranjera en Asia-Pacífico") When a speaker has not been exposed to the native language long enough it is hard to acquire all the language convection necessary to produce a more discrete vocabulary. When someone has limited vocabulary, it is obvious that it is hard to communicate well with other who has better command of the language that the heritage speaker is struggling to use.

Lastly, this heritage speaker is similar to the previous in the seventh category, but the difference is that this speaker shows a "wear out of the heritage language." The name is a little misleading, because when something has been wore out, it has been used too many times to the point of wearing out. In terms of language wear out, the meaning is the opposite, the language is not used, and it creates this language deficit. The heritage speaker is not able to form a coherent speech, and it is very hard to be understood.

Acosta Corte finds the classification made by Valdés with certain problematic attributions hard to distinguish one from the other. In reference with the wear out of the language and incomplete acquisition, the writer mentions that lexical loans, literal translations, or transfer of cognates could be equated to either of the two. (Acosta Corte, A, 139, "II Congreso de Español como lengua extranjera en Asia-Pacífico") Because it is hard to separate the two, if one was to use this classification, it will be hard to place a heritage language speaker in the proper category using this particular definition. The ones that do not share close similarities are very helpful, and easy to classify.

Acosta Corte concludes that although some heritage speakers could have had the opportunity to attend school in a Spanish country prior to emigration, or they could have attended a Spanish program or have been instructed by their family. The truth, he writes, is that heritage speakers have a deep lack of knowledge of the written language conventions. Many have learned the Spanish language as a continuum of sound, and are not able to separate the words, and transcribe what they produce orally (Acosta Corte, A, 139, “II Congreso de Español como lengua extranjera en Asia-Pacífico”). Their use of their second language interferes when they try to write, because they have been exposed for a longer period, and the sounds in English do not correlate to the ones in Spanish. The written errors are easy to spot, and trace to the English language influence.

Chapter 3 Methodology

This chapter covers the design of the study including an explanation of how the participants were selected, grouped and the initial interview questions that were asked to all the participants, and the survey completed by all the participants. This chapter also includes description of all the participants and charts that provide a quick glance of all the participants. A short video clip depicting young children making the trip alone from their native countries in Latin America into the United States was shown to the participants, and the questions related to the movie clip are presented here. Below are the four guiding questions which will be answered at the end of the study:

1. How did the age of arrival contribute to the loss or maintenance of the participant's native language?
2. Did the fact that some of the participants received formal elementary education in their native country help or not with their native language maintenance?
3. Was their Spanish culture preserved or did these participants exhibit some changes and adaptations to their newly adopted country?
4. Did their level of education determine their level of knowledge of the Spanish language?

The initial quest for the investigation was to find a group of people which met the following criteria (a) age, between seventeen to fifty years old in order to form three different groupings, (b) the age of arrival to the United States or Canada between four to ten years old, (c) Latin American born (d) bilingual Spanish speakers, (e) Gender, male or female. The participants who met all of the above criteria and that graciously agreed to be part of this study, of how Spanish language speakers have changed or maintain their Spanish after being immersed in a new language and culture over the years were chosen for this study.

The country of origin was not restricted to a specific Spanish speaking country; native Spanish speakers from any Spanish country were acceptable for the study, more vital was to select participants that were bilingual speakers, and one of the common languages that they all needed to share was Spanish. The fact that some were not able to write in Spanish was not considered to be a discriminatory factor for selection, because being able to communicate at least verbally was more essential. The place of residence was not considered restrictive, one participant lives in Canada, two in California, one in Florida that grew up in New York and the rest live in different areas of New York State.

The education and profession of the participants was important to study the final results of the data collected, but it did not exclude a participant from the study. When it came to gender, I tried to have a male participant in each of the three groups formed. The purpose of the male was simply to get the male perspective of the study, a contrast of opinion between male and female members of the groups.

The main characteristic to form a particular group was age relationship. Starting from the twenties in group one, the thirties for group two, and forties for group four; this arrangement will make it easier to analyze the group data obtained. It was proven difficult to have a large pool of participants, because of the age of arrival restriction, without it the number of participants could

have been greater. For future studies, I will recommend to consider year of residency as a factor, and not age of arrival as I did for this study. I feel that older adults try to settle in the United States, and children for the most part arrive at a later time, once their parents have settled into the country.

3.1 Data Collection

There were four methods of data collection; the first one was contact with the interviewee, via telephone or in person. The second was a self completed survey; some completed it in my presence, while other did it electronically. The third was a movie clip; some participants watched it in my presence while others watch it on their own. All participants answered the questions related to the movie immediately at the end of the movie. The fourth and last data collected was a writing sample provided by all the participants who were able to write in Spanish.

3.1.1 Interview

The purpose of the initial interview was to collect some information from all of the nine participants, in order to determine whether or not they could be part of the study. All the information gathered, as well as other information known prior because of previous acquaintance with some participants, was used to write the individual background information as described in the section labeled “The participants.” The interviews were conducted in English or Spanish. If I was not familiar with the person, I conducted the interview in Spanish. I wanted them to feel comfortable, and at the same time it gave me the opportunity to evaluate their Spanish language. Some participants were interviewed in person and some others over the telephone, because they lived in another state or country. Some participants gave short answers, while others gave lengthy explanations to the same questions. The interview was controlled; the participant did not have prior knowledge of the questions that he or she was answering. The full interview took from almost three minutes to some over ten minutes.

The questions were designed to help to understand a little more about the participant’s language and cultural knowledge, and their new language experiences once they settled in the United States. Questions two and four were geared to discover the knowledge of the language that the participant had prior to their arrival to the US. or Canada. Question three was given in order to find out what formal English education the participant had. To find out if the participant was familiar with the place with their parents were born, answer to question five provided that information. At the end of the initial interview all the participants gave the answers to the following questions:

1. How old were you when you came to the United States:
2. Do you remember if you were able to speak Spanish prior to your arrival to the United States?
3. When you started school in the United States, do you remember if you attended a bilingual or an ESL program?
4. What language did you speak at home?
5. Where are your parents from? Do you know the name of the particular state?
6. Do you have brothers and sisters?

7. What school have you completed? If a master program, what was the field of study?
8. Did you go to school only in the United States; If no, where, and up to what grade?
9. How old are you?
10. What languages do you speak?

3.1.2 Survey

A survey was given to all the participants; some filled it up in person, while others used technology for its completion. The survey was the second method of data collection; it was designed to analyze the control of the English language by the participants, and at the same time to discover how they rate themselves when it comes to their English and Spanish language use. Other questions sought to determine if the participants used code switching, and other questions would elicit the degree of influence that growing up in the new adopted country had in the participants.

Questions one through nine are general questions to obtain pertinent information: name, gender, age, place of birth, age of arrival to the US or Canada, last grade completed, highest degree of education, occupation, and the use of a language other than Spanish. If the answer was yes to the use of another language, then the participant could proceed to answer the rest of the questions.

For question ten, the participants needed to disclose the age when they started to learn each of the languages that they speak, and age when the particular language was mastered. For question eleven the participants listed where they learned their second language. Question twelve was important, because it provided information of the language that the participants practiced at home or with their caretakers.

Question thirteen had to do with the usage of the language in the past. This question was intended to find out whether or not the participant was in fact bilingual.

Questions fourteen was similar to the previous questions, but it had to do with the current language use. The difference is that in this question the participants name the language that they use primary in their everyday life. In question fifteen the participant provided an approximation of the length of time that they have been speaking their second language. Although the question seems straight forward, it could be subject to interpretation, because it could have been clarified further. For example it could have been written in the following matter: once you mastered your second language, how long had you been speaking your second language?

For question sixteen the participants were asked to rate all the languages that they speak on a scale from one being excellent, four being average, and seven poor. The language needed to be evaluated in terms of speaking, understanding speech, reading, and writing. The answers to this question will provide data of how the participants evaluate themselves. Questions seventeen and eighteen will provide information of the degree of bilingualism that each of the participants possess. Question nineteen starts building up the case for code switching among the participants. The requested answer for question twenty is the frequency of the code switching by the

participant. Question twenty-one has four true or false statements geared to investigate the reasons of code switching by the participants.

Questions twenty-two through twenty three will provide information about the degree of influence that living in their adopted country has on the participants.

3.1.3 Short Movie Clip

The movie clip was in Spanish, the movie told the story of a young fourteen-year-old boy that left his native country Guatemala, and makes the trip north to the United States alone, with no money or direction. He recounts all the bad things that he has witnessed throughout his trip. He mentioned the horrible conditions that the train passengers suffer in the hands of Los Zetas gang members when they travel through Chiapas, Mexico. The gang members rob, cut off the fingers, or even kill and toss their victims off the train.

I was present when some participants saw the movie, while for others I just sent the link. Immediately after watching the video the participants were asked three questions that were to be answered in Spanish. Question one was the reaction to the movie, question two asked the participants to give three things that impressed them about the movie, while question three tries to put the participants in the same position with the main character of the movie. The answer to these questions will serve to evaluate their Spanish language, and also to find out if the participants were sensitive to the calamities that many Spanish people suffer in their country.

3.1.4 Writing Sample

This was the last data collection sample requested from all the participants. The writing needed to be about a past experience that they remember when growing up in their adopted country. I told them my own anecdote of when I was learning English at school; as a child I was always eager to participate, and volunteered to provide the answers when the teacher asked a question. One time my teacher wrote the word Island on the blackboard, and asked if someone knew how to pronounce it. Me, being me of course I raised my hand and pronounced it just the way it was written, using my Spanish language knowledge. I don't remember well what happened next, but I know that it was the first time that I learned to pronounce the word properly /i'lænd/. Encouraged by my experience, the participants that were able to write in Spanish completed the task. The participants that were not able to write in Spanish will be evaluated as a bilingual or heritage speaker of the Spanish language.

3.2 The Participants

A total of nine participants were selected for this study, the participants were grouped by age, ranging from seventeen years old to fifty years old. The younger group was assigned as group one, the members of this group were Luisa, Ana, and Daniel. Group one participants needed to be between the ages of seventeen to twenty-two years old. Group two participants were: Candy, Alondra, and Jacobo; the age of this group needed to be from twenty-five to thirty five years old. The third group participants were Ofelia, Orlando, and Néstor. (See Tables 1, 1A, and 1B starting on page 39 for detailed participant's description.) The countries of origin for the

participants were Colombia, Dominican Republic, and El Salvador. All participants arrived to the United States and Canada as young children, their age of arrival ranged between the ages of four years old to ten years old. Their name identifier, sex, age and other related data is included in their individual survey. The following is some background information for each of the participants:

3.2.1 Group 1

Luisa is a hard worker. She is a very friendly twenty-two-year-old young woman. Her country of origin is The Dominican Republic. When she was ten years old she moved to The United States together with her parents. Her father is from a State called Moca; instead of State she called it “campo”, her mother is from a State called Cotuit. She has one younger brother. She attended school prior to her arrival into this country. She went to a private all day kindergarten she called it “matutino”, she told me that her parents dropped her in the morning to attend the kindergarten classes, and picked her up by the afternoon after they were done with their work. The highest grade that she completed in The Dominican Republic was the 5th grade. She told me that the school is divided in mornings and afternoons class schedules, she called them “tandas” She attended the afternoon schedule from 12:00 to 5:00 p.m. She remembers that her favorite subject was History, where she was learning about the industrial revolution. She loved all her classes and she was a very good student. All her classes were in Spanish, and she did not know any English. She took a study abroad program in Italy. She said that she does not write Italian, but she can speak and also understand it. Once in The United States, she remembers that she arrived in September, and that she waited about three weeks prior to starting the 6th grade at the Port Jefferson School District. Because she did not speak any English she was placed in the ESL program. She took three classes: science, music, and art; for the rest of the day she took the ESL class. The ESL class was all in English, the teacher did know Spanish, but did not use it in the classroom during instruction time. She spoke Spanish with her parents at home. She said that her best friends were the students in the ESL class, and she continues to have a friendly relationship with them. Many of the students on her ESL class were also from The Dominican Republic, but there were others in the ESL class that came from countries where Spanish was not the native language. She left the ESL program when she started her high School classes; at that point she started taking advanced classes. She has a bachelor degree in culinary management, and she works as a chef. One experience that she wanted to share happened on her early years of learning English. Luisa told me that she stutters, and she had difficulties with the English pronunciation. She said that she could understand what was being taught in the ESL class, but due to her problem with pronunciation she did not participate verbally. It took three years for her teachers to discover the underlying participation problem. She received speech therapy, learned exercises to compensate her stuttering, had one on one therapy sessions that helped her to improve her English and Spanish pronunciation; after that she was able to participate in all class activities. I was not able to detect any stuttering issues during our phone conversation. She still has this condition. Luisa is part of the younger group, classified by her age as group one.

Ana is a Salvadorian shy young woman, who moved to Canada with her entire immediate family when she was four years old. She did not go to school in El Salvador, her first language was Spanish, but now she prefers to speak French. The entire family attended school for one year

to learn the language and the culture of Quebec, Canada. She remembered that when she started school, she did not know French. She also studied English, but she does not feel that her English is that good. I asked her where the people need to use English and she said that only in the downtown area of Quebec. Ana said that where she lives and works French is the language that everybody uses. Her parents have been instrumental in teaching her the Spanish language at home. She also practices it when she visits her native country, and the place where she and her parents were born; San Francisco Gotera, Morazán. When it comes to her formal education, she graduated from high school, and did not go to college. She studied cosmetology and now works at a beauty salon.

Daniel is Colombian, he is a hard worker, and he likes to help others. His parents are from Medellín, Colombia. He left his country when he was ten. He was in the 4th grade in Colombia. He remembers his school, it was in the open, and he remembers his classmates. All his classes were in Spanish, and he did not study English, because it was not offered in the early years of schooling. He was a long time resident of Brentwood and attended that school district. Brentwood is a community where the great majorities are people of Spanish background. Daniel moved to Babylon three years ago. When I asked him about his experience of learning English, he said that it was very, very hard. He did not understand anything that was being taught in the classroom. This participant was in the bilingual program for two years; the teachers spoke English and Spanish. He said that he speaks both languages now. He did not graduate from high school. The last grade that he completed was the 11th grade. He works as a contractor. I asked him if he learned that trade in school, and he told me no; he learned it from his prior boss.

3.2.2 Group 2

Candy is a very social and caring young woman. She was born in Colombia. She came to The United States when she was four years old. She is now thirty one. She has lived in New York since her arrival to the country. Candy remembers attending the head start program at the Brentwood School District, located in Long Island, New York. She remembers being in the bilingual program, and the teachers speaking in English and Spanish in class. She left the program when she completed the second grade, and passed all the required tests in order to be placed in the regular 3rd grade classes. She told me that at home she spoke Spanish with her parents and her brother too. Her mother and father are from Medellín, Colombia. Candy is aware of her language change since her arrival to this country, because when she visits her relatives in Colombia, they make fun of her accent. They tell her that she talks like an Indian. I did not understand what she meant by that statement, so I asked her to explain what she meant. She gave me this example: “yo querer comer” In reality this is further from the truth. She is very fluent in both Spanish and English. When I socialize with her, I can carry on a long conversation in any topic that we happen to be discussing. She also mentioned that she makes up words, and that her relatives in Colombia correct her. For example, she will say the Anglicism “parquearse” and they tell her that the word is “estacionarse” many Spanish speakers use Anglicism in their everyday conversations here in The United States, and in many other Spanish speaking countries. She has noticed that they speak at a faster rate than she does, and she admits that she can also notice the different accent of her relatives. Candy is a bilingual teacher in the Brentwood School District; based on her profession she is more aware of the Spanish language grammar and its use. She is a very knowledgeable and confident teacher; she only has some doubts on the Spanish language

production when she visits her relatives in Colombia. As far as grouping for the purpose of this study Candy belongs in group two.

Alondra is thirty-one years, she is a very smart, and serious young woman. She is a native from Colombia; at five years old she arrived to the United States and her mother and father settled in Babylon, Long Island, New York. She has an older sister and a younger brother that was born here in The United States. Her Mom is from Cali, Colombia and her father is from Naguabo, Puerto Rico. She told me that she went to kindergarten in Colombia, but was unable to recall anything about her kindergarten class. At the beginning she spoke only Spanish with her family and friends. As a child she attended the Babylon School District in Long Island, New York, where she learned English; she remembers going to school and that her classes were all in English. She told me that she was pulled out of her regular classes to take her ESL (English as a second language) class. The class was small; her ESL teacher spoke only English during the class. She did not remember if the other kids spoke Spanish like her. Alondra works as a bilingual teacher for the Brentwood School District; she graduated high school from this District also. She has a Masters in elementary education and a Bachelor in ESL. Based on her age she belongs in group two.

Jacob is a reserved thirty-two years old Colombian native, he came to the United States when he was four years old, attended kindergarten in Colombia. He remembers that his classroom smelled like clay, the clay that he used to play. Jacobo has one sister; he grew up in Brentwood, New York. He said that he started first grade in Brentwood, and that his classes were all in English. He spoke Spanish at home with his parents and grand parents, both of his parents are from Antioquía, Colombia. He graduated from NYU with a Bachelor in Comparative Literature; he has always enjoyed writing poems. After graduation he moved to Florida and now works as a physical therapist aide. In the future he would like to go back to college and complete his masters in physical therapy, and to be able to have his own practice. I knew Jacobo's parents for many years prior to meeting him; I met him for the first time when he was around 16 years old, he had a very busy social life with youngsters of similar age. He was always coming and going. For this study he is a member or group two.

3.2.3 Group 3

Ofelia is forty years old, born in El Salvador, before moving to the United States she attended school there. She remembered that her favorite subject was social studies. She laughed when she told that it was pathetic of how she hated school as a child, but now she is a school teacher, and practically lives in school. She was ten years old when she came to the United States. She spoke Spanish at home with the parents a practice that she stills continues. Her parents are from Morazán, a state (Department as they call it) in El Salvador. Her family settled in Farmingdale, New York where she has been living since her arrival. This group three participant learned English when she attended the ESL program at the Farmingdale School District. She had great teachers, she remembers that all her classes were in English; Ofelia remembers making the connections with pictures, she also remembers that at first it was difficult, but after a year she got adjusted to the school setting, and it was okay then. She has been teaching Spanish in the Farmingdale School District for over 10 years; she also has a second job, and she cares for her mother as well. Because of her busy schedule she did not want to

participate in this project, but I convinced her to do it, and she graciously accepted. As far as her education she has a Masters in literature. For grouping purposes, she is a member of group three

Orlando is an accomplished businessman. He is vice president of a City Bank in New York City. He also does income taxes when the time to file taxes comes. He is very social and loves to spend time with his family and friends. Orlando is forty-four years old; he was born in Colombia, his parents are from Bogotá, Colombia. He arrived to the United States when he was five years old. He believed that he completed first grade in Colombia. He said that he was able to attend school as such an early age, because his mother was a teacher in Colombia. This participant remembers little about his schooling in Colombia, he remembered the recreation hour. He also remembered a big back pack that his grandma made for him to carry his books and things. Once here in the United State his family lived in Patchogue; he mentioned that at the time there were not many Spanish families living in Patchogue. When he started school in this country he was placed in the ESL Kindergarten program, and his classes were in English and Spanish. He said that after two years attending the program his mother noticed that he was getting the language mixed, so his mother took him out of the ESL program and put him in regular English classes. He credits his parents for keeping the Spanish language at home. He said that he feels comfortable speaking Spanish with them at home and that most of the communication with his friends and at work is done in English. He also mentioned that later on once the family learned English they also used the English language at home, but that he always spoke Spanish with his father a practice that he still continues to do. As a youth he grew up in Shirley, New York, and now lives in Smithtown. As far as his education he has a Bachelor in Business Administration and he is also a CPA. For grouping purposes, he is part of group three.

Néstor is a forty-one years old male, originally from El Salvador. He is easy going, and family oriented; both of his parents are from El Salvador. He grew up in Hollywood, California surrounding by his aunts, and cousins. He works as an electronic technician at a local hospital in California. He came to this country when he was nine years old. He lived two years in Mexico prior to his arrival to the United States. He completed first grade in El Salvador, second, and third grade in Mexico, and he started the fourth grade in California. He said that he did not remember much about his early years of schooling in the Spanish speaking countries; the only thing that he remembered was that the teachers used to hit the students if they misbehaved in class.

Néstor had a tough time in school here in the United States, he spoke only Spanish and at the time there were not ESL classes offered to students in the school that he attended in Hollywood, California. He was not able to understand what the teachers were saying in the classrooms; eventually he learned the English language on his own. He graduated from high school, went to college and graduated with a technology degree.

He continues practicing both languages; for the most part at work and with friends he speaks English, while at his mother's place he communicates only in Spanish. Néstor was very accommodating and helpful during this research. He was eager to participate, and was enthusiastic during this phone interview. For the purpose of this research he is a member of group three.

In this chapter a detailed description of the methodology used for this research work, and the different methods of data collection, as well as description of all the participants and grouping tables of the participants was provided. In chapter four that follows the analysis of the data collected will be presented, starting with the initial interview, followed by the survey, movie clip and writing sample. At the end of chapter four a conclusion per group is presented.

Table 1 Background Information

Group 1

Name/age	Age of arrival	Went to school outside USA/up to what grade	Starting grade USA/Canada	Attended Bilingual/ ESL prog. or None	How many years in the Bilingual or ESL program	School where English was learned	Knows specific area where parents are from	Extra information provided
Ana/22	4	No	Kindergarten	Bilingual/French	1	Quebec, Canada	yes	Her favorite language is French, did not remember much about early years of schooling
Luisa/22	10	Yes/5th	6 th	ESL	3	Port Jefferson, NY	yes	Remembers about her school. She was a good student her favorite subject History
Daniel/22	10	Yes/4th	5 th	Bilingual	2	Brentwood, NY	yes	Remembers a little about his school. Hard time learning English

Table 1A Background Information

Group 2

Name/age	Age of arrival	Went to school outside USA/up to what grade	Starting grade USA/Canada	Attended Bilingual/ESL Program or None	How many years in the Bilingual or ESL program	School where English was learned	Knows specific area where parents are from	Extra information provided
Alondra/31	5	Kindergarten	Kindergarten	ESL	2	Babylon, NY	yes	She remembers being pulled for ESL.
Candy/30	4	No	Nursery	Bilingual	3	Brentwood, NY	yes	She remembers her ESL class, the items having English and Spanish names
Jacobo/32	4	Kindergarten	first grade	Does not Remember	Regular English class	Brentwood, NY	yes	He remembers the classroom, the smell of clay and the playground

Table 1B Background Information

Group 3

Name/age	Age of arrival	Went to school outside USA/up to what grade	Starting grade USA/Canada	Attended Bilingual/ ESL Program or None	How many years in the Bilingual or ESL program	School where English was learned	Knows specific area where parents are from	Extra information provided
Ofelia/40	10	Yes/4 th	5 th	ESL		Farmingdale, NY	yes	Did not like school in El Salvador/she had great teachers in her ESL class.
Orlando/41	6	Yes/1 st	Kindergarten	ESL	2	Patchogue, NY	yes	He remembers little about his class in Colombia. He remembers his ESL class and not being able to speak English.
Néstor/41	9	Yes/3 rd	4th grade	0	0	Los Angeles, CA	yes	He had a hard time learning English

Chapter 4 Data Analysis

In this chapter the analysis of all the data collected during this research is organized by groups. The data analyzed consist of the initial interview, survey, movie clip and writing sample. There are also charts of their self-assessment of their English and Spanish. The findings are organized by group and then compared against each member's data within their assigned group.

Data Analysis - Groups 1 to 3

The writing sample was used as the foundation for assessing each participant's mastery of Spanish. Each participants writing sample will be analyzed in depth for vocabulary, grammatical syntax and clarity of thought. Below is a breakdown of the quantitative data for each group and a brief description of the results of their writing samples.

Group 1

All participants are twenty years of age. There were two females and one male, out of the three only one had a college degree. Two of the participants had immigrated at age ten and had received some formal education in their native country before immigrating, while one immigrated at age four and received no formal education. Out of the three, that participant was effectively a heritage speaker, as she was unable to provide a written sample in Spanish, and her own self-assessment for writing was five out of seven, the lowest of the group. The other two participants' writing was analyzed based on vocabulary, grammatical syntax and was found to be at a very basic level. It was below that of a native Spanish speaker but in line with the formal elementary education they received in their native country.

Group 2

All the participants were in their early 30's, college educated professionals who had entered the country between the ages four and five, after receiving very little or no formal education in their native land. There were two females and one male. All three rated themselves very high on the written self-assessment for Spanish with the male rating himself at the lowest, at a three. All three writing samples were at a very high level, either at or just below that of a native Spanish speaker. The two females had no mistakes of grammar or syntax and the male made three small mistakes of gender agreement.

Group 3

All three participants were in their earl 40's. There were two males and one female. All three had college diplomas. Two of the participants had received early elementary education in their native country while one of them, Orlando, had not. Orlando's writing sample was at the level roughly of a native speaker in the second grade. He had multiple errors in spelling and syntax that interfered with the clarity of the writing. The other two had minor errors that did not interfere with the meaning of their samples. Their level of writing was comparable to that of a native speaker.

4.1 DATA 1

4.1.1 Initial Interview Group 1

Group one has a total of three members; one male and two females; all three are twenty-two years old. For the purpose of this study the name of all participants were kept confidential and their actual names have been replaced. In group one are Luisa, Daniel and Ana. Luisa and Daniel moved to the United States when they were ten years old, and Ana moved to Canada when she was four. Luisa moved from the Dominican Republic to the United States twelve years ago, and Daniel moved from Colombia twelve years as well, Ana came from El Salvador to Canada eighteen years ago.

The initial interviews were conducted in Spanish and over the telephone for all the participants in this group. I felt that we shared a common bond, which was the Spanish language. The participants were comfortable talking to someone that shared knowledge of the Spanish language. Luisa's interview was done in Spanish, but there were instances where English was used. The interviews were conducted with the understanding that all participants were able to understand Spanish and they were not going to have difficulties answering the questions. The interview was conducted in a question and answer format. I will not be writing about all ten questions asked, but only those that show contrasting data among these participants.

The first person that I interviewed in this group was Luisa; I explained to her the reason why I was conducting the interview. My tone of voice was moderate; I spoke clearly, slow and in a relaxed matter. I wanted her to feel comfortable, being that I did not know anything about her. The interview was done in the "familiar you" in Spanish, because she is much younger than me. It is customary to address younger people using the "familiar you" in El Salvador my place of origin. When I asked her the first question: how old were you when you came to the United States? She said, "I was ten years old when I came to the United States." Her response reminded me of the type of response that you give to a teacher in a language class. You provide the new information and re-state the rest of question. Her voice was soft, and because I was a total stranger to her, I sensed a low level of anxiety. I replied to her response, "perfect," in order to advance to the next question, and to build up her confidence. When I asked her the third interview question to find out if she attended a bilingual or ESL program, she disclosed that she attended an ESL program in the Port Jefferson School District in New York. She was in the ESL program from her arrival to the United States as a 5th grader until the ninth grade; she had fond memories of her class, and her friends in the ESL class. She said that at the beginning, her ESL class was almost all day and after that class she took science, art, and music. The science, art and music classes were in English. Her ESL teacher spoke only in English, but she did know Spanish. In her class there was a student from Germany, one from Pakistan, one from Colombia and the rest were from the Dominican Republic. She was the participant that provided the most detail about her ESL class. When we reached question number five, the interview had changed, my speaking was faster, typical of Spanish speakers, and she no longer had anxiety. I asked her where her parents were from, and she replied, "Dominicans." She did not make the difference between nationality and country of origin; I proceeded with the second part of question five, and asked her if she knew the exact location where her parents were from. She gave me the exact location. This multipart question was important because it shows the connection with the mother

land of the parents. The children are reminded by their parents of the land and culture they left behind.

In order to find out more about her education, question seven was asked. She started to say her bachelor degree in Spanish, but she quickly switched to English. I repeated what I thought I heard, and she corrected me and again repeated her bachelor in culinary management. I said “perfect”, and asked her in Spanish, if she was working, and she said yes, in Spanish. She said that she works as a chef. Luisa is the only person in this group that has a bachelor degree. Ana graduated high school, and Daniel completed only the eleventh grade. When it comes to her English, Luisa speaks like a native speaker, without a Dominican accent, but her Spanish is typical of a native speaker of the Dominican Republic. I found it very interesting to be able to distinguish her Dominican accent in Spanish, but no trace of it in English.

The next person to interview was Daniel; the initial interview was done in Spanish and over the telephone. During the first question I spoke slowly, and in a clear manner to make sure that the participant understood what was being asked. When I asked him: “How old were you when you arrived to the United States?” He answered in a matter of fact, as he said “I was ten years old.” My questioning continued in the same manner, and for question number three about what he remembered about the school when he first arrived to the United States, he said that he started the fifth grade; and that it was very hard because he did not understand anything, that he “was very lost in life.” He said that he attended a bilingual program for about two years, Spanish was spoken there. The program was in the Brentwood School District, in New York. When I asked question number five pertaining to the origins of his parents, he said that both were from Medellín, Colombia. During question number eight, to find out if he went to school outside the United States, he answered “yes, yes,” and he said that he attended grade four. I repeated his answer, but corrected his response, and I said fourth grade. He did not make any comments pertaining to the correction. When it came time to describe what he remembered about his school, his voice sounded melancholic and he proceeded to say that he remembered his classmates, that the school was outside in a patio, and that they used uniforms.

During the interview I found out that he works in the construction trade, as a contractor. He learned the trade while working for another contractor. Daniel did not finish high school; the highest grade completed was the eleventh grade. He pluralized the Spanish word for grade (grados), but this time I did not make any corrections. The interview concluded in the same polite manner as when it started.

Ana is the third member of group one. She has lived in Quebec, Canada since she was four. At the beginning of her initial interview, my speech sounded a little bit scripted. I have not talked to her for many years, and I was not certain if she was going to be able to understand me. The first question that I asked was to know how old she was when she arrived to Canada. I spoke slowly, and she quickly responded with a little French accent in Spanish “Four.” The interview continued at the same rate for question three to find out about the school program that she attended in order to learn her second language. She said that before she started school she only spoke Spanish, but she attended a program that she could not recall the name in English or Spanish where they taught her how to speak French. Ana remembered little about her early schooling. One reason could be that she was taught a language that was new to her, and she

probably tried to forget the experience. In school all her classes were in French. Continuing with question five I asked her if she knew where her parents were from and the reply I got was El Salvador, then I asked her if she knew the location where they were from; she said that they were from Morazán. Question eight was not applicable.

Ana is a soft spoken young lady; she graduated from High School, and studied to become a beautician. She currently works in that field. Any extra information was not volunteered. She limited her responses to short answers and did not elaborate, contrary to Luisa and Daniel that both went into detail about their experience in school. Part of the reason could be that she arrived to Canada when she was much younger than Luisa and Daniel.

This group has a diverse education background; Luisa completed her bachelor, Ana completed high school, and studied to be a beautician, while Daniel only completed the eleventh grade. Daniel and Luisa are able to continue practicing their Spanish, because they live in communities that afford them that privilege. They work with people that speak English and Spanish, while Ana has a small circle of Spanish speakers. She is surrounded by people that mostly speak French.

4.1.2 Initial Interview Group 2

The three members of this group consist of two females and one male. It was important to have a male member in each of the groups to be able to contrast the data with the other members of the group. In this group are Alondra, Candy, and Jacobo. The initial interview was conducted in English for this group. The interviews were made with the assumption that each of the members speak English, and that they will have no problem understanding what was being asked, and because of this they were not going to have any problems providing the answers to the questions that were asked.

A similarity that the members of this group shared was their age, the youngest was Candy, she is thirty, Alondra is thirty-one, and Jacobo is thirty two. Both Candy and Jacobo arrived to the United States at the age four years old, while Alondra arrived when she was five. Candy and Alondra have been living in this country for twenty-six years, while Jacobo has been here for twenty eight. Their English is that of a native speaker of the language, because they arrived prior to the critical period they show no traces of a Spanish accent when they speak the English language. All three were born in Colombia and grew up in areas where large populations of Spanish speakers live.

Although each individual was presented with the same ten questions, I will not be making comments for all of them, however, I will be highlighting just some that I consider yield a significant contrast among the participants.

Candy was the first person that I contacted to do the initial interview. She is the youngest member of the group. I have known Candy for many years. Her interview was done over the telephone. At the very beginning I gave her a choice of language to conduct the interview, and she replied that whatever was easy for me. With that response from her, I decided to do it in English, because it is the language that we normally have used for communication over the

years. I told her that we were about to start the initial interview, and that if she had any other information that she would like to add, she could do so. I noticed that our interactions were very comfortable; I asked the questions in a friendly matter, and in return; she responded in a soft tone, giving stress free responses.

I initiated the questions and she provided the answers to my questions. At times she gave the answer to a particular question, and proceeded to add something extra related to the topic at hand. Her responses were long, and if she gave a yes or no answer, she proceeded to expand on her own. At the end of her answers, I gave her a sign of approval often “ok”, or “aha”, “very good”, some other times I changed my intonation to show that I was pleasantly surprised for the new information that she had just disclosed. Question number three was to find out if she had formal education at the beginning to learn the English language. She said that she attended a bilingual nursery school, and remembered the classroom and the items in the classroom being labeled in both languages. By her response I can tell that she remembers the positive experiences that she had while learning her second language. Question number five sought to find out the place where her parents were born, the specific location. Candy was not sure of what I was asking; she sounded unsure but in fact provided the proper response. Knowing the place where the parents were born tells me that the parents have taken the time to share their culture with the child, and that now as an adult the individual still cherishes that information, which connects them, with the country they left behind. Question eight of the initial interview, was a multipart question, and because I paused for about two seconds during the question, she interrupted and started to give the answer to the initial question. I continued with the question, and she stopped her answer and waited until I was done with the question to provide her full answer.

About her education, candy has completed her Master’s in TESOL (Teaching English of Speakers of other language) Education, and a Bachelor’s in Math. Because she is a bilingual teacher and she uses the English and Spanish language every day, it gives her the opportunity to maintain both languages at the highest level of function. Candy and the other members of her group share a high level of education. All three have completed college, and another member of her group is also a teacher.

Alondra’s initial interview was done in person; she was a little nervous. I have known Alondra for many years, but I became more acquainted with her about four or five years ago. She is a very reserved person, and at times shy. When we started the interview, I told her the reason why we were having the interview, and immediately proceeded to ask the first question. My tone of voice was different than the one used with Candy, it was a step down from the friendly tone that I had when I interacted with Candy; doing this analysis I was able to detect the difference in tone, and equate the difference in the type of relationship that we share. I am not as close of a friend to Alondra as I am with Candy. I could say that knowing her personally influenced my interactions a little bit. The praise phrases I used with Alondra were similar to those that I used with Candy.

This was the first question, “How old were you when you came to the United States?” With a slight nervous voice, she said five years old. Her answer was very direct. As the interview progressed my tone of voice became friendlier and her tone of voice became more relaxed. Most of her answers were short and she did not have many expanded answers. For question number

three, I asked her if she went to school here to learn English and she responded yes, because she did not elaborate I followed up with this question, “What do you remember about the class?” She proceeded to describe the class, she did not anticipate a follow up question, and she got nervous. She gave a two word answer, and at the end of her answer she burst into a nervous laugh. I took control of the interview, by re-directing her to another question related to the topic. I asked her if the class was in Spanish or if the class was in English. This gave her time to compose herself, and she regained her composure, she was more at ease, and provided more information. When it came to question number eight, I broke up the questions into three parts getting the first answer, and then proceeded to the second part and so on. She said that she went to kindergarten in Colombia, but she did not remember anything about the class. I am not sure if she has tried to forget about her school experience outside the United States, because she has adopted the life and culture of this country, or if she did not want to remember her early schooling because it was not the same or better than the one she received in this country. When she came to the country she was five, the other two members of her group were four, and were able to share a little something about their schooling outside the United States. The fact that she did not want to or was not able to share any of her experiences I can not draw a conclusion as to the type of experience she had in her native country.

Alondra has a Master’s degree in TESOL, and a Bachelor’s in Elementary Education. She works as an ESL teacher in a community where a large population of Spanish speakers live; this gives her ample opportunity to practice both the English and Spanish language.

Jacobo’s interview was done over the telephone. He lives in another state, his work schedule is very sporadic, making it difficult to get a hold of him. I have known him for a long time, but we do not interact socially. Our interactions are brief, just a quick hello. At the beginning I noticed that he was influenced by my straight forward questioning, and he gave the answers in a similar manner and tone, but as the interview progressed we both got a little bit more comfortable. The interview was conducted in English, after asking the first question I quickly realized the tape recorder was not on, as he gave me his answer I interrupted and told him in Spanish to wait. I normally talk to him in Spanish, but I know very well that he speaks perfect English as well. I feel that because of this, unconsciously I had switched to Spanish. Once I checked that the recorder was recording, I repeated the same question in English: How old were you when you came to the United States? And he quickly gave me the same answer as before the interruption.

When I asked him question three that had to do with getting information of whether or not he attended an ESL or a bilingual program. He replied that he did not remember and that he thought that his classes were all in English.

Question number five proved to be confusing for him. When I asked if he knew the place where his parents were from, he proceeded to name the town rather than the state. I gave him a name of a state in Colombia to provide a little guidance. It was then, that he told me the name of the state where his parents were from. The fact that he knew the state as well as the exact town proves that he has a strong cultural connection with Colombia. I believe that the confusion that this question generates has to do with the different word that is used to express the same thing. Here in the US. the word is state, but in Colombia the word that is used to express state is

department. Both have different meanings in each of the languages. Prior to the interview I was not aware of this difference. I thought that, because the participants have grown here in the US. they would be able to make the connection and provide the answer that I was trying to obtain. Clearly the participants needed a little more clarification.

Just like I did with Alondra I broke question number eight in parts, I was able to get the information that I needed, and it was easier for the participant to follow. He asked me to repeat a part of the multipart question, but I think that it had to do with the phone connection at his end. Jacobo mentioned that he attended kindergarten in Colombia. He said that he remembered his classroom, the smell of clay he used to play with, and he remembered the playground. Jacobo left the country as a young child and only had pleasant memories.

As far as education, I asked him which education level he completed here in the United States, and he said college. I then asked him if he completed his bachelor, and he said yes. I did not want to pressure him in talking more about college. I know that he writes poems, and that he graduated from NYU. He attained a bachelor's in comparative literature. Jacobo's responses to the interview were very similar to Alondra's. They both gave short answers and did not share any extra information, as opposed to Candy who went into detail with her responses. In part it could be that their personality is very similar. Alondra and Jacobo are both reserved individuals, and probably did not feel inclined to share too much about their past. Candy, on the other hand, is very social, and her personality is the opposite of Alondra and Jacobo.

4.1.3 Initial Interview Group 3

This group is made up of three participants, two are males and one is a female, the body make up of this group is the same as the previous two mentioned groups. Originally I had two females and one male, but due to difficulties trying to locate one of the female participants, I was able to find a volunteer male participant that replaced her. For group three, I will be reporting only about the three participants that completed all four required data: Initial interview, survey, movie clip, and writing sample. The members of the group that met these requirements were: Ofelia, Orlando, and Néstor. Ofelia and Néstor are both from El Salvador, with the difference that Ofelia grew up in New York, and Néstor grew up in California. Orlando was born in Colombia and grew up in New York. All three participants are forty-one years old. Orlando and Ofelia have lived in New York since they were six years old, and Néstor has lived in California since he was nine years old.

All three initial interviews were done in English, Néstor's and Ofelia's were interviewed by phone, and Orlando's was done in person. Of this group Ofelia was the only member of this group that I did not know. She was recommended by a friend of mine. I contacted her and it took some convincing for her to participate in the study.

Orlando was the first person that I interviewed in this group. I have known him for over twenty years, his personality is very outgoing, he is very talkative, and he was eager to participate. He came to my house and I had the questions prepared for him. I started asking the questions talking in a slow and friendly manner, at which he replied very fast, the way he naturally speaks. He sounds like a native English speaker; he gave very detailed answers to my

questions. Whenever he would pause I would acknowledge his responses with a short “aha”, or “I see”, to show that I was interested in what he was saying, and in response he continued to provide ample detail.

Just like the other participants, I started Orlando’s interview by asking him how old was he when he came to the United States. I was speaking in a slow and clear manner. He replied very quickly, and he said, “I was five years old.” In question three he was asked if he attended and ESL or a bilingual program in order to learn English here in the United States. He explained that where he lived at the time Patchogue, New York there were not too many Spanish speaking people and the school was just starting an ESL Program. He said that they put him in this program because he did not know a word in English; his classes were in both languages English and Spanish. Orlando also explained that after a while his parents noticed that he was getting his Spanish and English languages confused, so his parents took him out of the ESL program, and enrolled him in regular English classes at his school. He believed that it happened more or less in the second grade.

In question five, I asked him if he knew where his parents were from, the exact location, without hesitation he said that both were from Bogotá, Colombia. I said Ok, good and proceeded with the interview. Question number eight was about his education outside the United States, He said that he attended first grade in Colombia, I acted surprised to hear his response, and I said “really!” He proceeded to say that he remembered bits and pieces, it was a long time ago, but he did remember a little bit. I tried to guide him a little bit, and told him if he remembered about a particular class that he liked, or the school, or some of his friends. He said that he did remember his school more particularly, the break time. He mentioned that his grandmother had made him a large back pack to carry his books and things.

Orlando was beginning his formative years in his native land. The input necessary to gradually acquire the language, vocabulary, and structure ended when he moved to the United States. It was then left to his parents, family and friends to keep the language and culture alive.

Orlando’s line of work is in finance, he attended college, went to school to become a CPA, works as vice president of a bank in New York City. Most of the clientele that he serves are English speaker. He is a very accomplished man, very outgoing, and always willing to help. Because most of the time he uses one language, the other one is suppressed and left to minimal use.

Néstor’s initial interview was conducted over the telephone. I knew him since he was a child, and although I had not talked to him for several years, when I called him to ask him to be part of this study he gladly accepted. During the interview my tone of voice was very relaxed, and he answered all questions in a very peculiar way. He stretched the words; he made calculations in order to arrive at an answer. For example, when I asked him the first question of how old he was when he came to the United States. He first started by talking about the school he attended in El Salvador; kindergarten and first grade. He then followed by talking about the schooling that he did in Mexico; second and third grade, and finally he arrived to the response to the question of the age he was when he came to the United States, which he said he probably was nine or ten years old. He said that he attended the fourth grade in the U.S. Néstor calculated his

age of arrival based on his school completion. His speaking at the beginning was very peculiar. He stretched the words, talked slow, and thought aloud. Néstor's responses definitely stand out from this group, and that was only one example, but at times answering other questions, his speaking was fast. Néstor was in the process of acquiring Spanish vocabulary, grammar and language structure, once he was removed from elementary school in Mexico; the formal language acquisition ended and it was up to his mother, relatives, friends, and the community where he grew up to nurture his native language.

Question three sought to discover if the participant attended a bilingual or ESL program to learn English. He said that unfortunately at the time when he came, the elementary school that he attended did not have a bilingual curriculum. I acknowledge his answer with an "ok", and he proceeded to say that it was kind of hard at first. To his remark, I said another okay, and proceeded with the interview.

Question five was a multipart question to find out the exact location where his parents were from. I asked the first part, but at the end I realized that the exact location was not asked, so I asked him if he knew the exact location later on during the interview. I don't think that the fact that I did not ask the question immediately had any negative effect on the interview because at the end the information needed was provided as he stated that his parents were from El Salvador, for the exact location he first said that he was born in the capital, and that his dad was from the coast. He believed that his dad was from Aguachapán, and that his mom was from the country side, and he wanted to say Sonsonate. The fact that he knew where his parents were from was important, because it demonstrates the connection that he has with his native country, perhaps through the eyes of his family.

Question eight was related to education outside the United States. Néstor blew some air; he made deflating sounds prior to answering some of the questions. He started giving his answer as if he was reciting, shooting information nonstop. I let him continue without interruption. His rate of speaking was a little slower than Orlando's but not by much. To answer question eight, he started by saying, "kindergarten, first grade in El Salvador... second and third grade in Mexico." I know his answer is a little confusing, but he had given a clearer response in question one when he was calculating the age of arrival to the United States. As he continued to talk about his education outside the United States, he remembered that teachers used to hit students if they did not pay attention. He added that math was always harder, and that math was easier for him here in this United States. Néstor's formal education in his native language was in the early stages, if he had continued his schooling he would have received the necessary input to gain full acquisition of the Spanish language.

Néstor is in his early forties. He went to college to study technology in California, and is working at a local hospital in Hollywood, California. Néstor is family oriented, looks after his elder mother, who he visits at least three times a week. His mother speaks only Spanish, so he gets to use the language on a regular basis. He gave extended answers for the most part during the interview. He was easy to understand, and because he lived in California since he was young, his language accent has been influenced by the area where he grew up. He speaks like a native speaker of English, and at the same time he is fluent in Spanish as well. Comparing the responses of Néstor and Orlando one can see that there are some similarities; both provided

ample information about themselves without hesitation. In part, it could be that I knew both for a very long time. On the other hand, Ofelia was not a friend of mine, and because of it her interview was more of a matter of fact and straight forward.

Ofelia's interview was conducted over the phone. She did not want to participate in the study, but when I explained that it was not going to take too much of her time, she agreed to be part of this group study. In some of her answers she expanded her responses, and provided a little extra information, and in others she provided brief answers. During the interview I maintained a friendly voice, while she responded with a matter of fact responses; later on during the interview, she became a little bit more jovial.

I started the interview with question number one, and asked her how old she was when she came to the United States. She quickly responded that she was ten years old. When I asked her question three to find out if she attended a bilingual or ESL program to learn English, she said that she remembers that her teachers were great, and she also recalled activities in which she had to match pictures with their meaning in English. She also revealed that at the beginning it was hard, and that after a year she got adjusted to the school setting. She said that her teacher did not speak Spanish in the classroom and would frequently say "no, no, no, no Spanish." I said "ok", and proceeded with the interview. Attending an ESL program gives the opportunity to learn the second language gradually, but it does not help with the developing of a native language, because the classes are conducted only in English.

When I asked her question five to find out where her parents were from, she told me that they were from Usulután. Usulután is a department in El Salvador; a department is the equivalent of a state. Because I did not understand her response, I did not repeat the entire question, instead I only said, "where?" She started telling me the location being in the east part of the country rather than the name, which is what I wanted to hear. I said, "but you don't remember the name of the town?" At which she replied, "yes, Usulután." She was annoyed because she was not understood. She repeated Usulután. I said, "good, excellent," and continued with the other questions.

Question number eight had to do with providing information about the school attended outside the United States. I asked her if she went to school in her country and she replied, "yes, I did." She also said that she remembered that it was interesting how she did not like to go to school. When she came to the states, she realized the great opportunity that was given to her to learn a second language; she then loved school and is now a teacher. She also mentioned that her favorite subject to study in El Salvador was social studies. Similar to Néstor Ofelia left her country when she was in the early stages of learning her first language.

Ofelia is a forty-year-old school teacher. She works very hard. She helps her mother and has a full time teaching position in the day time, and a part time adult education job where she teaches English to non-English speakers. I know that she is a very busy individual, so I tried to be very accommodating during this study. In more than one occasion I had to convince her to be part of this research. Perhaps if she was my friend, it would have been different.

Comparing these participants and their experiences while learning a second language I could affirm that Ofelia most likely had the best experience while learning English. She had positive remarks about her teachers. Néstor on the other hand did not even have the opportunity to transition from his native language to English; his school experience at the very beginning was very hard. Orlando's experience while learning English was different. At the beginning he attended an ESL program, probably not too solid, being that his school was just starting the program. He at least had the opportunity to learn English, and now he uses the English language more than the other two participants. Because Ofelia is a Spanish teacher, and her mother only speaks Spanish with her, the same is true for Nestor his mother only speaks Spanish, and he gets to use both languages in his place of employment, while Orlando only uses English. Those who have the opportunity to practice their native language with relatives, friends or others, will have the advantage of keep it alive longer than those who are not able to.

4.2 DATA II

4.2.1 Survey Group 1

The three members of this group, Ana, Luisa, and Daniel completed the questionnaire electronically. Questions one through five seeks to get background information. For question three the group listed only the country and not the state where they were born. For the age of arrival, Luisa wrote ten, Daniel wrote ten years old, and Ana wrote four years old. The last grade completed in their native country was fifth Grade for Luisa, fourth grade for Daniel, and none for Ana. Daniel and Luisa were beginning their formative Spanish grammar in their native country, while Ana had none. Question six asked about the highest level of education completed by each of the participants; for Luisa it was college in which she received a bachelor's degree, for Daniel the eleventh grade, and for Ana was High School. If Daniel and Ana continued their education, perhaps they might have taken Spanish in college. Question seven asked if they have a job, and question eight asked about their occupation, to which Luisa wrote chef, Daniel construction and carpentry, and Ana esthetics. Although their professions are very diverse, Daniel and Luisa have something in common; both are able to speak to other Spanish speakers in their line of work. Ana on the other hand finds herself using more French than the other two languages that she speaks. Not being able to practice Spanish limits Ana's language growth. Question nine asked if they are able to speak a language other than Spanish fluently which all the participants in this group and the other two groups answered yes, and proceeded with the rest of the questionnaire.

For question ten the participants were asked to list all the languages they speak, the age when they began to learn it, and the age when the language was mastered. Luisa revealed that at age four she began to learn Spanish, and she mastered it when she was four as well. Daniel on the other hand wrote that he began learning Spanish at the age of two or three, and that he mastered Spanish at the age of seven or eight. Ana responded to this question very differently, writing that she began learning Spanish since she was born, and that she mastered the language when she was three years old. The age when Daniel and Luisa started learning English was immediately after their arrival to this county; Ana on the other hand wrote that she started learning at the age of eleven or twelve. That is similar to when students here in the United States are exposed to a second language; in contrast she wrote that she started learning French at the age of five or six. That explains why French is her strong language. Luisa also listed Italian as

third language, which she started learning at the age of nineteen, and she has not yet mastered it, so that part is blank on her form.

As far as mastering the English language, Luisa and Ana are close in years for their exposure to the language, two years. Ana stated at the age of thirteen or fourteen, and Luisa wrote twelve years old. Daniel felt that he mastered the language five years after he started learning it. He wrote fifteen years old. The third language French for Ana was mastered at the age of seven.

All three participants in this group disclosed that they acquired their second language in school, and all three participants also wrote that the language spoken by their parents, or primary care taker was Spanish, which was question twelve on the survey. The responses for question thirteen were identical for Ana, Luisa and Daniel. The question asked if during their lifetime, they have experienced a time where they used only their second language regularly, they checked yes. They also checked that they use both languages regularly but used them in different settings throughout the day. The last part of question thirteen asked them if they used both languages regularly in the same setting for example both languages used at home or used both with friends. This group checked yes.

Question fourteen is similar to thirteen, but instead it has to do with present language use. Each member of the group gave a different answer to their primarily language used. Ana wrote French, Daniel, Spanish and Luisa, English. Part of the reason has to do with the location were they live, and the type of people that they do business with in their day to day interactions. The other two parts of question fourteen shows the same answer for all three, group one participants. They listed that they use both languages regularly but in different settings (i.e., one at home and one at school, one with friends and one with family, etc.) They also use both languages every day within the same setting (i.e., use both at home.)

Question fifteen produced different answers from all group one participants. The question asked was how long they had been speaking their second language (approximately) to which Luisa wrote ten years, it is the same number of years, after she had mastered the English language. Daniel similar to Luisa listed the years after he mastered the English language; in his case six or seven years, and it represented how long he had been speaking his second language. Ana wrote twelve years more or less, her response is a little off, from question ten where she had written the age of ten or eleven was when she started learning English. However, because it is an approximation, one can say that her response is close enough.

When it came to rating their English language on a scale of one to seven (question sixteen); seven being poor, one excellent and four being average, Daniel and Ana rated their speaking ability at five, while Luisa gave herself a two. For understanding speech Luisa gave herself a one, Daniel a two, and Ana a three. When it came to reading, Luisa rated her English at a one, Daniel at a four, and Ana at a three. The writing ability was rated at a two by Luisa, a three by Ana, and a Four by Daniel. (See table 2, of their Self-Assessment for English in the next page.) Daniel rating his language skills at average perhaps explains the reason why he was not too motivated to continue in School. The same cannot be true for Ana being that English can be considered her third language; if she wanted to continue her studies she could have done it in

French. Luisa’s English language rating was the higher of the two, and of course her education was also more advanced.

Table 2 Self-Assessment for English Proficiency Group 1

Participant	Speaking	Understanding	Reading	Writing
Ana	5	3	3	3
Luisa	2	1	1	2
Daniel	5	2	4	4

Their Spanish language rating produced also diverse responses on these participants. Luisa and Daniel rated their speaking ability at a one, Ana at a two. For understanding speech all three participants rated it at a one. Ana and Daniel rated their reading skill at a three, and Luisa at a four. Daniel rated his writing ability at a two, Luisa at a four, and Ana at a five. (Table 2A shows their Self-Assessment for Spanish.) Speaking and understanding the language obtained better scores; it shows that the participants have a strong understanding of the spoken language, and a lesser understanding of the more complex language skills of reading and writing. If these participants had the opportunity in school, or home to develop their reading and writing skills, they would have given themselves better marks.

Table 2A Self-assessment for Spanish proficiency Group 1

Participant	Speaking	Understanding	Reading	Writing
Ana	2	1	3	5
Luisa	1	1	4	4
Daniel	1	1	3	2

Ana listed French as her third language, and in fact rated it with perfect scores of one for each of the categories. In reality, the scores show that French is her first language, Spanish her second and English her third. Luisa listed Italian as her third language, and her greater skills are at reading and understanding speech, which she rated at a three, she rated her speaking at a four, and writing at a six. Understanding Italian is easier for a Spanish speaker, because of the similarity of the language. Reading is a passive skill, contrary to speaking that requires that the individual produce complete utterance at a fast rate. Vocabulary knowledge, knowledge of the grammar rules, and to be able to applied them without thinking is what improve the fluency of any language.

Question seventeen asks the participants to disclose if they were comfortable having an informal conversation with an unfamiliar person in their second language. All three participants answered yes to this question. Their response re-affirms the responses that they provided on question sixteen where they rated their speaking, and understanding speech ability. For question

eighteen the participants were asked if they were comfortable giving or receiving general information in their second language. All participants in this group answered yes, which again shows the level of dominion that they have in their second language.

Question nineteen also produced the same response for all participants; they all said yes, to having friends or family who are also bilingual in the two languages they speak. When it comes to language maintenance it is important to have a circle of friends and family to be able to continue practicing the language and keep it alive.

Question twenty places a focus on code switching. The aim is to find out the frequency of code switching that the participants produce while having conversations with their bilingual friends and family within the same conversation or in the same sentence. Daniel and Luisa checked that they do code switching frequently, but Ana checked that she does it rarely. Studies show that there are various reasons why a speaker does code switching, for example to express something that the speaker feels that it is best expressed in a particular language and not in the other, or because at a particular moment the person cannot produce the word that he/she is trying to say in the language that he/she is speaking.

Question twenty-one is similar to the previous question because it seeks information related to code switching. Daniel and Luisa revealed that they do code switching only when talking to friends or family. Ana on the other hand indicated that she does not code switch with friends and family. All three participants disclosed that they do mix languages in conversations with other bilinguals because this enables them to express themselves better. Daniel and Ana selected false to mixing languages because of other reasons, and Luisa wrote that she mixes both languages if the person she is speaking to speaks both languages. Ana and Luisa try not to mix languages in the same conversation, but Daniel selected the statement to be false for him. By their responses it is clear that this group uses code switching in their everyday life, and some of the participants make an effort not to do it in certain situations.

The purpose of question twenty-two and twenty-three is to check for cultural awareness. The questions are open-ended which allows the participant to give his or her point of view. The response to question twenty-one illustrates how the participants feel about a Spanish person living in the United States and not being able to speak Spanish. Luisa stated that, in her opinion, they should learn Spanish, but if they don't know the language she will talk to them in English. Daniel responded to the same question by saying, that he "felt fine, and that it is hard." Ana answered it with one word; "nothing". Their responses showed that these individuals are very accepting and accommodating. Luisa was the only participant in this group that mentioned that they should learn Spanish, but she also stated that she will use the shared language to communicate.

Question twenty-three produced more ample responses from the participants in group one. This question is similar to question twenty-two. The question reads: How do you feel about a Spanish person living in the United States not being able to speak English. Luisa's response was similar to twenty-two. She wrote that they should try to learn English, but if they don't speak English, she will talk to them in Spanish. Daniel wrote that it will be difficult to communicate with any person. Ana was a little more critical in her statement, she wrote; "how is the person

going to live in this place if he/she does not speak the language of this country.” It is interesting how she shares this sentiment when she was born in another country. The statement echoes the sentiment that many people in the United States have against immigrants. They often say, “this is the United States we speak English here.”

The last question on the survey asks the participants to tell what nationality they consider themselves. Ana selected Salvadorian, Luisa, Dominican, and Daniel, Colombian. Although Ana was only four when she moved to Canada, her parents have instilled in her the love for her home country and her Spanish language and culture. Luisa and Daniel came to the United States when they were a little older, at ten, and they still have that deep connection to their roots.

4.2.2. Survey Group 2

Alondra and Candy completed their survey in my presence, while Jacobo did it electronically. The survey had a total of twenty-four questions all in English, and they wrote their answers in English as well. Some of the questions at the beginning are similar to the background interview, such as their age, and place of birth. For place of birth, Jacobo and Candy wrote the name of the state that happens to be Medellín, Colombia, but Alondra just wrote Colombia. All three attended school in Colombia, it cannot be said that they acquired formal grammar education in their native country because Alondra and Jacobo attended kindergarten, while Candy wrote that she attended nursery. The highest level of education for Alondra and Candy have is graduate school, while for Jacobo is undergraduate college. The fact that all of them have completed a high level of education in the United States is proof that they have good control of the English language. The three of them are currently employed; Candy and Alondra are bilingual teachers, and Jacobo works as a rehab aid. The fact that Jacobo does not have a job related to his field of study does not mean that he went to college in vain. He loves literature and he has always been a poet. Although Jacobo uses Spanish at his place of employment, it is Candy and Alondra that benefit the most. They work in a school district where a large population of students has a Spanish background. Their students are native speakers of Spanish; these students have not yet learned English. They teach all the major subjects, social studies, science, math, and others in Spanish, and one class in English. Their daily interactions with students give these young teachers the opportunity to practice their Spanish language at an academic level.

Question ten in the survey requires the participants to list all the languages that they speak and the age when they began to learn said languages, and the age when the languages were mastered. Here I noticed something very peculiar; all of them wrote that they learned Spanish at birth, while Alondra wrote that she mastered the language at the age of three, Candy at the age of four, Jacobo in the other hand wrote fifteen. I was shocked when I saw that number, and I called him for a clarification. He explained to me that when he arrived to the country he was able to speak Spanish, but he was placed in regular English classes, and that he forgot how to speak the language and had to re-learn it, and at that age he felt that he had mastered the Spanish language. Perhaps this explains the reason why Jacobo uses Spanish more frequently than Alondra and Candy. It is like he is trying to preserve what he almost lost.

As far as learning the English language they wrote that they started learning at their age of arrival for Candy and Jacobo at four, and for Alondra at five. The age at which they mastered

the English language, Candy wrote that at seven, Alondra at six or seven, and Jacobo wrote at eight. In previous data collected from Jacobo, he reported attending regular classes, while Alondra and Candy received formal ESL or bilingual classes. Because Jacobo reported taking an extra year to master the language, it proves that children learn best when they are given the opportunity to use their language to help them acquire their second language. Being placed in a bilingual program provides extra time to adjust to the new language, while at the same time it provides the opportunity to continue practicing the student's own native language. With the learning of a second language, the first language encounters interference and in this research almost all participants noticed it in their interactions with friends or family members.

The entire group reported to have learned their second language through school. They also reported that their parents and primary care takers spoke Spanish. The parents are the ones that have made possible for these three participants to continue the use of the Spanish language. As we are aware, the United State system of education does not provide accommodation for the continuation of the Spanish language, the goal is to speed up the process of assimilation of the new language.

Question thirteen of past language use was the same for this group. Here the participant needed to check everything that applied. They were asked if during their life time they have experienced the following: a time where you used only your second language regularly. Alondra, Candy and Jacobo checked that they did. Because they have done this, it shows that they can carry full conversations, and they are able to communicate with native speakers or other bilinguals like them. Alondra, Candy and Jacobo provided the same response to using both languages regularly, but in different settings throughout the day. This group had the opportunity to continue practicing both languages daily. They are the first generation of English speakers within their families, and their families made the choice to encourage them to use their first language. They also lived in an area where the population is predominantly of Spanish background. Alondra, Candy and Jacobo have enriched their knowledge of their Spanish language and culture with the help of their immediate family members, friends, and college classes taken. At the same time, they acquired their second language at school, and practiced it outside the school with their friends or family as well. All group two members reported that they have used both languages regularly in the same setting meaning at home, or with friends. It is important for a bilingual person to be able to practice both languages as often as possible. If the language is not used, with the passage of time one can forget the vocabulary, the grammar and the structure. This group clearly demonstrated with their responses that none of these has happened to any of the members.

Question fourteen mirrors question thirteen except that instead of past language use, this deals with present language use. They all reported that the primary language that they use is English. English is the dominant language of this country. It is understood that if one wants to advance in this country the person need to be able to speak the English language. Parents encourage their children to learn English, so they don't have to suffer the same hardship that they endured when they moved to the United States. Alondra, Candy and Jacobo currently use both languages in the same or in different settings. As explained above, this group has been fortunate to have the opportunity to practice both languages with friends and family or in their place of employment being that Alondra and Candy are bilingual teachers. This year their employer does

not restrict their language use. The same was not true last year, to teach English to speakers of other languages in the Brentwood School District they were not allowed to use Spanish in their classroom, even though the majority of the students were of Spanish background. In Jacobo’s case, he too can practice both languages at work.

Question fifteen asked for an approximation of how long they have been speaking their second language; Alondra reported twenty-five years, Candy twenty six years, and Jacobo twenty eight years. These individuals had the opportunity to acquire the second language vocabulary, grammar, and language structure in the classroom. They also continued to gain more knowledge of the language through higher learning; all three graduated from college. Candy and Alondra also completed their Masters. Although these participants graduated with advanced degrees, their Spanish language did not receive the same support that their English did. It was only by attending college and studying a career in bilingual Education, that Alondra and Candy were exposed to the vocabulary, and language structure.

Question sixteen asked the participants to rate their languages skills in terms of speaking, understanding speech, reading and writing. For English, all three participants gave themselves a one, which was the highest score. Their initial interview was done in English, and it was proof that they speak the language just like a native speaker. Given that all were educated in this country, and all attended college in the United States, it is safe to say that a one is a realistic rate for all three. Table 3 offers a quick view of their self-assessment for English.

Table 3 Self-Assessment for English Proficiency Group 2

Participant	Speaking	Understanding	Reading	Writing
Alondra	1	1	1	1
Candy	1	1	1	1
Jacobo	1	1	1	1

The rating of their Spanish gave different results per participant for example Alondra gave herself all ones for speaking, understanding speech, reading and writing. Candy gave herself a two for speaking, a one for understanding speech, a one for reading, and a three for writing. Jacobo gave himself a two for speaking, a one for understanding speech, a two for reading and a two for writing. Candy gave herself the lowest score for writing of the three. Jacobo and Alondra rated themselves a two for speaking. Grosjean quotes Dornic (1978, 1979), when he writes that, “a non-balance bilingual is probably much more typical than a balanced one” (Grosjean 255). Bilinguals are strong in one of the languages that they speak, and in the case of Candy and Jacobo, English is stronger than their Spanish. Alondra is the exception. She is an example of the atypical balance bilingual that are able to dominate both languages equally. All three gave themselves a one to understanding speech. It is easier to listen to someone else speaking, because even if the sentences are not perfect, the message that the person is trying to convey will be easy understood by the listener.

Alondra and Candy gave themselves equal scores for reading (one). A technique taught for reading comprehension is to use the meaning of the familiar words that surround the word that is not known in order to deduce the meaning. Alondra and Candy are both teachers, and must likely are very familiar with this approach of teaching reading comprehension to their students. In the other hand, Jacobo felt that his reading ability is not as perfect as his English, and most likely that is why he rated himself with a two. The writing ability shows that each member is within one point of each other in their rating score. Alondra rated herself with a one, Jacobo with a two, and Candy with a three. (See table 3A for a graphic representation of their assessment for Spanish.) The fact that these participant are able to write in their native language is to be commended. Living outside their native land for over twenty years, have not given them many opportunities to use this method of communication in their day to day interactions with others. While all three rated their writing at above average is proof of the resilience that all three exhibits toward their Spanish language, after so many years of living outside their native land they have manage to hold on of what matters to them, their native language.

Table 3A Self-Assessment for Spanish Proficiency Group 2

Participant	Speaking	Understanding	Reading	Writing
Alondra	1	1	1	1
Candy	2	1	1	3
Jacobo	2	1	2	2

Jacobo also listed that he learned a third language, Italian; he rated his speaking at a four, understanding speech at a three, reading at a two, and writing at a five. Being that Italian is not spoken in the area where he lives, it makes it harder for him to comprehend this language at a similar level with the other languages that have more support.

Questions seventeen and eighteen provide further clarification of the participants' second language knowledge. For example, for question seventeen all three participants in this group revealed that they were comfortable having an informal conversation with an unfamiliar person in their second language. They also all said yes, to being comfortable giving or receiving directions or other general information in their second language. These answers reinforce the highest rating that each gave themselves about their English language. It also shows that they are able to communicate fluently and without hesitations in their second language.

Alondra, Candy and Jacobo said yes, to having friends or family who are also bilinguals in the two languages they speak. This is important, because having friends that share the same language gave them the opportunity to practice both languages. Bilingual speakers need to be able to practice both languages on a regular basis, if one of the languages is not use as often as the other the one; the one that is used less will not be as fluid as the language that is practiced more frequently. These participants have a circle of friends and family that share the same positive attitudes towards using both languages and provided them the opportunity to practice both languages regularly.

Questions twenty and twenty-one sought to get information from the participants about their mixing of their Spanish and English language with their bilingual friends or family members. The most common term for this language alternation is code switching. Candy and Jacobo reported that they do it frequently, while Alondra reported to do it but only rarely. The fact that Alondra reported switching languages only rarely shows that she has more control of both languages when she speaks. There are several reasons why one mixes the language, starting with not having a particular word readily available to express the meaning that one is trying to convey. Another reason is that the speaker feels that the meaning that their trying to convey is better expressed in language A. Technical terms learned in a particular language, will make the speaker more reliant on using the term in the language that it was originally learned, even if the speaker knows the term in the other language, he or she normally selects not to use the term in the other language. There are many other reasons, why a person switches from one language to another, but for now I will proceed with the findings for questions twenty one, which is a multi-part question. Candy and Jacobo both selected that they mix languages only when talking to friends or family, but Alondra selected that for her the statement this was not the case. Alondra, Candy and Jacobo shared the same answer when it came to mix languages in conversations with other bilinguals because it enables them to express themselves better. Being able to express something better in one language rather than the other has to do with semantics, and what the person perceive to be true to them. Alondra and Candy checked that it was true, both mix languages because of other reasons, and they went on to specify that they do it for the following reasons, Alondra wrote that she did it because students don't understand and need more clarification in their native Spanish language. Candy just wrote for instructional purposes. She is a bilingual teacher and almost all her students are of Spanish background. Jacobo to the contrary checked that he does not mix languages because of other reasons. In the case of Alondra and Candy, their employment gives them the opportunity to mix both languages in order to help their students to understand the instruction that they are trying to convey to the students. Jacobo is not exposed to the same situation on his employment or other circumstances. The last part of question twenty-one had to do with the participants trying not to mix languages in the same conversation. Candy and Jacobo both try not to do it, but Alondra does the opposite. Being aware of the language limitations gives the speaker the opportunity to compensate and to force oneself not to mix the languages; this takes a greater effort in the part of the speaker.

Question twenty-two through twenty-four had to do with their cultural position in relationship with other Spanish people and themselves. For question twenty-one each of them had a different opinion. The question read, "How do you feel about a Spanish person living in the United States not being able to speak Spanish?" Alondra wrote, "Indifferent, it is a personal goal that they should have." Her response tells me that she does not care if English becomes the only language spoken in this country. Candy's response was the following, "I feel that they are limiting themselves." Candy's response tells me that she cares about the preservation of the Spanish language, and that she values the Spanish language. Jacobo gave a short answer and he wrote, "I feel bad for them." There are many reasons why to feel bad, but he did not elaborate. Does he feel bad because they are not able to communicate with other Spanish speakers, or visit countries or places where knowing Spanish is helpful?

Question twenty-three is a reversal of twenty-two and it reads, "How do you feel about a Spanish person living in the United States not being able to speak English?" Alondra wrote the

following, “They are doing a disservice to themselves being that they are living in a country that only speaks English.” Her comments seem to have been influenced by the negative comments that many people in the United States that often say that people living in this country should learn English, because this is the language of this country. Those comments are insensitive to the problems that prevent low income Spanish people from learning English. Candy’s response was as follow, “I believe that is necessary to acquire the second language without compromising the use of the native language.” The beginning her statement is more in line with what you hear in this country, but her response is less harsh, because of the words compromising the use of the native language. The last words make the statement positive. Jacobo’s response for this question was the same as the previous questions. He wrote, “I feel bad for them.” Why is that? Could it be that not knowing English will not give them the opportunity to obtain a good paying job or because they will have a hard time when trying to express what is wrong with them during a doctor’s visit and much more. With her response, Alondra favored the process of assimilation, whereas Jacobo and Candy favored retaining both languages.

For the last question of the survey the participants needed to select their nationality. Alondra and Candy selected Colombian. After so many years out of their native country, they still feel connected to their native land and it is shown in their membership association with the country they left behind. Jacobo sees himself different; he wrote that he is American Colombian. Because he selected to write American, it shows his deep connection to this country, saying I am an American first and a Colombian second clearly shows that his Colombian roots have been weakening with the passage of time.

4.2.3 Survey Group 3

Of this group, Orlando was the only one that completed the survey in my presence; Ofelia and Néstor completed the survey electronically. At the beginning of the survey the participants provided background information about themselves. Question one is for their name and gender, two is to disclose their age and so on. For question two, Orlando wrote forty-four, Ofelia forty, and Néstor forty one. Question three asked the participants to state their place of birth. Orlando wrote Bogotá, Colombia, Néstor wrote San Salvador, El Salvador, and Olga just wrote El Salvador. It is interesting to note that both the male participants are from the Capital of their respective countries and perhaps because they were proud to be from the capital they listed it in the survey, but Ofelia only said El Salvador. In the initial interview Ofelia mentioned that her parents were from the country side of El Salvador and maybe she too was born there. She selected not to mention it.

Question four was about the age of arrival to the United States. Orlando wrote five years old, Ofelia wrote ten, and Néstor wrote nine or ten years old. Néstor’s response was similar to other responses that he provided in other parts of this study; there was a level of uncertainty in his answers. One can say that perhaps because he had to go back many years it could be difficult to give the exact age, but the others had to do the same and their responses were straight forward. One can argue that part of the reason could be that he put his past behind him and he wishes to forget it.

Question five talked about the last grade completed by these participants. Orlando wrote first grade, Néstor third grade, and Ofelia fourth grade. The participants had some formal education in their native land, but at the primary school level the participants did not acquire all the necessary vocabulary and grammar to master their language. Once they arrived in this country and attended school here in the United States, their first language entered in competition with the new language and the grammar and vocabulary was replaced by the English language.

For question six, pertaining to the highest academic degree that the participants have achieved, Orlando and Néstor selected undergraduate college, and Ofelia graduate school. Being that all participants graduated from college it can be said that their English language should be better than their Spanish. There will be a section where this statement will be put to test, because each of the participants provided a writing sample to be analyzed on a different section.

Questions seven and eight are related. Question seven is to check if the participants are currently employed, which they all checked yes, and question eight was to find out their occupation. Orlando wrote finance, Ofelia school teacher, and Néstor wrote biomedical technician for a children's hospital. Of the three participants, Ofelia is the only one that has the opportunity to practice both languages. She is a middle school Spanish teacher, so it is safe to say that she has good control of both languages. In a previous interview Orlando said that he only uses English at his place of employment and Néstor mentioned that he uses both languages, but Spanish is just conversational with co-workers, friends and family.

Question nine seeks to find out if the participants speak another language or languages fluently, which all selected yes. With that, question ten requires that the participants list the languages they speak, in the order that said language was acquired, and the age when more or less they mastered each of the languages that they listed in the space provided. Ofelia listed Spanish first. She wrote that she started to learn it at the age of two or three years, and mastered the language at the age of six years old. Néstor wrote that he began learning Spanish at the age of three or four, and that he mastered it at the age of five; while Orlando wrote that he started learning the Spanish language since birth, and that he mastered Spanish at four years old. Clearly by their responses, Spanish was their first language. Each of them felt that they had mastered the language at a very early age. García's research related to early use of Spanish by her participants demonstrated that those who used it as children were the ones that continued using it as adults. In her study the early use of the language was not a predictor of language ability (García 191).

The next language listed by these participants was English; Ofelia wrote that she began to learn English at the age of ten. At the age of twelve or thirteen, she mastered Spanish. Néstor wrote that his starting age for learning English was nine or ten and the age when he mastered English at the age of twelve or thirteen. On the other hand, Orlando disclosed that he started learning English when he was five, and mastered when he was seven. All group three participants listed that it took only two or three years to master the English language. It is more or less the same amount of time that students are given the opportunity to learn English through services of bilingual education or ESL here in the United States. I believe that in two years they are able to more or less follow teacher's directions, but they are not at the same level to compete with a native speaker of the English language. Only one member of this group, Orlando, listed two other languages that he speaks. French and Italian were the languages that he started learning

at the age of thirteen, and he mastered when he was sixteen years old. Because there are not too many speakers of these two languages in his area, it is doubtful that he is still able to speak them. It takes a lot of effort to maintain a language that is not supported by members of a community, family and friends.

For question eleven on the survey. All of the group three participants wrote that they learn their second language in a school setting. In question twelve they were asked to state the primary language spoken by their parents or primary caretakers, all three answered Spanish. Another similarity that this group shared was about the past language used section on the survey; their responses were the same for all three. They reported a time where only the second language was used. They all used both languages regularly but in different settings throughout the day (home vs. school.) They also used both languages regularly in the same setting (used both languages at home, or used both with friends, etc.) This was from question thirteen. The past language use does not guarantee that the individual will be able to maintain the language, or perform at an elevated language skill without the proper formal guidance.

When it came to current language use (question fourteen), the answers were almost similar for Ofelia and Néstor. The difference was that Néstor wrote that he did not solely use primary one language; he wrote 50/50, however Ofelia left it blank, while Orlando revealed that he did use primary one language, which was English. This was the only choice from the multipart question fourteen for Orlando. The other part of this question is, use both languages regularly but in different settings (i.e. one at home and one at school, one with friends and one with family, etc.) This statement was true for both Ofelia and Néstor. It was also true to the statement that they use both languages every day within the same setting (i.e., use both at home.) Clearly in this group Ofelia and Néstor get to practice both languages regularly. Orlando does not get the same opportunity. Part of the reason could be that he lives in a community where Spanish is not the language spoken by most of the residents of said community. The present language use benefits the person who wishes to continue practicing his or her native language. In the case of Ofelia, Oscar and Néstor, it is Oscar who does not have the ability to practice Spanish.

Question fifteen gave an array of answer from the three participants of group three. The question was how long have you been speaking your second language (approximately)? Orlando stated, he was around seven years old, for Ofelia it was twenty-five years, and for Néstor it was fifteen to seventeen years. Being that Orlando stated that he has been speaking English since the age of seven, he definitely provided the most accurate answer to this question; Ofelia was two years off when the math was computed between the ages that she said she mastered the English language, and the number of years that she has been speaking the second language. Néstor on the other hand was a little bit off, but if we take into consideration that only an approximation was required. His answer is perfectly okay. He was off by about ten years.

When it came to rating their own languages, the participants gave diverse answers. Just like the previous groups participants, the ratings were set to numbers, one being excellent, four average, and seven poor. Starting with English, Néstor and Orlando rated their English at a one for speaking, understanding speech, reading and writing. On the other hand, Ofelia felt that her

English was at a two for speaking, understanding speech, reading and writing. Table 4 offers a quick comparison of group three participants self-assessment for English.

Table 4 Self-Assessments for English Proficiency Group 3

Participant	Speaking	Understanding	Reading	Writing
Ofelia	2	2	2	2
Néstor	1	1	1	1
Orlando	1	1	1	1

When it came to rating their Spanish, Néstor and Ofelia gave themselves a one for speaking, understanding speech, reading, and writing, but Orlando rated his speaking ability and understanding speech at a two, reading, and writing at a three. Table 4A below, illustrates group three’s self-assessment for Spanish. It is clear that English is Orlando’s dominant language; part of the reason was because he was placed in English only classes early in his school years. Being that Orlando’s parents thought that he was confusing Spanish and English, most likely they spoke to him in only in English to avoid confusion; because of that his Spanish suffered. Néstor listed French as his third language, which he rated at four for speaking, understanding speech, reading and writing. Orlando also listed French in his survey, but he rated speaking at a six, understanding speech at a five, reading at a six, and writing at a seven. Not too far from these scores was his Italian. He rated his speaking at a five, understanding speech at a four, reading at a six, and writing at a seven. It is very hard to be fluent in a language that is not supported in the community. The low scores for Italian and French reflect that without opportunities to practice the language, it will be forgotten.

Table 4A Self-Assessment for Spanish Proficiency Group 3

Participant	Speaking	Understanding	Reading	Writing
Ofelia	1	1	1	1
Néstor	1	1	1	1
Orlando	2	2	3	3

Question seventeen, asks whether the participants are comfortable having an informal conversation with an unfamiliar person (e.g., salesperson or stranger) in their second language. All three participants gave the same answer, a yes. This answer proves that they have good control of the second language, in this case English. Because speaking is more spontaneous than reading and writing, when one is speaking, receiving or giving answers, good command of the language is critical.

The next question has to do with being comfortable giving or receiving directions or other general information in your second language. This question seeks to get information from

the participants to see if they feel that they can use their second language in many different scenarios, they need to have a diverse vocabulary to be able to do this task. All group three participants answered that they felt confident.

Question nineteen produced the same answer for Ofelia, Orlando and Néstor, they checked yes to having friends or family who are also bilingual in the two languages that they speak. Having friends and family members that share the same languages affords them the opportunity to practice both languages on a regular basis. Their language rating clearly showed that the English and Spanish were the language that had the most support from family and friends and their scores for these languages were the highest by these group participants

Question twenty asks that the participants reveal if they use code switching when speaking to friends or family members, to which Orlando and Ofelia revealed that they did, but only rarely. Néstor disclosed that he did it frequently. Perhaps Néstor's friends need more help expressing what they are trying to say, and for this reason Néstor uses code switching more often.

Question twenty-one produced different answers among this group. The question has four different statements for selection by each participant. For example, Orlando and Néstor selected that it is a false statement to say that they mix languages only when talking to friends or family, on the other hand, the statement is true for Ofelia. She also stated that she mixes languages in conversations with other bilinguals because this enables her to express herself better, Orlando said the same, but Néstor contradicts this statement, since he chose false. Orlando selected that there is no other reason why he mixes languages. Néstor disclosed that he mixes languages, by intuition, that he cannot explain it, that it just comes out. The female participant of this group went on to say that her reason was that certain words were more "expressant" (expressive) in the particular language. The last statement on question twenty-one was true for all three participants in that they try not to mix languages in the same conversation.

There was also a question in the survey pertaining to cultural awareness, the question read, how do you feel about a Spanish person living in the United States not being able to speak Spanish? To which Orlando wrote, "it limits the individual." Ofelia stated that "they are missing out the opportunity," and Néstor tried to make a distinction between a stranger and a family member as he stated, "I feel, I don't feel anything for them, if it was my kid I will be ashamed"

Question twenty-two was a reversal of twenty-one. The participants were asked to describe their feelings about a Spanish person living in the United States not being able to speak English. Starting with Orlando he just repeated the same as in question twenty-one, "it limits the individual", Néstor echoes the sentiments of the masses here in the United States when he said, "I feel that everyone should be able to speak English. I am not sad or angry about it." The fact that he finished the statement with "not being sad or angry about it" makes it different from others that use the same statement "everyone should be able to speak English," with hostile sentiments. Ofelia was the most critical, she stated, "I think that it is important that the people learn the language of the country that they are living in, if they want to become part of the culture, the society, to have a saying in whatever they want to do." Her remarks did not take into consideration, that some people do not have the opportunities afforded to others, sometimes

people have to work more than one job just to make ends meet, and because of lack of time or access they cannot learn the language of the country where they have settled.

The last question of the survey required the participants to choose their affiliation to the country that they feel more connected, and the question was designed in a way that it was open to interpretation by the participant. The question simply asked, “What do you consider yourself?” Choices of nationalities were provided to serve as a guide. If one wanted to make the sentence less open to interpretation, the question could have been written, “Being that you were born in X country, what is your nationality?” For group three, only Orlando said that he was an American, followed by Ofelia that wrote that she was a Salvadorian American, and Néstor was the only one that simply called himself a Salvadorian. Their responses reflect how they see themselves in this country. The fact that Orlando came here at a very young age, and for the most part of his life has associated with English speakers; demonstrates the influence that these factors have had in making him feel more connected with the American culture. Olga and Néstor were a little bit older than Orlando, but Olga grew up in a town where she did not have many other Spanish speaking families, for the most part the population that she was surrounded by have influenced how she feels about herself now, a Salvadorian-American.

4.3 DATA 3

4.3.1 Movie Clip Group 1

Participants were required to view a video clip, the video clip that was shown was in Spanish, and all the questions and answers were also done in Spanish. There were a total of three questions that all the participants answered in their own words. These were the questions that all the participants were asked:

1. What is your reaction to the movie?
2. Tell me three things that impressed you about the movie
3. How would you feel, if you traveled alone in those conditions on the train, and you were the same age as Oscar?

In group one, Luisa was the first one to see the movie; the questions were asked over the phone. She answered question one by saying that “it was sad what the children’s went through.” Her speaking was slow, and her voice conveyed a state of sadness. I felt that her response could have been a little bit more detailed, but still I could say that she empathized with the suffering of the immigrants shown in the video. For question two, she listed more than three things that impressed her in the video. She first mentioned “the cold, and hunger” that the children endured during the trip. Luisa mentioned many scenes from the clip she found troubling, from “the long road that these kids travel from Honduras to the United States and the trauma that they endured when they arrived to Mexico... the coyotes, the cartel were waiting for them... and in some cases could trap them and kill them.” The movie showed situations that more than likely have not been experienced by any of the group one participants, or any of the other participants. It shows the reality that many immigrant children are enduring everyday while trying to reach their relatives living in the United States. When it came to question three where Luisa needed to compare herself to Oscar, she said that she would feel “scared, and fearful.” Luisa was given

ample time to express her feelings for each of the questions, and although she did not reveal any personal experience of coming to this country, her responses were genuine and sincere.

The next member of the group to watch the video was Daniel. I was present when he watched the video. I wanted to see his physical reaction to compare it with the other participants, but there were none. He sat quietly, watching the video, and when he was done I started asking the same questions that I asked Luisa. His reaction to the movie was that of sadness, to see those people trying to forge a better future for themselves. They took the train in order to arrive “to their dream.” His words were paused and expressed with sorrow. To express the three things that impressed him about the video; he proceeded to state “the people that had a strong will to give up their life to ride on the trains in order to arrive at their destination, disregarding the danger, they board the train.” His response showed that seeing the will of the people to make the journey to what they believe will be a better life, was the most impressive scene for him. The last question where he was asked to put himself in Oscar’s situation he said that “it was hard, that it would be a hard decision, that it was very dangerous and that he believed that it was very difficult as well.” His response shows awareness of the difficulties that many immigrants endured to reach the United States. Based on his response, one can certainly say that he was moved by the suffering of the people shown on the video clip.

The last member of this group to see the video was Ana. When it was the time to ask her the three questions, we both had trouble understanding each other. I had to rephrase the question in order for her to understand what I was asking. Part of the problem could have been that there were certain Spanish words that she did not use in her daily life, or perhaps it had to do with hearing and unfamiliar voice over the telephone. The problem that I encountered during our question and answer phone interaction had to do with trying to understand what she was saying, so I asked her to repeat her answers, once she did that, her answers were clear and easy to understand. Part of the problem I believe had to do with the way she talks, she is a very soft spoken person, and I am not used to talking to her over the telephone. Ana revealed that she felt sorry for all the suffering that the children had to endure before arriving to their destination, and that reaction was very fitting for question one. When it came to question two she needed to provide three things that impressed her about the movie clip, but she was only able to provide two. One of them was how the children needed to find a place to spend the night, and the other one was all the danger that they encountered on the train. The last question asked the participant to take the place of Oscar and tell how he/she would feel doing the journey. She said that she would be very scared.

4.3.2 Movie Clip Group 2

After the conclusion of the same video clip that group one watched, group two participants were asked the same questions in Spanish, and they all provided the answers in Spanish as well.

Candy was the first person to view the movie clip. I was present at the time when she watched the movie. I sat next to her as I did for Alondra. I noticed that she made a gesture like the sun was hitting her eyes, but the sun was not really hitting her face. It was then that I realized that she was just shocked to see what was happening in the movie. Candy is very sensitive.

Once she completed watching the video, I asked her the first question, and she said that she felt “sadness, sorrow, grief and she felt like crying.” She said that, “she felt very bad for those people that have to go through that.” Her emotions were more intense than those of Alondra, and Jacobo, but all were moved by the suffering of the immigrants.

The three things that impressed Candy about the video was that “young people have to travel and go through that.” She imagined the children anticipating being reunited with their parents [in the United States], their family [living in the United States] all that they have to go through, and then [the children are] send back; that made her very sad. Candy also was astounded to the fact that immigrants could be mistreated after what they have been through; she said, “look at all the things that they have to go through, and suffer, and they make the decision to come to this country to look for a better life. That tells that the life condition in their country has to be very very bad.” Candy was more vocal than Alondra and Jacobo to express her reactions to the video clip. Candy also expressed concern with the suffering of all the immigrants that are already here in the United States searching for a much better life.

For question three of the video clip questions, Candy went into detail as to why she felt that she would not be able to endure such a trip. Candy stated, “I imagine the conditions in his country had to be horrible to go through to leave his family, not to talk to his family, not to say goodbye to his family, and suffer that cold, hunger, that they cut his finger, kill him, I would not be capable.” Alondra just like Candy felt that she would not be able to make the trip. Jacobo said that he would be scared. The suffering experienced by Oscar in the video clip is more than the hardships the average person has to endure and can even fathom.

I was also present when Alondra watched the video. I was looking for any physical reaction to the video; there was none, she silently watched the video. Alondra’s lack of physical response to the video clip was typical of her persona. She is very private, and she seldom shows her emotions in public. At the conclusion of the video, she did not make any comments, so I started asking the three questions that I had prepared for all the participants in the same order as above.

She said that her reaction to the movie was “sadness for the troubles that the children have to suffer to come to the U.S. The travel trajectory is hard. What is happening to them is hard. Thank God she never had an experience like that.” Alondra clearly identifies herself with the main character in the clip, Oscar, the young immigrant making the trajectory alone to the United States. The sensitivity to the issues that immigrants suffer to make the trip up north, leads me to believe that she has a connection with the suffering of the immigrant community.

For the three things that impressed her the most about the video she mentioned the different points where the gangs attacked them, the various methods that they were attacked by the gangs. She could not think of a third one, but it is obvious that the attacks on the trains were the ones that left a long lasting impression on her. In the video, Oscar, the fourteen year old mentioned that the gangs cut the fingers of the immigrants if they refused to give them money, or even kill them and toss them out of the train.

The last question aims for the participant put him or herself in Oscar's place, and express their feelings about the ordeal. She said that she would be scared, and that she could not make the trip. Alondra's candid response expresses a valid point, unless you are in the real life situation that Oscar was in his native land, you can not truly make the same decision to leave the country for a better life opportunity as he did.

Jacobo's expressed that his reaction to the movie was that he felt sorrow for the children. The three things that impressed him the most, was that "they were so young and that they were so alone, without parents, they were motivated to follow their parents, and that was why they rode the train, and anger because there were bad people that abused the children, those thugs." For the last questions about his feelings if he had to go through the same, he said that he would be very scared about how he was going to find food or any other necessity he would need. The words that Jacobo used to describe the movie clip are the same that a caring individual would express. It is hard to ignore the suffering of the children that only want to be with their parents, or are escaping the crime and poverty of their native lands.

The purpose of the movie was to make the participants aware of the hardships that the Spanish people have in their home country, and the terrible situations that youngsters encounter when they make the trip North. It is interesting to note that after viewing the video and responding to the questions that none of the participants talked about their own experiences however they were sympathetic to the suffering that the immigrants endured during the trip.

4.3.3 Movie Clip Group 3

The video shown to these participants and the questions asked were the same as the previous groups. In this group, Néstor was the first to watch the video clip, once he was done watching the video I proceeded to ask the three questions over the telephone. For question one, he limited himself to only one utterance, "Sad;" his voiced conveyed that feeling as well. I gave him ample time to continue but he did not elaborate, so I proceeded with question two, where he needed to list three things that impressed him about the video. He spoke slowly, and paused, like he was trying to recall what he had just watched. The first things that impressed him was the long distance that they have to travel, followed by the emotional health of the person being interviewed, and last he expressed resentment because they needed more help, and there was no help for them. For question three the participants needed to put themselves in Oscar's place, the teenager shown in the documentary. Néstor said that he would feel "Sad and Scared" if he had to travel in the conditions that Oscar had to travel, he added no other details.

The next person to watch the movie clip and responded to the follow up question was Ofelia. The method of communication was over the telephone. The first question sought to ask her reaction to the video. Ofelia limited her response to one word "Sadness" She was more expressive during the next question when she listed three things that impressed her about the movie. This participant said that "the fact that the main character is only fifteen years old and has suffered so much at his young age, the fact that he could not attend school in his country because he had to work to provide for his family." Ofelia was definitely moved by the clip and all her answers conveyed a sense of sadness. I gave her ample time so she could express herself,

and when she was done I proceeded to ask Ofelia the final question of the movie clip that required her to put herself in Oscar's place. The participant said the following:

I think that when one takes the decision to make a trip, one has that sense of happiness, that illusion that one will arrive to a new country. There is that hope that one will be able to work, that one will have a better future. In reality it could be very exciting, but as the trip progresses the reality of the journey, the combinations of emotions, happiness because one is going to a new country and at the same time sad because one leaves his/her family, country, friends and everything.

Orlando was the last person to see the movie clip. I was there to see if he had a physical reaction to the movie however; the only thing that I noticed was his deep concentration to try to understand what the people were saying in the movie. I had no doubt that this participant was going to be able to answer the three questions prepared for the movie clip, so when the movie ended, he talked about his reaction to the movie. He said that he "felt sorrow for all the sacrifices that the people make for the trip, in order to have a better life." The three things that impressed him the most about the movie were "the suffering of the people, the age, and the harsh journey that the people endure." When it came to put himself in Oscar's place, Orlando mentioned that he would feel nervous, hungry, and not knowing what could happen to him would cause him anxiety.

Of the three participants Ofelia and Néstor expanded more in certain answers, compared to Orlando. The reality shown in the video clip was not the reality for any of the members of this group, but they were sympathetic to the sufferings of the people shown in the video clip.

4.4 DATA IV

4.4.1. Writing Sample Group 1

Most people learn how to write in their native language when they attend schools, others learn through other means, for example, some receive help from their parents, computer software programs or others learn by reading on their own. Daniel and Luisa were acquiring their primary education in their native land when they moved to the United States. Writing in their native language was not yet fully acquired; with that in mind I will proceed to report some of the findings from their writing samples. Ana said that she did not know how to write in Spanish therefore, no writing sample was provided by her.

Luisa's writing sample was written using a variety of vocabulary, using words that help the reader imagine what was happening in her world. She wrote about her first day of school, saying that it was a Monday in September, and she described the weather being warm on that particular morning. She said that her mother was talking to her, and was telling her how her life was going to change from that moment forward. She said that she felt nervous, because she did not know what to expect. She did not speak English, and did not know anyone. She talks about how her teacher was kind and very sweet, she also mentions two sisters that became her best friends. Luisa mentions that the sisters already knew English, but they there were all together in the same class. She ends by saying that she learned a lot in her first year in the ESL class, and

that she had fun with her new friends. There are numerous spelling errors in her writing sample, and subject agreement errors, as well. The narration is written for the most part using the imperfect tense, but there are other verbs in the past tense too. Within her writing, Luisa used the first person singular, third person singular, and third person plural. Examples of the imperfect are the following verbs: used to talk, was explaining, was going, did not know, did not speak. Some of the verbs in the past that were utilized in her writing were, "I learned," "I had fun," "I met," "I passed," "she took." The agreement errors identified in her writing are, "new friends (nueva amistades)," "the two sisters (la dos hermana)," "several students (barrios estudiante)," "five first periods (cinco primero periodos.)" The errors do not interfere with the meaning that she is trying to convey in her writing. The story was interesting, easy to read, and it demonstrated the importance of her mother's words that still resonate with her.

I was present when Daniel's wrote his writing sample. Like Luisa he used a variety of vocabulary to support his writing, his grammatical errors were similar to the errors produced by Luisa. For instance, there were several errors of number agreement errors, spelling errors, and prepositional errors. Most of the verbs used were in the imperfect tense and Daniel also demonstrated a good handle of the use of reflexive verbs. The writing was in the first person singular. Daniel's writing expressed the love that he had for one of his favorite subjects, math. He writes that he was always the first one to arrive to the math class and the last one to leave. Daniel writes that he was very intelligent and maintained the highest grade in his math class. The fact that Daniel that he left his country when he was ten and only attended up to fifth grade in his native land explains some of the mistakes in his writing. Taking a closer look at his writing, some spelling errors could be associated with being careless but, they could also be associated with the fact that once he arrived to this country the full acquisition of his native language was never completed. For example, he misspells the word class twice. In Spanish the word is "clase" and he wrote "case." The first time I saw the misspelled word I thought that he was just careless, but when I saw the same error done for a second time I thought that perhaps he believed that "case" is the correct spelling for that word. Then I noticed the misspelled word "intelligent," in Spanish it is written "inteligente" but Daniel wrote "interigente." This only solidified my belief that Daniel has a problem with the letter "L." It could be a hearing impediment that does not allow him to distinguish the "L" sound and for that reason he eliminates the "L" in his writing. The other word that he misspells is "math," he uses the word twice and he misspells it twice. In Spanish the word is "matemáticas," but he writes "matematica." I believe that because he did not continue learning the Spanish language therefor he did not learn the proper spelling of several vocabulary terms. The next error in his writing sample has to do with the use of the preposition "of," which in Spanish is "de." He uses "of," in place of "in" ("en" in Spanish). Specifically, the sentence reads in Spanish "era el primero de llegar" (I was the first one to arrive,) the preposition needed is "en" not "de." The next sentence with a similar error is "el ultimo de irme" (the last one to leave,) the "de" needs to be replaced by "en" in this sentence. Prepositions are difficult to master in any language and being that he has been living in a country where English is the primary language in school and there is no support for the continuing education of the Spanish language, he was unable to learn the proper use of Spanish prepositions.

The usage of the Spanish reflexive pronoun "me" was used with the following structure, "me recuerdo" (I remember,) "irme" (I leave.) I was impressed with the use of the reflexive pronoun at the end of the verb, a much easier construction would have been to use the Spanish

verb “salir” (to leave,) and it would have avoided the use of the required use of the reflexive pronoun attached to the verb.

Luisa’s writing is more detailed than Daniel’s. The meaning of both writings is easy to understand and the errors do not interfere with the flow. Most of their communication in Spanish is done verbally, so I can say that the writing they produced isn’t too far off of what is expected of them based on their day interactions with other Spanish speakers.

4.4.2 Writing Sample Group 2

All the previous data collections have been important in the analysis of the connection that the participants have with their language and culture. The writing sample offers the opportunity to analyze their mastery of Spanish through writing if any. All group two participants were able to provide a writing sample. Their writing will be analyzed individually, paying attention to the use of verbs, vocabulary, and gender agreement.

Starting with Alondra; she wrote about an incident that happened in the classroom when she was learning English. This participant mentioned that she was not able to understand the language well so when the teacher gave instructions she was unable to follow them. The instruction was to color the apples red but, she colored them green and yellow. It is obvious that she was at the beginning states of learning the English language. She also revealed in her story that when the teacher noticed that Alondra was doing something different, she was reprimanded for not following instructions. When Alondra wrote this story she varied her vocabulary with a wide range of adjectives, verbs and nouns.

Alondra has very good understanding of verb usage in Spanish as demonstrated by her writing piece. The narration was done in first person and the verbs were conjugated in the first and third person singular without errors. She used three different verb tenses in the simple and compound form, the present, the past, and the imperfect. Some examples of tense usage include, in the present, “I remember”, in the simple past, “she saw,” “I did,” “she reprimanded,” “I colored” and the imperfect with the use of the auxiliaries have and did include, “have told us,” “I did not (used to) understand.”

Alondra’s second writing piece was about her experience learning English with the help of her mother. She said that her mom used to put her in front of the television to watch Sesame Street and her mother wanted her to repeat what was being said by the characters but because she was shy she would repeat it in a very low tone of voice. This narrative was done mainly in the imperfect. Alondra also used the subjunctive and past, each one time in her writing. The verbs in the imperfect were, “she used to put us,” “she wanted us,” “she used to make me,” “I used to repeat.” For the subjunctive she used, “that I practiced,” and for the past she used, “it was.” The verbs were conjugated in the first person, third person singular, and also in the first person plural. Her vocabulary was varied and supported the topic. She used words like “television,” “mother,” “week,” “shy,” “low voice,” “house.” The narration was flawless and error free. Her writing is sophisticated and colorful. It demonstrates that she has very good control of the Spanish language.

Candy's narration was about the national anthem "The Star Spangle Banner" and her confusion with the words due to her limited English at the time. Candy thought the words to the song were, "José can you see." She was very happy to hear it, because her father's name is Jose. She did not realize until much later that this was not the case. This was very funny for her, and it is a positive memory that she has of her childhood.

Candy's vocabulary is varied she used words like, "song," "father," "dad," "name," "childhood," "experience." The verbs that she used were for the most part in the first person singular however, she also used the second person singular together with the auxiliary "can" and the third person singular. She used the present, past, reflexive, and the imperfect tenses. Examples of the present tense found in Candy's writing include, "it has," "it says," "I have," "can you see." For the past the verbs used were, "I had," "I thought." The reflexive tense was used in her writing when she stated, "I was emotional," "his name is," "I did not notice." The imperfect tenses used were the following, "I was," "the song said," "it was not." Her writing was free of conjugation errors, verb agreement, gender agreement. Due to the lack of errors found in her writing it is fair to say that she has very good control of the Spanish language. The fact that Alondra and Candy are bilingual teachers proves that the exposure of both languages have helped them to maintain good control of both languages.

Jacobo's writing sample was about a kindergarten experience that he had. He said that the assignment was to draw himself imagining what he would look like when he was one hundred year old. This participant said that he drew the old man and that his height was the same as the building in his drawing. Jacobo mentioned that he thought that one continued growing throught life. He mentioned that his reasoning for the old mans exaggerated height was that he had never seen people that old. He explains that he has always enjoyed that memor because it shows how his mind functioned as a child.

Jacobo's writing sample included words like, "glasses," "cane," "bald," "old man," "gray hair," "buildings." The verbs that he uses are in the present, past, and the imperfect. He uses the simple and the compound forms in the first and third person singular and also the third person plural. Example of the present simple form in his writing is, "it shows." For the past he uses, "I drew," "I thought," "I reasoned." The imperfect tense found in his writing included, "I was," "I (used to) believed," "one continued." Examples of the compound verbs are, "had not seen," "they had arrived," "I always have liked." In Jacobo's writing there were three errors in gender agreement. He used "una" ("a" in English) instead of "uno" ("a" in eEnglish) to talk about himself. These gender errors do not interfere with the meaning that he is trying to convey however, it is important to note that these errors in gender agreement would not be found in the writing of a native speaker. The fact that he does not practice writing in Spanish probably is the reason as to why this minor error was found in his writing sample. It is also important to mention that in his survey he said that he had to re-learn Spanish after too much English exposure and no support of his Spanish in his all English classes. Alondra and Candy did not have similar experiences when they were learning the English language.

4.4.3 Writing Sample Group 3

The three members of this group, Ofelia, Orlando and Néstor were able to provide a writing sample for analysis. The participants attended elementary school outside the United States. As students in the early grades they had a limited exposure to Spanish therefore, they may have not developed fully their writing skills in their native language.

Beginning with Orlando's writing sample, he described the beginning of his schooling in the United States. His writing was equivalent to a second grade student in a Spanish country. The basic meaning of his writing was understood, but the errors interfered with the flow of the reading. Orlando wrote that when he was five years old he learned how to play with friends, and that he played hide and go seek with them and also tag. Vocabulary terms found in his writing were, "muchacho" (boy), "escuela" (school), "amigos" (friends). In his writing there was the misspelling of "escondias" (hide and go seek), the correct spelling is "escondidas." Orlando's writing did not include number agreement errors. Errors in spelling were also found in the verbs he utilized, such as, "hugar" for "jugar" (to play), "hugamos" for "jugábamos" (used to play). The verbs tenses used in the infinitive form were, to learn (aprender), to play (jugar). Examples of the imperfect tense were: "yo era", (I was) and the misspelled verb, "hugamos" which should read "jugábamos" (we used to play.) The reflexive verb was used once to say, "me recuerdo" (I remember.) Orlando left his country at a very young age, and he stopped learning how to write in Spanish. The little that he knows probably is a vestige of the Spanish language that he learned before he left his native land, Colombia. His writing is an example of what Genesee, Paradis and Grago mention in their book of Dual Language Development & Disorders; a "lost of L1 abilities over time", that is known as "L1 attrition" (Genesee et al.142).

The next writing sample was provided by Ofelila. She writes about her experience when she first came to the United States. She mentions that it was very hard, because she did not speak English, she cried a lot, and did not like to go to school. As time passed she realized that she had the opportunity to graduate with a career. Ofelia also reveals that now she is very happy to see that her dream has been realized, as she has been a teacher for thirteen years and also, she is the first one in her family to graduate from college. Ofelia's writing sample was done in the first person singular. Her Spanish language vocabulary is very rich and shows evidence of more complex vocabulary. She uses words like "edad" (age) to express her age, "años" (years) is the more common word used. Other words that demonstrate her knowledge of the Spanish language is "el hecho" (the fact), "oportunidad" (opportunity), "carrera" (degree), "sueño" (dream). Her writing sample is very detailed and she uses transitional words like "después" (later on), "hoy" (now,) and "primera" (first). The verbs that she used in her writing were in the infinitive form, the present, past, and the imperfect tenses. Examples of verbs in the infinitive form are "estudiar" (to study,) "trabajar" (to work,) and "tener" (to have.) The present tense examples are "estoy" (it has,) "tengo" (I have). Some of the past tense verbs in her writing include the misspelled verb "viene" for vine (I came,) "fue" (it was.) Some of the imperfect tense examples are, "tenía" (I was,) "lloraba" (I used to cry,) and hablaba (I used to speak.) In her writing she had minor spelling errors that did not interfere with the flow of the reading.

The last writing sample was provided by Néstor, in his writing he mentions the difficulties that he had when he was learning English. He believes he struggled due to the lack of

ESL programs in the school that he attended. Néstor goes on to mention that little by little he learned English and he had control of the language. There are errors in his writing, but these errors do not interfere with the flow of the reading. The writing is in the first person singular, third person singular, and third person plural. The vocabulary in the writing piece is varied. The verbs used are in the infinitive form, present, past, and the imperfect form, and also the gerund. In his writing sample, vocabulary terms include “escuelas” (schools,) “la razon” for “la razón” (the reasoning,) and “clases” (classes). The Verbs in the infinitive form are “hablar” (to talk,) and manejar (to handle.) There verb “recuerdo” (I remember) was found in his writing and the only verb used in the present tense. There are many verbs in the past tense, such as, “fue” (it was,) “atendi” for “atendí” (I attended,) “aprendi” for “aprendí” (I learned,) and “pude” (I could). The imperfect was used to say “estaba” (I used to be,) “tenian” for “tenían” (they used to have). Néstor has one prepositional error in his writing sample; he uses “a” in place of “en” (at, in;) it could be that he is using a direct translation from English into Spanish.

The writing sample for each of the participants demonstrates the degree of knowledge that they have of the Spanish language grammar, vocabulary and function. Néstor and Orlando did not use written accents in their writing. It could be equated that it takes a little bit of an effort to do them, that they may not have an understanding of when to use accents properly or just being careless. Ofelia in the other hand did use them and in some cases in the wrong place. For example, she confused the accent in “cuando” (when); in Spanish “cuándo” with an accent over the “a” is used to form a question and without the accent it is used to answer the question. Living in a country that did not afford them the opportunity to continue using all their language skills is partly the reason for the language attrition exhibited by some of the participants of this study.

4.5 Conclusions by Group

4.5.1 Group I Conclusions

1. How did the age of arrival contribute to the loss or maintenance of the participant’s native language?
2. Did the fact that some of the participants received a formal elementary education in their native country help or not with their native language maintenance?

In this group there was a six-year difference between the participants in the age of arrival to the United States. Luisa and Daniel both came to the United States at age ten while Ana immigrated at the age of four to Canada. This played a positive role in language retention for Luisa and Daniel; having come to the United States at the age of ten, allowed Luisa and Daniel more time to develop their Spanish language skills through formal elementary school education in their native language.

3. Did their level of education determine their level of knowledge of the Spanish language?

The three had differing ending points in their educational career. Luisa went the furthest in her educational career out of all participants in her group; she completed her undergraduate work and received a bachelor’s degree. Ana received her high school diploma and Daniel did not advance very far in his educational career, having never completed high school. However even

though Luisa completed undergraduate school while Daniel did not complete high school, their written and oral Spanish were around the same level. Ana's oral skills were much more limited and her written Spanish skills were non-existent. An important contributing factor in the retention of their Spanish language skills is the professions of both Luisa and Daniel's (Chef and Construction) expose them to other Spanish speakers on a daily basis; while Ana, a beautician in a predominantly French speaking community, is not similarly exposed.

For this group there was no correlation between level of education and their Spanish language skills. Although the level of Education had no correlation with their Spanish skills, it did play an important role in the mastery of the second language. In English, according to their self- assessment, Luisa has the highest level in both oral and written English while Daniel and Ana's self-assessments were more similar, closer to the four-five range. This leads me to conclude that Luisa's higher level of education compared to Ana's and Daniel's allowed her to excel in the mastery of English when compared to her counterparts.

4. Was their Spanish culture preserved or did these participants exhibit some changes and adaptations to their newly adopted country?

Ana, Daniel, and Luisa were all twenty-two years old. They were all born in Spanish speaking countries and were brought up by native Spanish speakers. All three identified strongly with their country of birth, but Ana showed more connection with the new culture. When it came to immigrants learning the language of the country where they now live, she said, "How a person is going to live in this country know knowing how to speak the language" Luisa took a lighter approach she said "that if the person did not know the language, she will communicate with them in the one that they both understand, and Daniel said that it was hard to learn a second language.

4.5.2 Group 2 Conclusions

1. How did the age of arrival contribute to the loss or maintenance of the participant's native language?

In this group all three participants arrived to the United States around the same age (four and five). In this case the age of entry was not a factor in maintenance of their first language. Even though all participants immigrated at a young age and received little to no formal education in their native land, all three participants maintained a high level of proficiency as shown by the data collected.

2. Did the fact that some of the participants received a formal elementary education in their native country help or not with their native language maintenance?

In this group the level of formal elementary education they received was negligible and did not have a huge impact on language maintenance.

3. Did their level of education determine their level of knowledge of the Spanish language?

All three participants had a very high level of education. In the case of Alondra and Candy their level of education played an important role in their mastery of the Spanish language being that they were trained as ESL teachers and one of the requirements of their degree was to study a foreign language, and both participants selected to study Spanish.

4. Was their Spanish culture preserved or did these participants exhibit some changes and adaptations to their newly adopted country?

All three participants were pretty well-informed of their cultural heritage in that they knew where their parents were from in their native countries. It is interesting to note that Alondra and Candy, identified themselves as “Colombian,” while Jacobo on the other hand identified himself as “American-Colombian.” Even though all three participants have been in the country for about the same amount of time, Alondra and Candy still strongly identify themselves as Colombian and do not attach the title “American” to their background while Jacobo places importance to the “American” in his roots by listing it first.

Their English is that of a native English speaker being that they arrived prior to the critical period they show no traces of a Spanish accent when speaking the English language.

Their mastery of the Spanish language was also very high. All three were born in Colombia, and grew up in areas where large populations of Spanish speakers live giving them easy access to daily Spanish practice. Exposure is the biggest factor in language retention and maintenance. Alondra and Candy had a higher level of written mastery than Jacobo. The reason for this was Alondra’s and Candy’s additional training as ESL teachers as well as their continued daily practice of the language as part of their regular work day.

Another factor for their higher rating in written mastery was that both Alondra and Cathy had received formal ESL instruction as children. While Jacobo stated he had been put into regular classes from the beginning and because of this he had to re-learn Spanish at a later age. The acquisition of a second language can interfere with the retention of the first. ESL classes act as a buffer for learning a second language. Being placed in a bilingual program provides extra time to adjust to the new language, while at the same time; it provides the opportunity to continue practicing the student’s own native language.

4.5.3 Group 3 Conclusions

1. How did the age of arrival contribute to the loss or maintenance of the participant’s native language?
2. Did the fact that some of the participants received a formal elementary education in their native country help or not with their native language maintenance?

Néstor and Ofelia both arrived around the same age (nine-teen) while Orlando arrived at a younger age (five) this definitely played a big factor in language retention because they

received a formal elementary education in the Spanish countries where they resided prior to immigrating to the United States. Néstor completed up to the 4th grade, while Ofelia completed up to the 5th grade this gave both of them more time to develop their Spanish language skills.

3. Did their level of education determine their level of knowledge of the Spanish language?

All three participants in this group were college graduates but Ofelia and Néstor had a better mastery of the Spanish language than Orlando. In this case the level of education was not a factor in language retention.

4. Was their Spanish culture preserved or did these participants exhibit some changes and adaptations to their newly adopted country?

There was a varied response to the preservation of Spanish culture in this group. Orlando the participant who had come at age five simply identified himself as “American.” While Ofelia and Néstor who despite coming at around the same age and from the same country differed in the way they saw themselves. Ofelia identified herself as Salvadorian- American while Néstor simply saw himself as Salvadorian. This leads me to conclude that cultural preservation is tied to age of arrival but is also depends on the individual.

Comparing these participants and their experiences while learning a second language I could affirm that Ofelia most likely had the best experience while learning English. She had positive remarks about her teachers. Néstor on the other hand did not even have the opportunity to transition from his native language to English; his school experience at the very beginning was very difficult. His school did not offer bilingual education or ESL classes to help him acquire the new language and culture. He mentioned how at the beginning he could not understand a word of what the teachers were saying. Orlando’s experience while learning English was different. The ESL program he attended was probably not too solid, being that his school was just starting the program. He at least had the opportunity to learn English and now he uses the English language more than the other two participants. Ofelia is a Spanish teacher, and her mother only speaks Spanish with her so she uses it frequently. The same is true for Nelson whose mother only speaks Spanish. Nelson also has the opportunity to use both languages in his place of employment, while Orlando only uses English. Those who have the opportunity to practice their native language with relatives, friends or others will have the advantage of maintaining and developing the language than those who do not have the same opportunities.

Chapter 5 Final Discussion

This investigation primarily focuses on identifying the main factors that affect changes surrounding the retention of one's own first language and native culture in immigrants from Spanish-speaking countries. This objective was achieved through the study of nine bilingual participants who had emigrated to the United States and Canada from various Spanish-speaking countries. The study split the participants into three groups and compared the influence of various factors such as level of education, profession, and age among others. The data was gathered through questionnaires, interviews and writing samples from the participants.

This study was guided by participants' answers to four main questions. The first was related to age: How did the age of arrival contribute to the loss or maintenance of the participant's native language? As I stated in Chapter II, this study was designed to try to pinpoint the specific factor(s) that influenced the language ability of these nine participants. It became clear that age of arrival was not found to be the one of these influencing factors. For example, in Group Two, although all the participants arrived at a very early age, their language proficiency and retention was very high. Similar findings were observed by Silvina Montrul on her study of bilinguals, in which she concluded that early bilinguals (ages 4-7) who are "exposed to", and continue using "the heritage language have good overall command of the language" (Montrul 201). In another study performed by Johnson et al. regarding the effects of age of arrival, self-consciousness, and cultural identification on language learning, the findings were inconclusive. The researchers believed there was not enough data to support an argument of whether self-consciousness and cultural identification made a difference in language learning (Johnson et al. 85). The study did find, however, that age of arrival did in fact influence language learning.

When the participant groups were formed, it was important to have a mix of male and female participants in order to test for the variable of gender. The study found that was not influential, since the data showed there were no significant contrasting differences in the answers of male and female participants.

The second research question involved early education: Did the fact that some of the participants received a formal elementary education in their native country aide with their native language maintenance? The participants' early years of formative education in their native countries was also explored as a factor in the retention of the four skills of language proficiency. This study found that early education did have some influence but was not a significant factor in the retention of higher-level skills, such as writing. A greater factor in the retention of higher-level skills was education and practice of the Spanish language as a profession. In the cases of Alondra, Candy and Ofelia, they exhibited high proficiency because they were either ESL or Spanish teachers. As Baker mentions in his book *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, attending school in their native land provides the students the support they need in order to learn a second language (Baker 293). In fact, all participants were bilingual.

The third research question focused on level of education: Did their level of education determine their knowledge of the Spanish language? The data collected in this study demonstrated that having a higher degree of education was not a predicting factor of advanced language skills among the participants. This result clearly contradicts the result that Garcia

obtained in her study of Puerto Ricans living in the New York area. In her study she concluded that a higher level of education predicts more advanced Spanish language ability (Garcia 188).

This data also shows that attending a bilingual or ESL program was not the main factor that influenced the participant's Spanish language retention. Some participants either entered the country before ESL programs were in place in their local schools (such as in the case of Néstor) or participated in a fully developed program (such as Luisa) and yet had similar skill levels in English and Spanish. Similar results were observed by Garcia, who studied the Spanish language comprehension among Puerto Ricans living in New York. She disclosed that some of the participants felt that their bilingual classes were geared more towards beginner students and others complained that their Spanish teachers made fun of their "Spanish variety." In her study, none of the participants had a positive experience in their schooling as a child (Garcia 189). Another point of view in reference to education is one made by Krashen. He writes how "Literacy developed in the primary language transfers to the second language," which he refers to as "Bilingual Education." Because these participants did not continue being exposed academically to their first language, some did not fully develop the language skills of reading and writing.

The fourth research question addressed culture: Was the participant's Spanish culture preserved or did these participants exhibit some changes and adaptations while in their newly adopted country? Although there is a growing population of Spanish-speakers in the United States, when these speakers encounter a language that competes with theirs and occupies a more favorable regard, such as English, the Spanish language and culture will be changed by the dominant culture's influence. Fishman mentions similar findings in his book *Language in Sociocultural Change*. He reports that children enrolled in ethnically diverse schools "become less interested in their mother tongue" (Fishman 50) and consequently changes in language and culture will follow. Similar views are reported by Weinrich, who mentions that cultural change happens in two ways: the individual can both absorb some elements of the new culture and simultaneously replace some elements of the old culture (Weinrich 5).

This study shed light on certain cultural changes experienced by participants. For example, in Group One during the initial interview, Luisa could not differentiate between country of origin and nationality. Small oral language errors made by these participants would have been quickly identified by Spanish speakers who have a better command of the language or live in Spanish-speaking countries. However, for many Spanish speakers who have not been formally instructed in their native language and live in a country where many speak a language other than Spanish, these mistakes will go unnoticed.

Self-identification with the dominant culture also varied widely among the participants regardless of age of arrival, level of education, or gender. Some participants identified strongly with their country of origin, others with the United States, and the remaining with a mix of both. Even so, the daily effort to maintain their native language abilities from the constant domination of the English language proved that these participants were resilient and love their language and culture so much that they were not willing to stop using it in their everyday interactions with family members, friends, and even strangers. The positive attitude that the participants have toward the Spanish language seems to be the reason why all nine participants still continue to use

the Spanish language. Gradually, attitudes toward immigrants have for the most part improved in the United States. During the seventies, the United States government commissioned a study lead by Fishman to learn more about the culture of others and the effects they potentially posed to the American culture. In his report, Fishman declared that such cultural and linguistic diversity should be supported (Fishman 25). These participants definitely had the support of their families and the communities where they grew up. For most of the participants, their language and culture still plays a major role in their life.

Final Conclusions

The most influential factor affecting participants' language retention and maintenance was input and interaction with family members, friends, and the communities where they grew up. All participants were able to communicate orally in Spanish, but some exhibited signs of language attrition, especially in their writing skills. Past language use helped the participants to be familiar with the Spanish language. They all disclosed that when they were young their parents or caregivers spoke to them in Spanish.

Living in bilingual communities gave these participants a chance to practice the Spanish language and stay connected with their Spanish culture; however living in a bilingual community does not guarantee that the individual will become more proficiently bilingual. Even though Daniel, Alondra, Candy and Jacobo all grew up in a community with a large number of Spanish speakers, we see that their proficiency levels varied widely. The English language assimilation forced upon them in the United States school system made it difficult for some of the participants to gradually acquire all aspects of their native language.

Taking into consideration the profession of these participants, it was clear that the participants that used both languages in their professions had the best Spanish language abilities. Those who work in the ESL education field were the ones that demonstrated the highest skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Limits of the Study

The greatest limitation of the study was finding enough volunteers to acquire an adequate amount of data. The study required finding participants with certain requirements and certain factors proved to be very difficult, such as having the same age of entry.

It was also difficult to communicate with some of the participants because of work, family or time constraints. On top of the time constraints keeping the studying going after the initial commitment also was problematic. There was one participant in particular who was constantly trying to back out of the study.

I propose that future studies be built around these considerations:

- Are there structural changes in the education system that can be made which will allow non-English speakers to continue developing their first language simultaneously with

their second language in order to cultivate a true bilingual (or poly-lingual) population in the United States?

- What influence do community cultural centers have in the ethnic non-English speaking population over time in terms of culture retention? Should cultural diversity be promoted by outside entities such as the local government? How would this influence the existence of such centers?
- What are the motivating factors and results of cultural assimilation? Should new immigrants be required to assimilate, yes or no?

I am very thankful to the participants of this study for giving me the opportunity to learn about themselves. I was able to document their language and cultural changes and although my goal was not to offer solutions to my findings, I do have suggestions for those who wish to maintain their language and culture: form a club, read in the native language, e-mail friends and relatives using your first language, or just pick up the phone and call. Make it your goal to keep the conversation in Spanish.

The journey of discovery that I took, guided by my supportive professors Lilia and Elena, helped me with the completion of this study. The amount of research, writing, and brainstorming that took place to put the ideas onto paper was unimaginable. I had discussions with my professors on several different topics, some of which I was familiar with and others that were new to me. I was not familiar with the field of study about heritage speakers; I now understand who they are and how they are classified, along with much more. It was very important for me to address the history of bilingualism in the United States. I felt that it was important to keep it in this document in order to best be able to understand what native Spanish-speaking people have had to overcome in order to achieve success and progress. In some of the readings, the label “minority” was hard to ignore. I strongly disagree with labels. I made it my point to avoid using it throughout this research. I feel that when you label someone a minority you are diminishing the person. Rather than saying the “minority group”, just be creative and use a different word to describe the group.

I could not end this work without revealing that as an immigrant myself I was able to connect with some of the subjects, and when I saw the movie clip about Oscar it reminded me of my own journey coming to this country alone and getting lost trying to find my relatives in Los Angeles. I too was hungry, without money, and so far away from the place that I left behind. I never dreamed of leaving El Salvador, but the war displaced countless families and I was just one of many. I have always appreciated what this country offers to those who persevere. Education opens the gate of knowledge and I have always had a passion for learning. My brother also had a passion for learning. He was very smart and was studying to be a business administrator. I remember him doing math problems far too advanced for me to understand. I believe that by continuing to learn and furthering my education, I honor my brother’s memory. He was only twenty-four when he traded his life so a fifteen year old kid could live. Jorge will always be missed.

Bibliography

Acosta Corte, A. "II Congreso de Español como lengua extranjera en Asia-Pacífico." Web. 6 Apr. 2016.

"Amendments of Regulation of the Commissioner of Education, Part 154, Services for Pupils with Limited English Proficiency." *counsel.nysed*, Oct 2014. Web. 11 Mar. 2015.

Auer, Peter, Wei, Li, *Handbook of Multilingualism and Multilingual Communication*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2007. Print.

Bahannon III, John Neal, Stanowicz, Laura. "The issue of negative evidence: Adult responses to children's language errors." *Developmental Psychology*, Vol. 24, No. 5, 1988, Web. 10 Mar. 2016.

Baker, Colin. *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. 5th ed., Tonawanda: Multilingual Matters, 2011. Print.

Baker, Colin, Prys Jones, Sylvia. *Encyclopedia of bilingualism and Bilingual Education*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1998. Print.

Beaudrie, Sarah M., Fairclough, Marta, *Spanish as a Heritage Language in the United States: The State of the Field*. Washington: Georgetown UP, 2012. Print.

Beer, William R., Jacob, James E. *Language Policy and National Unity*. Totowa: Rowman & Allanhead, 1985. Print

Bhatia, Tej k, Ritchie, William C. *The handbook of bilingualism and multilingualism*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2006. Print.

Bialystok, Ellen, *Bilingualism in development: Language, literacy, and cognition*. Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 2001. Print.

Bialystok, Ellen, *Language Processing in Bilingual Children*. Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press, 1991. Print

Bloomfield, Leonard, *Language*. Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1984. Print.

"Community Facts, Hispanic or Latino by type: 2010", Census Summary File 1, 2010, *factfinder.census*. Web. 05 May 2015.

Diaz-Campos, Manuel, *The handbook of Hispanic Sociolinguistics*. Malden: Wiley Blackwell, 2015. Print.

Dithurbide, Danielle. "El Drama de los niños migrantes (2)," *Univision Noticias*, 19 Apr. 2012, youtube.

"Education: Instruction in English." Government of Quebec, Canada.n.d. Web. 11 Aug. 2015.

Escamilla, Kathy. "Bilingual means two: Assessment Issues, Early Literacy, and Spanish-Speaking Children." *U.S. Department of Education. Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA), A Research Symposium on High Standards in Reading for Students from Diverse Language Groups: Research, Practice & Policy.* □ PROCEEDINGS, April 19-20, 2000. □ Washington, DC. Web. 15 Dec. 2015.

Fishman, Joshua A. "Bilingual Education in Sociolinguistic Perspective." ED 040040 *ERIC*, Mar. 1970. Web. 11 Jan. 2016.

Fishman, Joshua A. *Language in Sociocultural Change: Essays by Joshua A. Fishman*. Stanford: Stanford U.P., 1972. Print.

Furman, Rich et al. "Social Work Practice with Latinos: Key Issues for social Workers", PMC 2010 Apr. 30. 54 (2), PMID: PMC2861823. Web.15 Apr. 2016.

García, Ofelia. "Spanish language ability and use among second-generation of newyorican", *Ofelia García. Files. Wordpres*, Feb 2011, Web. 06 Jan. 2016.

Genesee, Fred, Johanne Paradis, Martha, B Grago. *Dual Language Development & Disorders: A Handbook on Bilingualism & Second Language Learning*, 11th ed., Baltimore: Brookes, 2004. Print.

González, Josué M. *Encyclopedia of Bilingual Education*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2008. Print.

Grosjean, Francois. *Life with Two Languages*. Massachusetts: Harvard U.P., 1982. Print.

Hakuta, Kenji. "Educating Language Minority Students and Affirming their Equal Rights: Research and Practical Perspectives." Seventh Annual Brown Lecture in Education Research, *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 40, No. 4, May 2011, Web 22 Nov. 2015.

Hakuta, K., Ferdman, B.M., Diaz, R.M. "Bilingualism and Cognitive Development: Three Perspectives and Methodological Implications." ED278274 *ERIC*, 1986, Web 12 July 2016

Hamers, Josiane, Blanc, Michel. *Bilinguality and Bilingualism.*, 2nd ed., Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 2000. Print.

Hasson, Deborah J. "Language Maintenance in Hispanic University Students: Analyzing Written Competence." *Proceedings of the 4th International Symposium on Bilingualism*. Cascadilla Press. Massachusetts, 2005. Web. 17 Apr. 2015.

Hoffmann, Charlotte. *An Introduction to Bilingualism*. New York: Longman, 1993. Print.

Jedynak, M. *Critical Period Hypothesis Revisited: The impact of Age on Ultimate Attainment in the pronunciation of a foreign language*, Series XX1, Vol. 333, Frankfurt. Peter Lang, 2009. Print.

Johnson, J. S., Newport, E. L. Critical period effects in second language learning: The influence of maturational state on the acquisition of English as a second language. *Cognitive psychology*, 21(1), 1989. Web. 12 Feb. 2016.

Krashen, Stephen. "Bilingual Education, the Acquisition of English, and the Retention and Loss of Spanish" *languagepolicy*, n.d., Web. 17 Jul. 2016.

Lenneberg, E.H. *Biological foundations of language*. New York: Wiley, 1967. Print

Levey, Jacques E. *Cesar Chávez: Autobiography of La Causa*. Minneapolis: U. of Minnesota Press, 2007. Print.

López Montero, Quesada Chave, Maria José, Salas Alvarado, Jonnathan. "Social factors involved in second language learning: A case study from the pacific campus, *Universidad de Costa Rica*." *Revista de Lenguas Modernas*, No. 20, 2014. Web. 24 Apr. 2016.

McLaughlin, Barry. *Second Language Acquisition in Childhood: Volume 2: School-Age Children*, 2nd Ed., New York: Psychology Press, 2012. Print.

McWhorter, John. *Understanding Linguistics: The science of Language*, Part III. Chantilly: The Teaching Co., 2008. Print.

"Minority Health: Hispanic or Latino Populations," *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*. n.d. Web. 07 Jun. 2015.

Millán Garrido, Rosario. "Interferencias lingüísticas en el aprendizaje de una segunda lengua." *XVI Congreso Internacional de la ASELE La Competencia Pragmática o la Enseñanza del Español como Lengua Extranjera*. Oviedo, 2005, *Centro Virtual Cervantes*, 22-25, Sep 2005. Web. 6 Jun. 2015.

Montrul, Silvina. *Incomplete Acquisition in Bilingualism: Re-Examining the Age Factor*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2008. Print.

Montrul, Silvina. "Is the Heritage Language like a Second Language?" *eurosla*, 2012, Web 11 Apr. 2016.

"Native American languages." *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 6th ed., *Encyclopedia*, 2015. Web. 25 Nov. 2015.

N.Y/Region, "Legislature's Intent in backing "the Primacy of English"." *N.Y. Times*, 14 Aug. 1996. Web. 10 May. 2015.

"Responding to Linguistic and Cultural Diversity Recommendations for Effective Early Childhood Education." *National Association for the Education of Young Children*, Nov 1995. Web. 04 Apr. 2015.

Reza, H.G., "Immigrants Deported in INS Sting Operation." *L.A. Times*, 31 Jul. 1993. Web. 03 Oct. 2015.

Singleton, David Michael, Ryan, Lisa. *Language acquisition: the age factor*. 2nd Ed., Tonawanda: Multilingual Matters, 2004. Print.

Silva-Corvalán, Carmen. "El español de Los Angeles: ¿Adquisición incompleta o desgaste lingüístico?" *La Enseñanza Bilingüe en EE.UU. Centro Virtual Cervantes*, 22 Nov 2003. Web. 9 Jan. 2016.

Snow, C.E. et al. "The Critical Period for Language Acquisition: Evidence from Second Language Learning." *Child Development*, Vol.49, No.4, Dec 1978, Web. 04 Jul. 2016.

US Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health "Hispanic/Latino." *minorityhealth.hhh*, 2012, Web, 11 Feb. 2016.

Valdes, G. "Heritage Language Students: Profiles and Possibilities." ED 458809 *ERIC*, 2001, Web. 17 Jun. 2016.

Valdés, G., Capitelli, S., Alvarez, L. *Latino Children Learning English: Steps in the Journey*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2011. Print.

Valdés, G., Fishman, J.A., Chávez, R., Pérez, W. *Developing Minority Language Resources: The Case of Spanish in California*. Tonawanda: Multilingual Matters, 2006. Print.

Weinreich, Uriel. *Languages in Contact: Findings and Problems*. The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1979. Print.

Wray, Alison, Bloomer, Aileen. *Projects in Linguistics and Language Studies: A practical Guide of Researching Language*, 3rd Ed. New York: Routledge, 2013. Print