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For much of history, U.S. schools have employed ideologies of assimilation and nationhood – involving an exchange of immigrants' ways of life for a homogenous American identity - as frameworks for their curriculum and language education programs. However, a new ideology of multiculturalism has gained popularity in recent decades. Multicultural education encourages cultural pluralism and cross-cultural communication through bilingual and dual language immersion programs. Through observations of and interviews with teachers and students, I examine the intricacies of such a multicultural approach in practice in an Oregon high school with a novel dual immersion program, and the ramifications for Latino immigrant students in particular. I explore the Latino students' constructions of ethnicity and identity within this context, as well as their language practices and relationships with students and teachers of other ethnicities. I find that everyday experiences of multiculturalism are complex: The dual language immersion program provides a space for Latino

immigrant students to explore their own hybrid identities; challenges English monolingualism; and promotes interethnic solidarity. Yet it also leaves several unequal structures of power intact, by benefiting White students over others and maintaining ethnic divisions in classrooms. I ultimately argue that we cannot romanticize multicultural approaches; rather, a critical examination of their effects in practice is necessary.

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The Experiences of Latino Immigrant Students in an Oregon High School: Identity, Language, and Interethnic Relationships

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Alyssa Hayden

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I understand that my thesis will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request.

Alyssa Hayden, Author

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Chapter One: Introduction: Multiculturalism in Practice

Introductory Remarks

> In a dual language immersion classroom in an Oregon high school, students discuss their observations of bilingual professionals in the community – one of their biggest class assignments for the term. Tomás, who has completed his activity at the Cesar Chavez center on the university campus, comments that there are fraternity houses for Latinos at the university. Tomás adds, "But they speak English!" while Juan remarks under his breath, "Brownsville." Mrs. Mowen responds to Tomás, "*Como Ustedes*!" Mrs. Mowen leaves the classroom for several minutes and the students turn their conversation to other subjects. Veronica – a native Spanish speaker of Spanish ancestry - overhears a conversation in Spanish amongst some students and states, "You guys sound really funny speaking Spanish." Gabriela laughingly responds, "Like Mexican?" Her response elicits laughter from the rest of the class. Veronica says, "No, like redneck Mexican." Meanwhile, Stephanie asks Juan for help translating a Spanish word in her book, and Tomás grabs a sip of Mary's lemonade.

This excerpt constitutes just ten minutes of a massive expanse of rich dialogue and behavior that I catalogued in bilingual classrooms in an Oregon high school. The descriptions above and the ones that follow in this thesis demonstrate the complexity of students' experiences in contemporary U.S. classrooms. As societies become increasingly diverse, schools are transforming into locations of extensive intergroup interaction. In this new context, classrooms, hallways, and lunchrooms serve as sites of negotiation for issues of language, ethnicity, power, and identity. Students of different backgrounds meet in these small spaces, carrying their prejudices, ideologies, and cultural ways with them, and engage in learning and meaning-making. The results are sometimes explosive, yet many times inspirational.

Although traditionally informed by an assimilationist discourse, in which immigrant and minority students must adopt White, middle-class ways, some U.S. schools are now taking a multicultural approach. Rather than erase variances amongst youth, multicultural programs seek to *recognize* ethnic and cultural differences (Rosen 1977). Attention is paid to other cultures and

ethnicities, as well as the languages of these groups. As a part of this multiculturalist agenda, dual language immersion (DLI) programs have become a more popular form of language education in the U.S. in recent decades (Freeman 2000). DLI programs enroll English speakers and Spanish speakers in the same classrooms (and oftentimes are ethnically-mixed, with White and Latino students), and classroom instruction is usually divided between the two languages. The unique dynamics of DLI classrooms have implications for how immigrant, minority, and majority youth negotiate issues of language, identity, and interethnic relationships in these classrooms, as well as in their broader school communities.

It is my goal in this thesis to uncover the complexities of such a multicultural approach in practice in an Oregon high school (dubbed Lancaster High School) with a dual language immersion program, and its effects on the school's Latino first- and second-generation immigrant students in particular. I explore the following questions: What identities do Latino immigrant students at the school formulate for themselves, and what role does the Dual Language Immersion program play in this identity-construction? Do Latino immigrant students have a sense of belonging in the school community as the result of the DLI program, or are they largely isolated from peers? What effect does such an approach have on interethnic relationships in the DLI classrooms, as well in mainstream school spaces? Does the program ameliorate issues of language dominance, ethnic inequality, and discrimination as are often documented in English-only schools, or does it simply reinforce hierarchies of difference?

Literature Overview and my Research Contributions

I locate my research within scholarship that describes ideologies of assimilation and multiculturalism and analyzes the ways in which these ideologies are applied to immigrant populations in the United States (and other nations). Nation-states have widely utilized the

assimilationist model to erase immigrants' subjectivities, identities, and cultural ways and replace them with the norms and values of mainstream society (Glick Schiller et al. 1995; Ong 2003). In the contemporary era of globalization and neoliberal reforms, a new political discourse of multiculturalism has recently gained popularity and encourages cultural pluralism and diversity; thus, the discourse appears to be an alternative framework for immigrant integration, as it promotes maintenance of cultural difference (Dávila 1999). State officials have actualized this ideology into multicultural programs and policies. Yet anthropologists and other social scientists have begun to question the seemingly culturally relativistic approach of multiculturalism. Grillo (2010), for example, found that in the UK in the early 21st century, the state discourse of multiculturalism required immigrant and minority communities to "support the values and laws of the nation, whilst keeping hold of their cultural identity" (29). Glick Schiller et al. (1995) note a similar contradiction in the United States, in which immigrant groups are encouraged to preserve their culture while simultaneously being "fully embedded in an American mosaic" (51). Beyond its homologizing discourse, other anthropologists have critiqued multiculturalism for essentializing and commodifying cultures (Comaroff 2009; Dávila 1999; Eller 1997; Paap 1995), reinscribing lines of inclusion and exclusion (Dávila 1999), constraining opportunities for political and social action (Hale 2002), and bolstering hierarchies of race, ethnicity, and gender (Rahier 2008).

My research ultimately contributes to this anthropological literature by exploring how such a multicultural discourse is enacted on the ground in an Oregon high school. There is a considerable paucity of knowledge surrounding lived experiences of multiculturalism in such diverse settings. As do other scholars within the Anthropology of Education (Collins 2012; Ek 2009; Patthey-Chavez and Genevieve 1993), I employ theories of social reproduction (Apple

1982; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Bowles and Gintis 1976; Willis 1977) to explain how Lancaster High School (LHS) puts a multicultural discourse into practice – through a dual language immersion program - in their dealings with Latino immigrant students, and how the students respond in these multicultural spaces.

Dual language immersion is an example of a specific type of multicultural education that attempts to foster bilingualism and cross-cultural understanding for students (Palmer 2010). It often promotes the use of Spanish or other languages and encourages the expansion of curricula to consider minority contributions to history, literature, politics, and the economy (Freeman 1996). I ultimately find that the Dual Language Immersion program at LHS provides a nurturing environment for its Latino immigrant students, as these students develop and maintain their Spanish language and engage with a non-Eurocentric curriculum that focuses on Latin American histories and cultures. This stands in contrast to mainstream, English-only classrooms that often require exclusive English-use amongst students and largely present Euro-American perspectives (Nieto 2010; Valenzuela 1999). Yet my findings also suggest that DLI programs should not be regarded as the cure-all for social ills. The program at LHS has many structural and practical problems, and it also leaves several hierarchies of power intact. For example, English remains symbolically superior to Spanish; the program excludes the majority of the Latino student population at the school; and the White students receive the vast amount of benefits from the program. Furthermore, interethnic interactions within DLI classrooms are complicated by deep-rooted notions of ethnic division. These findings indicate that though multiculturalism may appear to be an ideal model for diverse societies, experiences of multiculturalism are complex. Thus, I extend anthropological challenges of this political ideology by documenting and critiquing multiculturalism in practice.

I also engage with anthropological debates concerning transnationalism (Smith 2006), transnational social fields (Glick Schiller 2012), and transborder experiences (Stephen 2007). Early paradigms of transnational migration positioned transnational subjects as constant border crossers between sending and receiving countries (Kearney 1991; Smith 2006). However, anthropologists (Glick Schiller 2012; Stephen 2007) have recently challenged these paradigms and expanded transnational subjects to include later generations of immigrants, as well as those that may not physically travel across the border but still engage in “an array of communications that transmit new advice, opinions, and affect” (Glick Schiller 2012:26). I similarly challenge conceptualizations of transnationalism as strictly dependent on physical border crossings, and instead demonstrate how rooted first- and second-generation Latino immigrants engage in transnational social fields in their everyday lives (and even in the school context). I also draw upon literature on identity and ethnicity to consider the Latino immigrant students’ process of ethnic identity construction in these spaces. I find that the students form hybrid identities that reflect their transborder and diasporic cultural imaginaries, as well as critique pan-ethnic categories such as ‘Latino’ and ‘Hispanic.’ These findings confirm literature that describes identity and ethnicity as flexible and emerging out of social practice (Ek 2009; Holland et al. 1998; Lucko 2011).

Finally, my research makes contributions to the anthropological discussion of youth negotiation and agency, as it illuminates the ways in which youth engage in meaning-making and identity formation in contemporary school spaces, as well as critically analyze issues of power, marginalization, and subordination in societies across the globe. By doing so, my work also speaks to the creativity of minors and thus advances critical scholarship within the Anthropology

of Childhood that seeks to position youth as agents rather than cultural receptors (Hecht 1998; James 2007; Katz 2004; Schildkrout 2002).

In this thesis, I use the phrase 'first- and second-generation immigrant students' to refer to foreign-born students as well as U.S.-born students with at least one foreign-born parent. Traditionally, scholars have classified immigrants and their children according to generation (first, second, and so on) in an attempt to describe the divergent ways that they assimilate and acculturate to U.S. society (Portes and Zhou 1993; Rumbaut 1997a). They propose that subsequent generations increasingly adopt American values and lose their own cultural ways, by assimilating to middle or lower classes. However, while some scholars have indeed noted that different generations of Latino immigrants may hold different values, practices, knowledge, and experiences (Smith 2006; Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco 2001; Valenzuela 1999), many of these same academics have also found similarities between first- and second-immigrant generations, such as a shared and continued Mexican identity (Valenzuela 1999) and similar participation in transnational or transborder life (Glick Schiller 2012; Smith 2006). These academics challenge rigid generational classifications and the presumed unilinear path toward assimilation, suggesting that these do not make sense in the contemporary context of hyper-mobility and transnationalism that many immigrants – regardless of generation - experience. In this thesis, I similarly contest this generational categorization and examine first- and second-generation immigrant students collectively.

Thesis Outline

In the following chapters, I develop these findings while simultaneously interweaving the literature that frames my research and results. In chapter two, I present salient background information concerning Latino immigrant students in Oregon schools and the state's language

education programs. This chapter also includes an overview of the methods I employed for this research, as well as an exploration of the progression of my research and my own positionality. Chapter three explores the backgrounds of the Latino immigrant students in the Dual Immersion program at Lancaster High School, including their transborder experiences and hybrid identities. The chapter examines how these experiences and identities defy the assimilationist agenda of the U.S. nation-state. In chapter four, I continue the discussion of identity by exploring the state's creation of the ethnic classifications 'Latino' and 'Hispanic' and their connection to neoliberal ideologies. I detail Latino immigrant students' critiques of these identity markers and discuss recent multicultural imaginaries of America as another political project. Chapter five discusses the ways in which the Dual Language Immersion program at LHS employs a multicultural rather than assimilationist agenda. It also describes how the program has succeeded and failed, surrounding issues of structure and implementation, academics, language, and power. In chapter six, I explore interethnic relationships in DLI classrooms – one of the goals of multiculturalism - and broaden the lens of analysis to the larger school population. I examine issues of isolation, invisibility, and discrimination related to the Latino student community at the school. Finally, chapter seven offers concluding remarks and makes recommendations for future steps.

Chapter Two: Background and Context

Latinos in Oregon Schools

Immigration from Latin America (defined in Wright's study as Mexico, Central America, and South America) to the state of Oregon has dramatically increased in the past several decades, with Oregon's immigrant population from Latin America nearly tripling between 1990 and 2000 (Wright 2012). Latinos now make up 12% of Oregon's total population. A recent report shows that Latinos are making a significant contribution to the state's economy, as Oregon Latino customers fuel the growth of Latino-owned small business, purchase homes at greater rates, and contribute to the state's GDP and funds through income and taxes (Wright 2012).

Latino children are enrolling in Oregon k-12 schools at greater rates as well; 21% of students enrolled in Oregon k-12 public schools are Latino (Wright 2012), and six Oregon school districts already have Latino enrollment that is greater than 50% of their total enrollment (ECONorthwest 2009). The number of Spanish-speaking, English-learning students has also increased. Currently, 9.1% of all k-12 students in Oregon are Spanish-speaking English Language Learners (Wright 2012), and half of Oregon's Latino students are enrolled in ESL programs (ECONorthwest 2009).

Yet a recent study found that Oregon's Latino student population faces large barriers to academic success: "Hispanic students are more than twice as likely as white students to be economically disadvantaged and are more likely to change schools and to be taught by inexperienced teachers than are their white counterparts" (ECONorthwest 2009). Another study of Multnomah County reveals the County's inability to sustain Latino students in its schools: "Hispanic and Native American youth have dropout rates that are persistently almost three times worse than those of White youth" (Curry-Stevens et al. 2010:35). Martinez et al. (2004) noted

that 50% of the Oregon Latino students in their study experienced discrimination for being Latino or observed discrimination occurring to someone else.

Oregon schools are attempting to remedy these problems with progressive bilingual education programs. Unlike other U.S states where multicultural programs and bilingual education have been under considerable political attack, Oregon has had a long history of promoting multilingualism. In reaction to the English-only movement sweeping the nation in the second half of the 20th century, in 1989 the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon passed an 'English Plus Resolution' (Senate Joint Resolution 16) which encourages diversity in Oregon communities: "The use of diverse languages in business, government and private affairs, and the presence of diverse cultures is welcomed, encouraged, and protected in Oregon" (Crawford 1997). In recent years, the state has realized the potential benefits of bilingual education for both English Language Learners and English speakers. The Oregon Department of Education now widely promotes bilingual education and plans to expand the 70 current dual language immersion programs in the state (Manning 2014). In 2013, the Department approved $900,000 dollars in grants to new dual language immersion programs in eight Oregon districts, citing the fact that "Dual Language / Two-Way Bilingual programs create unique opportunities to address those needs" of English learners (Oregon Department of Education 2013). The assistant superintendent in the Oregon Department of Education Equity unit is working to make bilingual seals available statewide in 2015; high school graduates with these seals can receive college credit or advanced placement within college courses (Manning 2014).

Yet in part because of their novelty, as well as general barriers of access to schools, little research has been done on the internal dynamics of Oregon schools with dual language immersion programs, or the views and opinions of the Latino immigrant students themselves.

What do they like or dislike about these dual immersion programs? How do they interact with other students in these spaces? Do they feel that they belong at the school? Are their needs being met in these multicultural programs?

Progression of Fieldwork

Valdes (1998) notes that “most policymakers and members of the public have little information about what actually happens in schools” (13). For much of the adult public, including state officials, parents and even researchers, schools can be relatively enigmatic institutions. These institutions host most of the nation’s minors for the majority of each day, but relatively little is known about the day-to-day experiences and interactions of students within school walls. As a researcher, gaining access to one of these isolated institutions presented a challenge. Because my study involves research of and conversations with minors, school administrators are understandably cautious and somewhat guarded in their dealings with researchers. These challenges required me to remain creative and flexible regarding my research site, as well as the nuances of my research topic.

When I first conceived of my topic and scanned the literature for related research, I imagined myself conducting this study in a high school with a typical English-only type of language education program. Almost all of the existing similar studies have been completed in schools with standard English As A Second Language (ESL) programs (Anderson 2009; Collins 2012; DeJaeghere and McCleary 2010; Gutierrez et al. 2000; Valenzuela 1999). I contacted several schools as potential field sites, but I was rejected by many of them that maintained policies barring student research. The executive director of a local Latino organization where I interned suggested I contact the assistant principal of Lancaster High School, who had worked with the organization before and was known to be an ally for the Latino community. The

assistant principal immediately expressed interest in my work at LHS, and she became my point of contact at the school, as well as my primary advocate as I also requested permission from the superintendent of the school district. After gaining entry at LHS, I soon discovered that the school retains a specific type of bilingual language education program called dual language immersion (DLI). This development rendered my field site novel in relation to previous studies and prompted me to shift my framework toward that of multiculturalism: DLI programs are embedded in a different rhetoric than English-only programs – multicultural rather assimilationist – and thus one of my focuses became comparing these discourses and documenting how multiculturalism plays out on the ground in the DLI program and in the broader school. In my interviews, students in DLI classrooms invariably had much to say about their experiences with bilingual education; many noted that the program has changed their world views or helped form their identities. Thus, it became essential that I expand some of my interview questions to explore the intricacies and nuances of the DLI program at the school, such as the students' opinions of the program, their language use within its classrooms, its effects on their identity, and its connection to and consequences for the remainder of the school.

The *participants* of my research also expanded due to the nature of the DLI program at LHS. Although I remained focused on Latino immigrant students, I observed and interviewed their non-Latino, White peers as well. The ethnic structure of the DLI classrooms is unique – generally 50% Latino students and 50% White students. This structure presented the valuable opportunity to explore issues of interethnic interactions. DLI programs emphasize cross-cultural communication, and I quickly became interested in documenting how this goal was being achieved (or not) in the DLI classrooms at the school. Documenting the perspectives of both Latinos and non-Latinos was essential in this research pursuit.

Methods and the Research Process

I employed ethnographic methods in my research at the school, including semi-structured interviews and participant observation in classrooms. I conducted interviews with 13 students – five are Latino first- or second-generation immigrants (Natalia, Gabriela, Fernando, Tomás, Juan); seven are non-Latino Whites (Sally, Becca, Stephanie, Alice, Monica), of which two are Spaniards (Veronica and Sergio); and one is half-Latina and half-White (Emily). I also interviewed three faculty members – Mrs. Mowen, Mrs. Hannan, and Mrs. Beckler - all largely non-Latino Whites, barring Mrs. Mowen, who is half-Costa Rican. Mrs. Hannan teaches two combined ninth and tenth grade DLI classrooms; Mrs. Mowen teaches a twelfth grade DLI classroom; and Mrs. Beckler teaches a twelfth grade mainstream Anatomy & Physiology course. The assistant principal initially identified these three teachers, on the basis that they would have Latino immigrant students in their classrooms and would allow me to observe their classrooms and conduct an interview with them. After two weeks of observing Mrs. Mowen's classroom, I developed a particular rapport with her students, and I began recruiting them for interviews. All of the student interview participants came from Mrs. Mowen's classroom. I audio recorded all interviews (except one) with the permission of participants, transcribed them, and then coded them for common themes surrounding identity, language, and interethnic relationships, which I develop in the following chapters.

I interviewed students during class breaks, either in an empty classroom across the hall or in open seating areas outside of their classroom. The students that I interviewed in open seating areas seemed somewhat anxious during our discussions and attempted to speak in hushed undertones, as other students and teachers milled about. Some of them quickly glanced around before providing their answers or made comments indicating their concern. The students seemed

particularly cautious in their responses to sensitive questions that elicited potential critiques of the school's DLI program or other students' (lack of) interest in Latino culture. For example, when I asked Monica if students outside of the DLI program are interested in learning about Latino culture, she whispered, "Ok, I don't way to say this like too loudly in front of anybody, but I feel like, no." Another delicate question that I posed to students concerned their dislikes of the DLI program. Halfway through my interviews, I sensed the students' hesitation to respond to such a question (especially when sitting right outside of the DLI classroom) and began prefacing this question with "You can answer however you would like, this stays between us." Given the sensitive nature of some of my questions, if I were to conduct this study again, I would attempt to hold all interviews in a separate space away from other students and teachers or even in an area outside of the school, in order to ease my participants' fears of being overheard. I may also give students the opportunity to choose the location of the interview. There is the possibility that some of my student participants may have withheld certain feelings or experiences because they felt uneasy in the school environment.

Although I created a script to guide the discussions, the interviews remained open-ended and flexible to allow the students to expound on what is most meaningful to them. In practice, this resulted in each interview taking a unique route. Some of the students, such as Gabriela, found it more salient to discuss their lives in Mexico and their migration stories. Others, like Diego, discussed at great lengths their relationships with other students in the DLI classroom. Still others spent considerable time exploring their identities (Juan). In this sense, I felt as if many of the students guided *me* through the interviews, as they wove together meaningful narratives and life histories. Students also resisted or re-formed some of my questions, such as "How do you identify yourself?" This question in particular elicited long pauses and comments

such as “That is really hard.” Although I originally intended to glean their *ethnic* identities, some students responded to this question by describing their personalities and characters. Others found it difficult to give a direct answer to this question and instead provided intricate paragraphs of dialogue about their sense of self. With their responses, students taught me that identity is complex and somewhat undefined (see chapter three), as well as the importance of remaining flexible with my interview questions and the research process in general.

I also observed these same students in their twelfth grade DLI classroom, along with students in three other classrooms - two combined ninth and tenth grade Dual Language Immersion classrooms and one twelfth grade mainstream classroom - to triangulate the interview data. I observed these classrooms three to five times per week over a three-month period. Sometimes I sat on one side of the classroom at a table by myself, and other times I sat amongst the students. In Mrs. Mowen’s class, I became more of active participant in the classroom, chatting and laughing with the students or helping the teacher carry out some group activities. During these class sessions, I recorded extensive notes about the behavior, language use, dialogue, body language and facial expressions, seating patterns, instructional content, and actions of the students and teachers. These observations allowed me to go beyond what the students professed to me in interviews and watch how the students *acted*. Some of the things I noted were whether students prefer English or Spanish; how the Latino and White students interact with each other versus those of their own ethnicity; and how the Latino students perform their ethnicity in the classroom – taking note of discussions related to their cultural practices at home (*quinceañeras,* holidays), jokes about ‘being Mexican,’ and so on. During these observations, I was particularly struck by the amount of power and voice the students hold in the classroom: Students participated to a great extent in classroom discussions; held sway over some

of the classroom activities; protested questions on exams; and corrected teachers' Spanish. This seems to suggest that students are cultural producers even in institutions that oftentimes treat them as purely receptors (James 2007) – a point that I expand upon in the following section.

Reflections on Conducting Research with the 'Other'

I must also make mention of my own positionality in this research. As is essential in anthropological research, I was forced to confront my own position – as a White European-American woman conducting research with Latinos - before beginning my fieldwork. I have been connected to the Latino community in some way for much of my life. Growing up in 'The New South,' which has undergone a recent influx of immigration from Latin America, and attending a high school that was 50% Latino sparked my interest in Latino culture. When I attended The University of Georgia as an undergraduate, I began to involve myself in surrounding immigrant communities in various ways. While tutoring a young Mexican girl in an apartment complex of 98% Latinos, she told me that she was falling behind in school and may not advance to the next grade because she did not understand the homework assigned to her, and her mother could not read the English instructions to help her. It was this conversation – when I was struck with such a sense of educational injustice – that led me to work on educational issues.

However, up until my recent fieldwork, I had never considered the implications of this power dynamic. Anthropologists working with minority communities must explore issues of what it means to ethically conduct research with the 'other,' and how to create bridges between cultural and ethnic communities without exploiting or trivializing the marginalized. As I prepared to conduct the fieldwork for this thesis, I began a critical reflection of my own privileged 'whiteness' and the 'brownness' of my research participants. How could I attempt to

discover and portray what it is like to be a Latino in an Oregon high school without exploiting a culture and history not my own?

The underage status of many of my participants complicated the situation even further. Though my research participants are adolescents and not young children, they are technically minors and still largely considered non-adults in U.S. society. Ironically, as I came to discover in my research, these same adolescents are saddled with responsibility and decision-making in their own ethnic communities, whether that be through caring for younger children or translating for parents at doctor's appointments. Yet institutions – including schools – have conceptualized children and adolescents as in need of adult protection (Zelizer 1994). Zelizer (1994) identifies the source of this conceptualization – a cultural process occurring at the turn of the twentieth century that included a shift of concern from the economic value of children to the sentimental value of children. The universal space of 'childhood' was constructed, and children within this space were engineered as weak victims in need of adult guardianship.

In academia as well, researchers have adopted this view of childhood. Scholars have often ignored the voices of children in their works, which has resulted in an inauthentic and false representation of children and childhood in much of academic history (James 2007). Children are often positioned as solely cultural receptors rather than actors: "…all too often those voices are silenced by images of childhood that cling to the more traditional, developmental discourse of children's incompetence, rather than competence, as social actors" (James 2007:266). James (2007) advocates for approaches that place the voices of children at the center of research and critically consider the ways in which their voices are represented. Other anthropologists and social scientists have also proposed various child-centered methodological techniques. In her study of dying children with cancer, Myra Bluebond-Langner (1980) allowed the children to

initiate communication with her, rather than prodding them for responses to interview questions. In his ethnography of street children in Brazil, Tobias Hecht (1998) offered the children his tape recorder, allowing them to ask their own questions to other kids. This creative methodology was a way for Hecht to address the inequalities of power related to childhood research. Hecht (1998) states, “I searched for ways to treat the children as protagonists of my research, not as mere repositories of data” (8). Hecht also argues against homogenizing children in research, and instead proposes that scholars highlight the multiplicity of children’s experiences; one of the ways he accomplishes this is by developing the narratives of certain child characters in his ethnography, to allow the reader to hear these children’s voices in an intense, in-depth way.

In an effort to address these power issues related to ethnicity and age, during my fieldwork, I attempted to decrease power inequalities between myself and the students by treating them as my own contemporaries. Christensen (2004) encourages researchers to relate to children “primarily as fellow human beings” by “not treating children as in principle different from adults” (165). I continually reiterated to students that I was chiefly interested in their own opinions and views, even more so than those of teachers and administrators. Furthermore, my own youthful appearance and mannerisms helped to close the distance between myself and students. In their research with ESL students in a Los Angeles high school, Patthey-Chavez and Genevieve (1993) lamented that the field researcher’s access to the students was constrained by her ‘teacher’ appearance. I found the opposite to be true in my research: I am just six to ten years older than all of the students I observed and interviewed and wore clothes during my research that were informal and similar to students’ attire. The students, especially those in Mrs. Mowen’s small, close-knit class, became accustomed to my presence in their classroom and even periodically initiated banter and other informal talk with me. For example, one day Tomás asked

me if I had seen the newly released *Divergent* film, and on another occasion, Natalia, Veronica, and Gabriela incorporated me into a conversation they were having about translating for their families during doctor visits. These conversations helped me to both gain access to the students' inner worlds and validate them as valuable participants. Furthermore, to address the issue of *representation* of children's voices (James 2007), I present the views and perspectives of the students themselves in this thesis, though recognizing that any researcher analysis inherently requires a process of interpretation and representation to some extent. Rather than merely describing their actions and discussions in the following chapters, I include extensive quotes from my conversations with the students and snippets of dialogues from my observations, in an effort to allow them to speak for themselves. By "presenting new insights based on children's own perspectives as social actors" (James 2007:262), I hope to minimize the unequal power relationship between minors and adults, as well as between children and the researcher. Like Hecht, I develop narratives of 13 students, particularly five Latino immigrant students – explaining their life stories and experiences in depth – to reveal the various ways in which students experience issues of identity, language, and interethnic relationships.

Chapter Three: Mexican, American, or 'Half and Half'? Transborder Life, Assimilation, and Identity

Transnational Social Fields and Transborder Life

From the 1920s through the 1980s, most immigration researchers invoked theories of complete assimilation and a 'clean break' from sending communities to describe the process of immigration (Smith 2006). Yet in the past few decades, scholars in the social sciences have attempted to locate more accurate conceptual frameworks for characterizing the flow of ideas, objects, and people across national borders. Many have argued that these flows are reciprocal – sending communities do not merely propel emigrants to host communities, but these same migrants maintain ties and connections to their sending communities after their migration experience. These scholars have employed the term transnational migration – "the process by which immigrants forge and sustain simultaneous multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement" – to describe this movement (Glick Schiller et al. 1995:48).

Since its inception, the concept of 'transnational migration' has received considerable attention from scholars across the disciplines. Academics have reworked this concept multiple times and produced variations that they argue better describe the phenomenon. Initial paradigms of transnational migration positioned the 'transmigrant' subject as a first-generation immigrant that constantly (physically) travels back and forth between sending and receiving countries (Kearney 1991). In his ethnography *Mexican New York: Transnational Lives of New Immigrants*, Robert Smith claims a slightly broader definition for the transnational migrant, as he examines second- and third-generation immigrants' transnational lives alongside their first-generation parents. Smith (2006) asserts that these later generations may participate in transnational life just as much as or more than their first-generation parents: "[Transnational theory] disputes the

inevitability of severing ties to the old country, once assumed to be part of the inexorable transition from 'immigrant' to 'ethnic' to 'native' in two or three generations" (6). He argues for a more on-the-ground examination of transnational life, analyzing the lived experiences of its participants. Although his definition may be considered slightly more inclusive and flexible than earlier conceptualizations, Smith's quintessential transnational participant still seems to be someone who physically travels back and forth between the sending community and the host community. His chapters on second-generation Mexican immigrants in New York profile those adolescents that travel to their parents' hometown of Ticuani, Mexico at various points throughout their childhood and adolescence.

Nina Glick Schiller introduces a more expansive way to think about people who live multi-sited lives – as participants in a transnational social field. She investigates the ways in which transmigrants "become part of the fabric of daily life in more than just one state, simultaneously participating in the social, cultural, economic, religious, or political activities of more than one locality" (2003:107). Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004) propose that this notion of a social field is an effective way of transcending the nation-state unit to examine how its participants are responding to social, political, and religious institutions as well. The concept of a social field is more inclusive than the transmigrant paradigm in terms of its participants: "The actors in a transnational social field are not necessarily migrants or mobile individuals. … Some migrants build transnational social fields and these fields may extend across generations" (Glick Schiller 2012:26). Thus, Glick Schiller's 'social field' notion includes a wide variety of people, including migrants, return migrants, and non-migrants. Because some of the participants in a transnational social field are not migrants themselves, their transnational activities are not merely constituted by and generated through physical border crossings, but "by an array of

communications that transmit new advice, opinions, and affect as well as through various transactions that send food, clothing, and money for daily expenses, education, community projects, political or religious activities or investment" (Glick Schiller 2012:26).

In her book *Transborder Lives: Indigenous Oaxacans in Mexico, California, and Oregon*, Lynn Stephen (2007) provides a similar critique of the limiting theories of transnational migration and transmigrant subjects:

> While the term *transmigrant* suggest a more or less permanent state of being between two or more locations, some people may spend a good part of their lives engaging in this state of being, others may live for longer periods of time in one place or another, and still others may leave their home communities only one time or never. [25]

Stephen utilizes parts of Glick Schiller's social field framework for her own research, yet she also proposes a new term - transborder migration. Employing the term 'transborder migration' rather than 'transnational migration' or 'transmigrant' allows one to move beyond the physical border between two nations to consider other types of borders that migrants and their children traverse in their daily lives in their settlement countries:

> We have to look beyond the national in order to understand the complete nature of what people are moving or 'transing' between. … The border they have crossed and continue to cross are much more than national. … These include ethnic, cultural, and regional borders within the United States. For these reasons, it makes more sense to speak of transborder migration in the case I am describing here, rather than simply transnational. [Stephen 2007:23]

In my analysis, I employ Glick Schiller's concept of transnational social fields to describe the experiences of the Latino immigrant youth in the Dual Language Immersion program who spend the majority of their time in Lancaster, Oregon but still engage in a transnational social field through their various social interactions and communications. A few of the participants in my study are first-generation immigrants and thus physically traveled across the border between Mexico and the United States at some point in their lives, but the majority of them are second-

generation immigrants who may have traveled to Mexico once or never in their lives. Thus, they fit more appropriately into a 'social field participant' category rather than a 'transmigrant' mold, as they maintain contact with Mexico through communicative technologies (such as email, phone calls, and skype), money transfers, and other types of communication. The Latino immigrant participants are also engaged in transborder life (Stephen 2007), as they cross multiple borders – ethnic, cultural, social - everyday in Lancaster, Oregon in the formation and performance of their identities.

Some of the Latino immigrant participants have engaged in transnational practices to some extent through physical travel between Lancaster and their communities of origin. Although almost all of the participants live with at least one parent in Lancaster, Oregon, all of them have extended family members residing in Mexico – grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and nephews. Some of the students travel to Mexico regularly to visit these family members and friends. For example, Tomás – a senior from Shilmer, Oregon – visits his paternal grandparents and great-great grandmother in Mexico during school breaks and holidays every six months, claiming that he "loves being over there."

Other students have spent several years of their childhoods living in Mexico. Some were born in Mexico and moved to the U.S. after the first few years of their lives, while others were born in the U.S. and emigrated to Mexico at some point during their childhood before returning to the U.S. For example, Natalia was born in Mexico and spent the first three years of her life there before her family moved to the U.S. Tomás was born in Shilmer, Oregon, yet his family moved to Mexico for two years immediately after his birth and then returned to Oregon when Tomás reached school age. Gabriela was born in Amel, Oregon, and then emigrated with her family to Baja California and then Michoacán where she worked as a sales person at a jewelry

store in the mornings and attended school in the afternoons. Her family returned to the U.S. when she was in the third grade to access better medical care for Gabriela, who was gravely ill with a sickness she barely remembers. And Fernando was born in Oaxaca, Mexico and traveled to the U.S. in 2005 to receive medical treatment for his physical and mental disabilities. His entire family – grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, mother, and father - remain in Mexico. Despite spending some time in Mexico in past years, the majority of these students do not currently engage in regular visits to Mexico. One second-generation student – Juan – has never even traveled to Mexico, despite an expressed desire to visit his extended family there. These varied experiences of physical border crossings – some frequent, yet the majority infrequent or not at all - reveal a rather complex picture of transnational life, calling into question the assumption that transnationalism involves constant bodily movement between two nation-states.

If most of the Latino immigrant participants do not easily fit into this transnational or transmigrant paradigm (as constant traversers of the border), they do seem to engage in a broader *transnational social field* through other types of communication. In the absence of physical travel to Mexico, many of the students maintain contact with family and friends through phone calls, emails, or video chat services. Juan has never had to opportunity to travel to Mexico, but has 'met' one of his family members over Skype: "I want to visit my family, because both my parents' families are down there. And both my sets of grandparents are there, and I don't know them personally. My dad's mom, I've met her over Skype." Other students use Skype and iChat to monitor little cousins' activities or to update grandparents on their lives. Furthermore, a few of the students reported receiving 'reverse remittances' – or financial assistance - from their families in Mexico. For example, Fernando's mother brought him to the U.S. and then returned to Mexico where she and his father currently reside. They send money to Fernando regularly.

The students also seem to receive constant cultural information – "social expectations, cultural values, and patterns of human interactions" - from their sending communities through various institutional avenues (Glick Schiller 2003:108). The educational institution can function as a key player in the construction and maintenance of a transnational social field, as it can instigate a transfer of cultural knowledge, information, and material from the sending community to students in the receiving community. For example, the Dual Language Immersion program at LHS seeks to enlighten students about the history of Latin America as well as current events. During my classroom observations, the twelfth grade DLI class read Colombian author Gabriel Garcia Marquez's novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude* - a tale of seven generations of the Buendia Family who experienced major historical events in Colombia, such as the arrival of the railroads, the Thousand Days' War, and the emerging dominance of the United Fruit Company in the country. And once a week, an assistant teacher conducted some sort of 'current events' activity with the students, in which he engaged them in a debate about immigration issues, presented Mexican news articles or videos to discuss, or asked them to critique major corporations' advertisements in Latin American countries (such as Coca-Cola or Nike). For example, one day the assistant teacher played music videos of a band in Chile that creates protests songs castigating the Pinochet regime. After watching several clips of their songs, the students engaged in a critical discussion of neoliberal economic reforms in Latin American countries. The discussion evolved into a critique of the imaginary of a homogenous Latin America and a Pan-Latin-American identity, which I discuss in detail in chapter four. Through the exposure to Latin American issues and events (history, literature, music, media) in DLI classrooms, the Latino immigrant students receive cultural codes, values, and information from their home communities.

Furthermore, the Latino immigrant students are involved in "personal networks [through which they] receive ideas and information that connect them to others…" (Levitt and Glick Schiller 2004:5). In DLI classrooms, students engage in a constant cultural exchange of information and knowledge amongst themselves. During observations, I frequently overheard conversations related to *quinceañeras*, large fiestas with food and music, and other cultural activities. The students made inside jokes to each other about Mexican traditions and ways of life (that were not always intelligible to me), and they discussed with each other experiences during recent return trips to Mexico. In this context too – through interpersonal conversations and communication - the students are "simultaneously participating in the social, cultural, economic, religious, or political activities of more than one locality" (Glick Schiller 2003:107).

Assimilation, Nationhood, and Citizenship

Theories of transnationalism, transnational social fields, and transborder lives are often presented as antithetical to discourses of assimilation. For much of the twentieth century, scholars promoted assimilation as the most ideal form of immigrant integration into the host society (Smith 2006). Yet it was only in the later years of the twentieth century that academics began critiquing the notion of assimilation as "an explosive term, value laden with arrogant presumptions of ethnic superiority and inferiority and fraught with the bitter baggage of the past – and the politics of the present…" (Rumbaut 1997b:484). The process of assimilation involves judging the immigrant's subjectivities as inferior to those of the host society, subsequently erasing of his / her ways of being in the world, and replacing them with the cultural norms, values, and practices of the host society.

The ideology of assimilation is connected to nation-state building projects that construct a myth of a homogenous people "defined by their residence in a common territory, their undivided

loyalty to a common government, and their shared cultural heritage" (Glick Schiller et al. 1995:61). In U.S. nation-building process, immigrants are forced to abandon their links to their communities of origin and to take on an American nationality. In her book *Buddha is Hiding,* Aihwa Ong (2003) discusses the process by which Cambodian refugees to the United States. are assimilated into society by becoming American. Examining the history of immigration to the United States reveals an assimilationist agenda that is framed in both racial and classist terms: "From its inception, the United States has been imagined as an implicitly racial and classist formation governed by an Anglo-Saxon hegemony that projects white race and class interests as universal for the nation" (Ong 2003:71). During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the U.S. embarked on civilizing missions to reform and ultimately assimilate Native Americans and African Americans. These same ideologies and practices are employed to erase the ethnic tendencies of more contemporary Cambodian refugees to the U.S. (and as I argue, other immigrant groups such as those from Latin America).

In her book, Ong (2003) is primarily concerned with the "distinct set of technologies" that the state uses to transform the immigrants and refugees' habits and dispositions (73). The ideology of assimilation is inscribed into U.S. policies and laws and is enacted through state institutions such as health centers, schools, and courts. Ong employs Michel Foucault's framework of governmentality in her analysis, claiming that state power is not consolidated in a central apparatus, but rather dispersed throughout networks of institutions that control and regulate target populations. Through contact with state institutions such as refugee centers, the welfare office, mental health services, and schools, the Cambodian refugees' subjectivities are constantly reshaped to those of White, middle-class Americans. Ironically, while the Cambodian refugees detailed in Ong's book are sold the idea that becoming the model American will bring

them success, in actuality this process propels them into an ethnic / racial hierarchy of difference and bars them from every truly becoming White, middle-class Americans.

In the popular 2008 film *The Class*, director Laurent Cantent depicts a Paris high school as enacting this same assimilationist agenda. Immigrant students from Africa and the Middle East are forced to renounce their knowledge and cultural backgrounds in order to assimilate to White, middle-class French values. Cantent's film introduces important questions that are especially relevant for my research context, such as what constitutes legitimate knowledge? And how do we render the knowledge of all students equally valued in the classroom?

Notions of citizenship and citizen-making are enmeshed in ideologies of assimilation and nation-building processes. Ultimately, citizenship is tied to ideas of nationhood and national belonging: "Citizenship determines who is considered part of the national community and who is to be excluded" (Smith 2004:61). As the nation-state attempts to assimilate immigrants, it erases their own knowledge and transforms them into citizens with particular norms, values, and practices. Ong (2003) discusses the ways in which institutions such as the public hospital and the welfare office attempt to make proper citizens – namely, independent and self-reliant persons - out of the Cambodian refugees: "In America, human techniques – the diverse microstrategies that allocate, classify, formalize, normalize – seek to govern through freedom, or to adjust citizen-subjects to key values of autonomy and self-definition" (276). Ironically, as social workers, the police, and courts attempt to empower or liberate the Cambodian refugees, they oftentimes erode their family networks and undermine cultural solutions to such issues.

Similar to Ong, Cristiana Giordano (2008) considers the ways in which Italian institutions translate immigrants' stories and remake their subjectivities in the citizen-making process. She states, "I approached the production of migrant stories as the translation of alterity

into the languages of these institutions, and as a means of creating citizens – those who are recognized as members of a community and adhere to its diverse bureaucratic logics" (588). The police stations and courts employ a form of 'confessional citizenship' – in which females can become legal by claiming they are victims of human trafficking – and rephrase the women's stories in juridical language. Ethnopsychiatric clinics, on the other hand, promote a 'cultural citizenship model,' which involves pushing the females to reconnect with their cultures in a process of healing. Yet this practice involves assigning the women to a fixed notion of their culture. Thus, both models of citizenship – confessional and cultural - entail institutions remaking the immigrant women's subjectivities. Giordano's concept of 'practices of translation' is useful for understanding how institutions alter immigrants' identities and self-understandings.

Glick Schiller et al. (1995) note that the process of citizen-making requires that immigrants transfer their loyalties to their new country: "What has been uniformly defined as unacceptable was a migration in which immigrants settled permanently in their new country while maintaining ties to countries they still saw as homelands" (51). However, this very practice is emerging as a global trend, as contemporary immigrants are constructing transnational and transborder linkages to their home communities. The situation is further complicated by structural readjustment policies and the movement of global capital that are transforming the economic and social landscapes of core and peripheral nations (Glick Schiller et al. 1995). The marked increase in technologies of communication, such as telephones, video chat services, and email, has furthered immigrants' transnational linkages. However, the restructuring of global capital has also impacted U.S. nation-state building projects: Glick Schiller et al. note that the U.S. nation-state has responded to these transnational activities with renewed incorporative

efforts. In this sense, as the state globalizes the national economy, it simultaneously intensifies its assimilationist and Americanization project.

Recently, the U.S. government has devised an interesting strategy of 'divide and conquer,' in which it reinscribes boundaries by separating immigrants into documented and undocumented persons (Glick Schiller et al. 1995). State governments have taken up this mantra as well, with Arizona's law enforcement officers now licensed to engage in racial profiling, and undocumented students banned from universities across southern states such as Georgia and Alabama (Garcia Pena 2012). Glick Schiller et al. (1995) discuss this paradox:

> As the national economy is restructured to facilitate higher levels of profit for transnational capital, politicians and the media have projected a bunker mentality, convincing the majority of the population, including people who are themselves immigrants that the national borders have to be defended against the undocumented. [59]

The attention to levels of legality is connected to discourses of exclusion and inclusion, in which documented immigrants are awarded the status of 'belonging' to the nation, but simultaneously separate themselves from undocumented immigrants. Furthermore, this public attention to issues of immigration has perpetuated a broader anti-immigrant frenzy and xenophobia that discriminates against all types of Latinos, regardless of legal status (Glick Schiller et al. 1995).

The Relationship Between Transborder Life and Assimilation

Most scholarly work theorizing the relationship between assimilation and transnationalism has focused on the ways in which transnational practices have either blocked or encouraged the assimilation of immigrants into their host countries (Lukose 2007). For example, in his ethnography, Robert Smith (2006) claims that transnational life for Mexican immigrants "has great potential to facilitate positive assimilation in the United States" (8). The valued categories of 'positive' and 'negative' assimilation are related to the notions of 'upward' and

'downward' assimilation posited by Alejandro Portes and Min Zhou (1993). Portes and Zhou assert that assimilation for second-generation immigrants can be segmented into upward (positive) or downward (negative) mobility, with upward mobility constituting more schooling and better jobs, and downward mobility constituting less schooling, lower quality jobs, and gang membership. Although Smith, Portes, and Zhou can be commended for attempting to clarify the relationship between assimilation and transnational life, they still locate their arguments within an assimilationist framework "that seeks to assess the impact of transnationalism on processes of national assimilation" (Lukose 2007:408). In this sense, they are ultimately concerned with the degree to which immigrants are incorporated and assimilated into U.S. society. As a departure from this orientation, I consider the ways in which Latino immigrant youth's identities and self-formulations complicate the assimilationist project of the U.S. nation-state. Thus, I am ultimately concerned with the alternative identities that Latino immigrant youth construct to counteract the homogenous 'American' national identity. As Ritty Lukose suggests, instead of using the nation-state as the *unit* of analysis, I position the nation-state as an important *object* of analysis.

Hybrid Identities

As the U.S. nation-state attempts to extend belonging to some immigrants (namely, documented) and link them to a homogenous (and mythologized) American identity, the immigrants' transborder lives and hybrid identities defy and threaten this effort. As Schiller and Basch (1995) note, "None of the nationbuilding processes encompasses fully the complexity and multiple identities which constitute the lives of transmigrants" (59). In their ethnography of Mexican youth in Minnesota, anthropologists DeJaeghere and McCleary (2010) discuss the ways in which immigration discourses of the nation-state and its institutions affect the formation of Mexican youth civic identities, and how the youth respond by constructing their own identities in

a diasporic and transnational space. DeJaeghere and McCleary explain that the Latino youth have certain identities assigned to them, oftentimes by communities and schools, in a process of "being made" as citizen subjects (230). The schools attempt to transform the immigrant students into U.S. English-speaking citizens through language policies which require students to speak exclusively in English. Importantly, DeJaeghere and McCleary also note that the youth contest these ascribed identities by engaging in "self-making," or managing the construction of their own identities (230). They craft multiple identities – Latino, Hispanic, Mexican, American – and engage in both Spanish- and English-language use in an attempt to make sense of the diasporic realities of their lives.

The Latino immigrant students in the DLI program at LHS construct similar hybrid identities that reflect their transborder and diasporic social and cultural imaginaries. When I asked Natalia – who was born in Mexico and immigrated to the U.S. when she was three years old - how she would identify herself, she expressed a sense of ambiguity about her self-conceptualization:

> Ughh it's so difficult! [laughs]. It's so difficult for me sometimes. I love watching TV shows that are in English. Like some of my favorite TV shows are in English. And I never really watch Spanish TV, but some movies in Spanish are just hilarious. And like the comedy in Spanish is really funny. And so it's so difficult to say like "oh I only listen to like English music or like only Spanish." And I don't, I listen to both. So I identify a little bit of both but not too much of like one of them. I think just like a little bit of both.

Interestingly, Natalia conceptualizes her identity according to her entertainment preferences – television, movies, and music – as well as her language affinity. In her insistence to identify as "a little bit of both," Natalia rejects the notion that she must choose to express or maintain one specific component of her personhood.

Juan – a second-generation immigrant who has never visited Mexico - seems to be searching for ways to reconcile the identity other students at LHS made for him with his own:

> I think I would say I'm "White Mexican." Just because of how other peers refer to me as. I don't see anything wrong with that, but I think it's kind of funny how people like, even in my Spanish class say I'm White Mexican because I socialize a lot with other White people and like have the same interests. I mean we're human, so I mean why not have the same interests? I don't know, I think some just labeled me that just because I do things that I think aren't like stereotypically Mexican, I guess. [laughs]. And so they're like, "You're so White, you do this and this." I'm like alright? Well I like doing that, so label me what you want.

Juan claimed that he does not mind the label of "White Mexican," because some parts of this classification are true for him. He professed the importance of maintaining some connection with his ancestral homeland, despite his second-generation status and his current U.S. residence: "Just because I'm second-generation, I'm not gonna ignore the fact that I'm Mexican. Like even though I live in the U.S." Yet later in our conversation, he switched between different terms again: "I just say I am Mexican-American. I just say I'm just Mexican. But yeah, Mexican-American. I don't say Chicano a lot, I don't see anything wrong with saying that. But I just kinda don't." Juan's code-switching to describe his identity – as 'White Mexican,' 'Mexican-American,' and 'Mexican' - divulges a complex and heterogeneous self-conceptualization.

Tomás – a second-generation immigrant who makes frequent trips to Mexico – told me a story of the moment he realized his unconscious sense of belonging to both the Mexican and American cultures. His Dual Language Immersion teacher – Mrs. Mowen – pointed out to him that in their class discussions about the U.S. and Mexico, Tomás refers to both the American and Mexican cultures and peoples as his own:

> I would say like "we" for both, not "them." And so I didn't really notice that, and she pointed it out. And I feel like I've grown up with that. Our first day of kindergarten, and 9/11 - we went through that. That's something that happened here in this country. And like even if we were gone that day, that's still part of what we grew up in, a part of that culture. And we're not specific to one culture.

> So I think honestly I wouldn't identify myself as like full Mexican or like full American. It's kinda in-between, like Chicano. That's what I would identify myself as.

For Tomás, as well as the other students, this "in-between status" is not a liminal or transitional stage in a path to becoming more 'American.' Tomás is clearly comfortable with his in-between position, directly defying the unilinear trajectory - from full Mexican to full American – that the assimilationist project assumes. When I pressed him for more details about this transborder space, Tomás attempted to clarify:

> It's two cultures. Well it's kinda one culture. It's not two cultures. It's one culture, but going in depth, it is two cultures, but those two cultures make up that one culture, make up Chicano culture. We can talk in Spanish, and then if we don't know how to say a word, we just like say it in English or in Spanish. Or we can be listening to drake music and then we can go and listen to like *mariachi* or *bamba* or something else. It's all with us. It's not two separate cultures. You know?

Gabriela - a second-generation immigrant that lived in Mexico for several years of her childhood - expressed a similar bicultural experience, claiming that she is "half-Mexican" and "half-American." Gabriela articulated her 'mixed' identity as being more Mexican in some ways, and more American in others:

> I know I have part of [the American] culture. I have its language, and I also have part of its history into my life, like my parents and all that. And I know I'm Mexican because of the cultures I follow and the traditions and the language I have with my family. I just think that I'm a little bit of both, because I'm a mix of both. Like we celebrate 4th of July as well as we celebrate the 16th of September. We celebrate Christmas as Mexican tradition and we also celebrate with a Christmas tree and presents. I just think pretty much I'm both. And for some things I am more Mexican and for some things I am more American. But I couldn't define myself as one single thing.

Traditional notions of identity view identity as an individual, internal phenomenon (Spencer et al. 1990) or an essentialized, static product (Handler 1994). These conventional perspectives consider identity to be a definite and bounded sense of self that each person attempts to achieve. However, Bilingual Studies scholar Lucila Ek (2009) notes that such

perspectives have been ineffective for people of color, "because they assumed static notions of culture and homogeneity among racial and ethnic group members" (406). In my own study, the students' rejection of the homogenous and dichotomous markers of 'American' or 'Mexican' and alternative conceptualizations of their identities as multiple, mixed, and hybrid defy this notion of identity as stagnant and bounded. As evidenced by the above comments, it is difficult for many of the students to articulate or clarify their sense of self. The students' struggles to explain their hybrid self-conceptualizations indicate that identity is complex. Zentella (forthcoming) found a similar rejection of official categories in her research of bilingual youth in a San Diego school:

> BH students seemed uneasy with hard and fast categories and preferred a complex negotiation of languages, birthplace, legal citizenship, residence, race, and national allegiances. … official designations were often trumped by personal feelings and experiences.

Recently, various scholars have offered an alternative conceptualization of identity as fluctuating and emerging out of social practice (Ek 2009; Lucko 2011; Schneider 2002). In their book *Identity and Agency in Cultural Worlds*, Holland et al. (1998) challenge the notion of identity as a distinct product, instead claiming that identities are "lived in and through activity and so must be conceptualized as they develop in social practice" (5). My findings confirm this concept, as the Latino immigrant students in my study describe their hybrid identities as 'lived through.' The students explain that their process of identity construction and maintenance involves the performance of activities and events such as celebration of holidays (the Independences of Mexico and the U.S. and Christmas), listening and dancing to certain types of music, speaking English and Spanish with their families and friends, and engaging in transborder activities previously described. In essence, identity is a process – embodied through practice, and prone to fluctuation (Ek 2009; Lucko 2011). Holland et al. (1998) also note that identities are

“important bases from which people create new activities, new worlds, and new ways of being” (5) and thus link identity to agency. Gee (2000) similarly references the ways in which people “fashion themselves in a particular way” by constructing their own self-categorizations (204). Identities are therefore sites of negotiation, by which students act as fluid actors and thinkers. This notion elucidates the ways in which youth construct their own identities, and is thus a more appropriate conceptualization for my study.

All of the Latino immigrant participants in my study except one described their identities as multiple, mixed, hybrid, bicultural, or ‘half-and-half.’ It appears that the hybrid experience does not depend on first- or second-generation status or the frequency of the students’ visits to Mexico; almost all of the participants expressed this particular cultural and social imaginary, despite their various backgrounds. Significantly, it appears that the Dual Language Immersion program at LHS encourages the students to construct these hybrid identities. Several of the students expressed that Mrs. Mowen has helped them become aware of their biculturalism. When I questioned Mrs. Mowen about this, she remarked that the DLI curriculum emphasizes Chicano history and bilingualism, and that she has facilitated classroom discussions about the students’ own personal histories and connection to these themes. Thus, it appears that unlike the school in DeJaeghere and McCleary’s study (2010), the DLI program at LHS does not invoke an assimilationist discourse – a point that I will expand upon in chapters five and six.

Another important observation is that the hybrid space is viewed as beneficial or positive rather than a stressful experience. Many of the students praised their hybrid identities – for allowing them to belong to two communities, express themselves in both English and Spanish, and access more employment opportunities in the future. Yet significantly, despite claiming belonging to multiple cultures or communities, the Latino immigrant students oftentimes feel

unwelcomed or excluded by the larger school population and broader Lancaster community, as I discuss in chapter six.

The Latino immigrant students in the DLI program at LHS meld their cultures of origin and cultures of destination by designing hyphenated or hybrid identities – ‘Mexican-American,’ ‘Chicano,’ and ‘half-Mexican and half-American.’ In this sense, they create transborder spaces that can be viewed as locations of defiance, as their cultural duality challenges the dominant assimilationist U.S. agenda. Perhaps it would serve us well to re-conceptualize the category of the ‘immigrant’ to reflect the diverse experiences of immigrants in transnational social fields (Lukose 2007). As Lukose (2007) states, “The issue here is not to assume a straightforward trajectory of assimilation into a U.S. mainstream…” (414). In the next chapter, I examine another aspect of identity: I deconstruct the ethnic categories ‘Latino’ and ‘Hispanic’ and their promotion through neoliberal discourses and analyze their relevance for the Latino immigrant students in the DLI program at LHS. The chapter also introduces the concept of multiculturalism and provides cautionary insight into the ways that recent pluralist and multicultural imaginings of America and other nations can underline state power and racial hierarchies.

Chapter Four: Latinos in the U.S: The Politics of Ethnicity and Identity

Exploring Ethnic Categories of 'Latino' and 'Hispanic'

The rise of a single ethnic classification for people of Latin American ancestry in the United States – such as 'Latino' or 'Hispanic' - is a relatively recent phenomenon. The terms were first standardized by federal agencies in the 1970s, and since then have been written into census categories, state policies, and the media (Dávila 2012). In the 1980s (deemed the "Decade of the Hispanic"), scholars and community leaders began referencing a new Hispanic consciousness that was beginning to link all Latinos together (Sommers 1991:32). Sociologist Felix Padilla coined the term '*Latinismo*,' or "action and identification as Latinos or Hispanics" in an attempt to capture this ethnic movement (Sommers 1991:33). Yet does a sense of unity and solidarity amongst all Latin American persons truly exist? While scholars such as Padilla were discussing ideas of *Latinismo*, others rejected the terms 'Hispanic' or 'Latino' as far too general. The famous Chicano playwright Luis Valdez (1983) claimed,

> It's … a term of convenience that eventually skirts … the real problems that we have before us. We suspect that Anglo Americans cannot distinguish between a Puerto Rican and a Chicano. … These are differences in the Hispanic world that we recognize because we have been struggling with national identities, even a certain amount of national cultural expression. So we come and say that we're part of one unvariegated mass. … Hispanic doesn't do it for me. It doesn't go deep enough… [7-8]

Sommers (1991) explains the impetus behind the concept of *Latinismo*:

> … The increasing use of ethnicity as a political tool since the 1960s, the rise of affirmative action programs, the growing urbanization and diversification of the United States Latino population, and the widespread adoption of the term 'Hispanic' itself. [33]

Sommers describes *Latinismo* as an imagined community that seeks to construct a sense of boundary, continuity, and homogeneity for the group. Country-specific national identifications

such as ‘Mexican,’ ‘Guatemalan,’ or ‘Ecuadorian’ threaten the discourse of *Latinismo*, which involves a transcendence of national territories. Sommers asserts that a *Latinismo* reality requires a common interest and a common identity, with an overarching symbol system or cultural umbrella that unites all members. Yet she questions the existence of such a symbol system, pointing out that “no single cultural symbol, beyond language and a generic sense of hispanidad, seems to unite the [U.S.] Hispanics at more than a rhetorical level” (1991:37).

In her book *Latinos Inc: The Marketing and Making of a People*, Arlene Dávila (2001) describes the related term of ‘*Latinization’* as the process through which Latinos are conceptualized as sharing one common identity. Like Sommers, she challenges the construction of the categories ‘Latino’ and ‘Hispanic’ as a generic people that share essential characteristics. To Dávila, the identity markers ‘Latino’ and ‘Hispanic’ remain dangerously unproblematized in popular culture, as people regard the terms as neutral representations of persons from Latin America (Latino) or Spanish-speaking countries (Hispanic). The terms serve to erase the differences in class, citizenship, nationality, gender, and political histories that exist in this highly heterogeneous population: “The homogenization of all Latino subgroups into a common category, be it Hispanic or Latina, involves the depoliticization of the history of conquest and colonization that has affected particular Latina nationalities” (Dávila 2001). Examining the colonial and political histories of some Latino subgroups such as Mexicans and Puerto Ricans elucidates their continued subordination and relegation to the lowest sectors of society in the United States.

The construction of ethnic categories such as ‘Latino’ and ‘Hispanic’ assumes the existence of fixed ethnicities throughout the world. In their book *Ethnicity, Inc.*, John and Jean Comaroff (2009) contest the notion of established and homogenous ethnic groups and provide a

true definition of ethnicity: "A loose, labile repertoire of signs by means of which relations are constructed and communicated; through which a collective consciousness of cultural likeness is rendered sensible; with reference to which shared sentiment is made substantial" (38). In popular discourse (as well as in past intellectual and scholarly thought), ethnicity is conceptualized as a natural classification system that has its basis in shared biology, ancestral origins, and innate disposition. This belief has led to ethnicity becoming a well-recognized and common marker of difference in this day and age, although on the ground it is a rather nebulous concept. Academia's use of ethnicity as an analytical concept has furthered the term's popularity and perpetuity: "The term came to be taken by the positivist social sciences to describe a concrete, objectively measurable phenomenon" (Comaroff 2009:39). Yet in reality, "ethnicity is vested in subjective beliefs and identities" (Comaroff 2009:39).

Sommers', Dávila's , and John and Jean Comaroff's works prompt questions of how people reject or accept these ethnic identifications of 'Latino' or 'Hispanic' in everyday life: Do they use these ethnic categories to describe themselves, or do they employ nationalist (or other) markers in their self-conceptualizations? In my conversations with Latino immigrant students in the DLI program at LHS, I used the term 'Latino' to describe the purpose of my project and to ask them particular questions about Latino culture at the school. For example, I framed my study as an examination of *Latino* youth, and asked them how other students and teachers perceive *Latinos* at the school. I did this to avoid using the term 'Hispanic,' which elicits elitist evocations of Spain, and to be inclusive of all people from Latin American countries. Yet the immigrant students I interviewed do not employ the term 'Latino' (or 'Hispanic') to describe their identities. During our conversations, I posed the following ambiguous question: "How do you identify yourself?" Each student hesitated for some amount of time before they tentatively

supplied their answers. Some did not even immediately assume I was inquiring about their ethnic identity, but rather a general sense of their attributes and qualities as a person. For example, when I posed the above question to Natalia – who was born in Mexico and emigrated to the U.S. at the age of three - she confusedly replied, "Hmmm… Like what do you mean?" I said, "Like if you were to say, 'I am blank.'" Natalia then responded, "Ok, um I am very serious sometimes. But I can also be very funny. I think I'm funny, and people say 'You're not funny!' Umm… I'm always trying to be positive, but sometimes I'm like really negative. I can go from one extreme to the other." Fernando – a first-generation immigrant to the U.S. eight years ago – gave a similar response to my question about his identity: "I identify myself as like a good person, a great person. I don't know… Sometimes I can be a person that can be rude. Or sometimes I can be honest. But most of the time I'm honest in everything. If I need help, sometimes it's hard to ask for help." These students' responses indicate that perhaps *ethnicity* and *ethnic* identity are not truly the palpable or compelling concepts that scholars often make them out to be, as they are evidently not at the forefront of some of the students' minds; perhaps other components of these students' personhoods are more significant to them than their ethnicities.

Other students, however, immediately responded to my question about their identities by describing their ethnicities. Regardless of their initial understanding of my question's intent, when I clarified that I wanted to glean how they identify ethnically, *all* of the students used the national marker 'Mexican' rather than the ethnic markers 'Latino' or 'Hispanic.' As described in the previous chapter, most also employed other terms such as "Chicano" or "half-Mexican and half-American" in addition to 'Mexican.' Yet significantly, the students do not conceptualize their identities as primarily Latino or Hispanic.

One of the students – Fernando - even passionately rejected the label of Latino. To clarify my question about his identity, I asked, “Do you say ‘I am Mexican,’ or ‘I am Latino?’ Or something else? Which word do you use?” Fernando responded, “I say Mexican. I cannot say I am Latino because… that doesn’t really describe like what is my nationality. And also because if I say that I am Latino, but how am I gonna be a Latino if I have this shirt, this sweater?” [He is wearing the Mexico national soccer team’s jersey]. When I asked him if he believes that Mexico is part of Latin America, he replied, “Yeah, but I don’t really. … I need to represent my country to people. … I am proud of being where I’m from, where I’m born from.” To Fernando, performing his national identity – expressing his Mexicanness to others – is extremely important and even necessary. Indeed, during the three and a half months I observed Fernando’s classroom, he mainly wore shirts that were plastered with Mexican symbols or images. Interestingly, Fernando questioned his ability to identify as simultaneously Latino and Mexican; for him, his Mexican identity is dominant.

In the twelfth grade DLI classroom discussions, both the Latino and the White students engaged in open critiques of the notion of a pan-Latin-American identity. These criticisms were not suggested or introduced by the teacher, but were entirely instigated by the students themselves. During one class discussion, the assistant teacher played several songs from a popular New Wave band in Chile, Los Prisioneros. One song – titled “*Latinoamérica es un Pueblo al Sur de los Estados Unidos*” [“Latin America is a Town to the South of the United States”] – discusses how in the global imaginary, Latin America is solely envisioned as a small town beneath the First World country of the United States. After listening to the song, the students engaged in a critical discussion about its themes. One student lamented that in the United States, people view Latin America as very homogenous. Another pointed out that tourists

only see one part of the continent, and not other parts. A female student noted that in other class discussions about Latin America (such as in history classes outside of the DLI program), they only learn about the Aztecs or other indigenous groups, and these are usually represented as barbaric and uncivilized populations. Another student suggested that it is difficult for people in the U.S. to think about other people in Latin America besides Mexicans, because immigration is such a trendy and controversial topic in the current public discourse. All of these comments comprised a general critique of a homogenous and uniform imaginary of Latin America. In these two ways – through their own self-identifications and through critical class discussions – the students contest the pan-ethnic category 'Latino' and instead suggest a more heterogeneous and diversified (perhaps even national) conceptualization of peoples from Latin America. Ultimately, the students' perceptions of this defunct classification system have significant implications for the ways in which the notions of *Latinismo* and *Latinization* are negotiated on the ground.

Interestingly, although the immigrant youth reject the existence of a common Latino culture, some articulate 'being Mexican' in these terms – as though there is a shared understanding or subjectivity amongst all Mexicans. When I asked Juan what it means to be Mexican, he replied,

> Proud of where you come from and like embracing your heritage. …I think Mexican is like not having the same mentality, but having some of the same like… sharing something in common. Like a sense of community, and like sharing the same culture. And liking and embracing it, and just being a part of it. That's what makes you Mexican.

Fernando also spoke of all Mexicans as sharing the same personality traits or characteristics: "A Mexican person can be umm… I don't know, it has a strong anger sometimes. That's a word I would use to describe. But we're not patient. … The way you walk into a place, sometimes you have the sound, like if you walk, it's like making a noise like a Mexican is coming." In this

sense, the students' insistence on a common *Mexican* understanding supports Sommers' assertion that country-specific identifications may be more meaningful to Latinos than a particular *Latinismo* imaginary.

Assimilation vs. Multiculturalism

The theorization of ethnicity and identity is tied up in the political projects of assimilation and multiculturalism that the U.S. nation-state promotes. As discussed in the previous chapter, for much of the twentieth century, the U.S. pursued an assimilationist agenda in which immigrants were expected to become model citizens through an Americanization process (Glick Schiller et al. 1995). To attain citizenship, immigrants were forced to abandon their cultural knowledge and ways of being in the world and replace them with the cultural norms, values, and practices of White, middle-class society. This same process has occurred in most Latin American countries whose states have treated their native, indigenous peoples in a similar manner. Andrew Canessa (2005) discusses the ways in which indigenous groups are forced to assimilate into a mestizo-creole Bolivian nation in order to gain any sort of acceptance or sense of belonging in society. Assimilative discourses in Bolivia are tied to notions of citizenship, as the state – through institutions such as the school and the army - offers citizenship to Indians but at the price of leaving their communities and altering their ways of life. As discussed in chapter three, ideas of nationhood and nation-building are enmeshed in this ideology as well:

> The Bolivian army, as with every 'people's army' since Napoleon, has a social function, which is to create a sense of national purpose and identity among its recruits. In this it is very similar to the school, which also has had as one of its key goals the creation of a national and homogenous culture and extending citizenship to Indians. [Canessa 2005:136]

Canessa points out that the imagined community of the nation is gendered as well: Men rather than women are able to attain citizenship to the nation-state by joining the Bolivian army and sleeping with prostitutes. Veena Das (2008) provides a similar analysis of the nation-state as masculinized: "…the definition of the state as a masculine state accounts for the gendered violence of the modern state" (284).Yet although Indian men may intensely pursue citizenship and the whitening process, they are never truly able to completely devoid themselves of their 'Indianness.' Canessa notes that ironically, for the powerful racial and gendered hierarchy of inequality to operate in Bolivia, the Indian other always needs to exist as a counterpart to the superior White Bolivian citizen.

Yan Hairong's book *New Master, New Servants: Migration, Development, and Women Workers in China* delineates a similar project in post-Mao China that sought to rework rural migrant women's subjectivities and identities when they traveled to the city to work as *bamous,* or domestic workers. This process involved an erasure of their rural-based knowledge, cultural ideas, and ways of knowing: "It is admitted that a 'clean slate' is not a natural state of blankness, but rather something that must be actively created by erasing, condemning, and liquidating the value of rural-based knowledge and experiences that migrant women have accumulated" (2008:95). While Hairong discusses the erasure of *rural* identities, the assimilation project in the U.S. involves the erasure of *ethnic* identities of immigrants. Yet the process by which the state manipulates people's subjectivities and personhoods is similar.

During the last few decades of the twentieth century, amidst a new era of globalization and neoliberal reforms, a new discourse surrounding ethnic identity, diversity, and immigrant integration began to gain popularity – that of 'multiculturalism.' While the assimilationist model involves an abandonment of cultural / ethnic practices for White, middle-class values, the

multicultural model advocates for immigrant groups to maintain their ways of life in the U.S. (Dávila 1999). Since the discourse of multiculturalism first gained traction in the 1980s, the term has been defined in various ways and praised by national leaders, community activists, and some scholars for its cultural relativist approach and recognition of cultural difference.

However, in the 1990s, concerned anthropologists began to problematize the ideology of multiculturalism. Glick Schiller et al. (1995) detected that the cultural relativism thought to be inherent in multiculturalism was perhaps a façade:

> The rupture of home ties or their transformation into sentiment rather than connection is also a central aspect of pluralist and multicultural imaginings of America in which immigrant groups are encouraged to preserve their culture, custom, and identity yet be fully embedded in an American mosaic. [51]

Ralph Grillo (2010) chronicles a similar homologizing process occurring in the UK in the early twenty-first century, with government commissions and panels producing reports that spoke of "encouraging community cohesion" in a multicultural society (28). The Community Cohesion Panel Final Report (2004) stated, "We need a type of multi-culturalism in which everyone supports the values and laws of the nation, whilst keeping hold of their cultural identity. To achieve this everyone must have a real sense of belonging and they must share common values" (Grillo 2010:29). In their discussion on hetero-nationhood in the new globalized environment, John L. and Jean Comaroff (2009) similarly recognize nation-states' attempts to encompass all of its peoples under one, universal citizenry: "Heteronationhood … embraces difference… in the capacious language of pluralism while subsuming it within a single, overarching juridico-political regime" (48). They sarcastically critique the "polite appreciation" that the majority population has for the "colorful" costumes, traditions, dances, and foods of minority populations in a multicultural discourse and imaginary (2009:52).

Other anthropologists have admonished multiculturalism's essentialized view of cultural identities – "whereby these are seen and presented as single, concrete, and identifiable entities" (Dávila 1999:183). Eller (1997) outlines the differences between anthropology and multiculturalism, claiming that culture in multiculturalism is romanticized – "a source of all that is good and true, the only authentic or genuine source of value, truth, and identity" (252). Like Dávila, Eller also warns against the cultural essentialism of multicultural discourse, in which cultures are viewed as retaining a natural essence that divides members of groups. Paap (1995) discusses how neo-multiculturalism (as distinguished from the colonial multiculturalism of the nineteenth century) has altered the landscape of the college classroom. Neo-multiculturalists suggest that students can now travel to other places for one or two weeks and engage in empathetic contact with the locals. These students then return to anthropology classrooms, only to be irritated by the idea that they must deconstruct the concept of culture. Paap also cautions that the goals of neo-multiculturalists are oftentimes couched in a dangerous rhetoric of humanitarian development. Paap's (1995) main concern is that neo-multiculturalism leaves many politically-charged concepts unexplored: "The neo-multiculturalists rarely pause to define important terms like nation, development, sophistication, civilization, and yes, culture" (15).

Because of its pseudo-cultural relativist approach, multiculturalism has often been conceptualized as an opposite force or an alternative to U.S. nationalism's pursuit of a homogenous national identity (Dávila 1999). Yet in actuality, multiculturalism sometimes aids in nationalist processes by demanding that these cultural groups construct strict cultural and identity boundaries. Each culture is discussed as having a particular history and cultural property that substantiates its existence. Thus, the ideology of multiculturalism (like that of nationalist discourse) seeks to provide a set definition of each culture and how it should be authentically

represented. Angela Dávila (1999) discusses the ways in which multiculturalist curators and museum workers legitimize the "Latinness" of certain works or artists by relating them to particular Latino cultures or nations. She claims,

> By promoting an essentialized view of identity, multicultural discourse perpetuates a concern over origins and concrete determinations of culture, triggering distinctions about who and what can be considered a more appropriate representation of 'Latinness.' [1999:181]

Importantly, this has resulted in the ranking in value of particular artists and their countries, so that certain artists such as Puerto Ricans are positioned at the periphery of the institutionalized category "Latin American art."

Multiculturalism and Neoliberalism

In her book *Latinos Inc: The Marketing and Making of a People*, Dávila investigates how within this broad multicultural project, the U.S. corporate culture and the marketing industry have aided in the construction of the essentialized identity of 'Latino' and the related notion of '*Latinidad'* for profitability purposes: "Over eighty Hispanic advertising agencies and branches of transnational advertising conglomerates spread across cities with sizable Hispanic populations now sell consumer products by shaping and projecting images of and for Latinos" (2001). The very existence of the terms 'Hispanic marketing' and 'Hispanic-driven media' point to the presumption that Latinos comprise a homogenous population that is both "forever needy of culturally specific marketing" and separated from other American consumers (2001). Dávila claims that in this industry, Latinos are packaged into images that are palatable to corporate clients - dressed in 'traditional,' colorful clothing, for example, or represented as a very family-oriented people. Marketers that seek to use one advertisement to reach the entire Hispanic market

construct imaginaries of the quintessential Latino. For example, one advertiser professed disinterest in the differences of Latinos:

> The Hispanic is a very particular race. It has 50 percent similarities, in that we are all the same, you and I are attached to our families, we love our families, we respect our ancestors and are proud of them, unlike the American, we are proud of our roots and keep eating rice and beans, but we are 50 percent different in that the Cuban is different from the Argentinean and he in turn from the Colombian… what we seek is to tap into that 50 percent that makes us all the same. [2001]

One of Dávila's main purposes in her book is to connect notions of *Latinidad* and a homogenous Latino market to current neoliberal regimes that promote the privatization and commodification of Latino culture. In this global market, the Latino cultural domain is regarded as commodifiable and is sold in a palatable, homogenous format to Latinos themselves as well as people of other ethnicities.

In their book *Ethnicity, Inc*., the Comaroffs (2009) provide a similar exploration of the commodification of ethnic identities and difference in the neoliberal context, yet they broaden their analysis to a global scale – examining a wide variety of ethnic and cultural groups around the world, such as Native American tribes in North America and the San / Bushmen on the edges of the Kalahari Desert. The Comaroffs claim that rather than being less relevant in today's modern, neoliberal world, ethnicity is becoming inscribed into the very dynamics and processes of the market. As people's livelihoods become increasingly threatened under neoliberalism's disembodied approach to the social world and obsessive attention to profit, these people are turning to the commodification and sale of their own ethnic and cultural identities. However, as Dávila (2001) warns, by transforming their vernacular signs, knowledge, and practices into products, cultural and ethnic groups may risk essentializing their cultures or rendering them inauthentic. The Comaroffs note that the process of cultural / ethnic commodification under neoliberalism has other significant consequences as well, such as the re-inscription of hierarchies

of race, class, and gender. For example, Indian tribes' attempts to claim their 'sovereignty' and transform their tribes into corporations has contributed to the breakdown of relations of sociality and community, and "deeper lines of social differentiation and inequality within" (2009:77).

The concept of cosmopolitanism is related to notions of multiculturalism and consumerism. Cosmopolitanism is oftentimes considered to have roots in multicultural ideologies which promote images of ethnically and culturally diverse societies in a globalized world. Cosmopolitan discourses go one step further than multicultural imaginaries, as they invoke visions of the cosmopolitan subject as a "sophisticated world citizen" (Delugan 2010:85). Under the neoliberal model, cosmopolitan subjects are positioned as quintessential consumers of modernity and development. In her book chapter "Auctioning the Chorus Line: Gender, Rural Youth, and the Consumption of Modernity in Thailand," Mary Beth Mills (2001) examines the consumption of modernity and development in the context of rural-to-urban migration in Thailand. Discourses of progress and modernity are offered to rural women in the form of consumption of goods – electric fans, housing materials, and television – attained through migration to urban centers. Yet Mills (2001) notes that the cosmopolitan vision oftentimes fails. Once the girls reach the city, this new consumer identity is not realized: "Apart from occasional trips to pleasure parks or window shopping in a mall, migrants assertions of *thansamay* status receive little social validation within the wider urban context" (43). Like the Comaroffs, Mills cautions against the consumerist frenzy that accompanies neoliberal regimes.

Although they may seem antithetical at first glance, ideologies of neoliberalism and multiculturalism may be similar in some aspects (Hale 2002). In his article "Does Multiculturalism Menace? Governance, Cultural Rights, and the Politics of Identity in Guatemala," Charles Hale (2002) coins the term 'neoliberal multiculturalism' to describe the

process by which states in Latin America, development agencies such as the World Bank, and other advocates of neoliberal policies promote a limited version of indigenous cultural rights "as a means to resolve their own problems and advance their own political agendas" (487). Proponents of neoliberal multiculturalism call for the recognition of indigenous people's rights that were previously refused under the assimilationist agenda – or *mestizaje* model – of the state. From the right of recognition, other rights ensue under a discourse of inter-cultural equality, such as reforms in educational policy and anti-discrimination laws. Yet importantly, Hale (2002) notes the constrained nature of these reforms, as well as the limits that neoliberal multiculturalism places on political action and resistance:

> The concessions and prohibitions of neoliberal multiculturalism structure the spaces that cultural rights activists occupy: defining the language of contention; stating which rights are legitimate, and what forms of political action are appropriate for achieving them; and even, weighing in on basic questions of what it means to be indigenous. [490]

It is important to note that neoliberal multiculturalism is state-endorsed, and thus does not work against the state's favor, but is instead positioned to achieve the state's goals (Rahier 2008). Portraying their societies as multi-ethnic and pluri-lingual allows states to appear culturally and ethnically tolerant, modern, and cosmopolitan. It also allows them to slide by with surface-level reforms that do not enact true, lasting transformation of inequality, power imbalances, and hierarchies of race, class, and gender. As Rahier (2008) poignantly states, "The multicultural illusion is that dominant and subordinate can somehow swap places and learn how the other half lives, whilst leaving the structures of power intact" (148).

In his paper "Soccer and the (Tri-) Color of the Ecuadorian Nation: Vision and Ideological (Dis-) Continuities of Black Otherness from Monocultural Mestizaje to Multiculturalism," Rahier (2008) considers how the Ecuadorian state's multicultural discourse,

officialized with the adoption of a multicultural Constitution in 1998, treats blackness and the African diasporic population. He finds that although the multicultural turn marked a shift away from the exclusionary politics of the 'monocultural mestizaje' model, the switch was purely imaginative and never actualized in practice. In reality, the discourse of exclusion has merely been repackaged into the multicultural model:

> …Liberal and neoliberal multiculturalisms appear as reincriptions of the hegemonic social and racial orderings of things which existed before their advents, and which are now formulated in somewhat different political configurations with the help of 'new' vocabularie. [Rahier 2008:151]

In the Ecuadorian case, black communities have long been denied recognition rights as "peoples" or *pueblos.* And under the ideology of multiculturalism, although recognition rights are afforded to indigenous groups, blacks cannot easily attain this same status. Examining the 1998 Political Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador reveals the ways in which neoliberal multiculturalism re-inscribes differences between African and indigenous populations. Article 83 of Chapter Five, Collective Rights states: "The indigenous peoples, who self-identify as nationalities of ancestral roots, and the black or Afro-Ecuadorian peoples, are part of the Ecuadorian state, unique and indivisible." Yet Article 84 seems to exclude the Afro-Ecuadorian community: "The State will recognize and will guarantee to its indigenous peoples, in conformity with this Constitution and the law, the respect of the public order and of the human rights, the following collective rights" (Rahier 2008:152). The article goes on to list fifteen collective rights that it affords to indigenous populations, such as the right to maintain their communal land and use its resources. It was only later, in a second round of discussions, that Article 85 – which afforded Afro-Ecuadorian people the same rights as listed in Article 84 – was added. The initial refusal to include the Afro-Ecuadorian population in drawing up collective rights suggests that blacks do not conform to the model of indigeneity included in multicultural imaginaries.

The concept of neoliberal multiculturalism may be useful for understanding the relationship between neoliberalism and multiculturalism. While initially praised for its attention to cultural and ethnic diversity and its seemingly tolerant stance, multiculturalism has come under some scrutiny from anthropologists and other social scientists who have pointed out its shortcomings. These include perpetuating a homologizing discourse, essentializing culture, redrawing boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, limiting the capacity for political and social action, and reinforcing hierarchies of race, ethnicity, and gender.

Multicultural Education

The practices and discourses that schools use in their dealings with Latino immigrant students are reflective of broader societal practices and discourses. Scholars have used theories of social reproduction (Apple 1982; Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Bowles and Gintis 1976; Willis 1977) to characterize this relationship, claiming that educational institutions are sites of cultural transmission and socialization, as they adopt broader societal features of cultural practices or language use and subsequently reproduce them for their students (Anderson 2009; Hall 2004). Some scholars using this framework in relation to Latino immigrants have found that some U.S. schools still employ assimilationist agendas - in which students are pushed toward White, European-American values and identities and the English language - that are reflective of a broader xenophobic political and social context (Ek 2009). Anderson (2009), for example, ties the "English Only" language policies employed by educators and administrators in a California school system to broader discourses of race, language, immigration, and Americanness occurring in the nation, as evidenced in and perpetuated by the media (newspaper, television, and radio texts). Collins (2012) similarly links language programs in two upstate New York schools to broader language hierarchies fabricated at the national or state level, which broadcast the

message that English is the only valid means of communication in the United States: "The remarks by school personnel indicate perceptions scaled at the state and national level … in which only English is appropriate for public education or other institutional activity" (201). Yet as an alternative to this assimilationist framework, other scholars have noted the recent rise and prevalence of multicultural education, which seeks to recognize ethnic and cultural differences of children (Rosen 1977). Viewed under a social reproduction framework, multicultural education can be considered an institutional embodiment of the broader discourse and ideology of multiculturalism.

Multicultural education has been promoted by activists, scholars, and educators for the past forty years (Castagno 2013). Since the passage of the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 and the Ethnic Heritage Studies Act of 1972, many multicultural education programs have been implemented in schools across the United States (Rosen 1977). Since the programs' introduction into schools, there has been considerable confusion and ambiguity surrounding the definition of multicultural education and its goals. The term has been applied to many different types of programs in which children from various ethnicities come into contact in one classroom. Rosen (1977) claims that an educational program can be considered multicultural "if it is specifically mandated to take the differences between the children into account in the formulation and implementation of educational policy" (221).

In her article "Approaches to Multicultural Education in the United States: Some Concepts and Assumptions," Margaret Alison Gibson (1984) reviews four approaches to multicultural education in order to attain conceptual clarity:

(1) *Education of the Culturally Different* or *Benevolent Multiculturalism*. The purpose of multicultural education is to equalize educational opportunities for culturally different students.

> (2) *Education about Cultural Differences* or *Cultural Understanding*. The purpose of multicultural education is to teach students to value cultural differences, to understand the meaning of the culture concept, and to accept others' right to be different.
> (3) *Education for Cultural Pluralism*. The purpose of multicultural education is to preserve and to extend cultural pluralism in American society.
> (4) *Bicultural Education*. The purpose of multicultural (or bicultural) education is to produce learners who have competencies in and can operate successfully in two different cultures. [95]

The fourth approach – bicultural education – is often combined with some sort of bilingual education program. These bicultural / bilingual programs:

> Seek to foster or maintain pride in the native culture, to develop a fuller understanding of one's heritage and traditions, to strengthen identity, to increase motivation and academic success, to reduce prejudice and discrimination, and to increase educational opportunities and social justice. [Gibson 1984:107]

Advocates of bicultural education claim that one's 'native' culture should be preserved and that the 'mainstream' culture should be obtained as a second culture. Promoters also believe that those students whose 'native' culture is the 'mainstream' culture will benefit from learning about and acquiring competencies in the second culture.

One specific form of bicultural / bilingual education that has recently gained popularity is dual language immersion (DLI) education or two-way immersion (TWI) education, in which English-speaking students and minority language speakers are enrolled in the same classroom (Palmer 2010). DLI programs oftentimes divide their class time between the two languages of instruction, requiring that students use only the appropriate language during these sessions. The goals for DLI programs concern bilingualism, bi-literacy, cross-cultural understanding, and high academic achievement. DLI programs have received high accolades from activists, educators, researchers, parents, and students. Yet some scholars have problematized this seemingly utopian model, pointing out several dangerous shortcomings and flaws. For example, Deborah Palmer's (2010) ethnography of a TWI strand program in an urban elementary school in Northern

California revealed that White, middle-class, English-speaking students are the primary beneficiaries of the program, which excludes many African American and Latino children. In this sense, the program effectively reinscribes instead of deconstructs hierarchies of race and class. Gibson (1984) outlines several problems with bicultural / bilingual education in her paper, including the following: Overemphasizing ethnic identity, which prevents students from choosing other identities; viewing bilingual / bicultural education as the cure for all social and educational issues; focusing on the acquisition of language at the expense of culture; and viewing the school as the sole environment for the acquisition of multicultural competencies.

In the following chapter, I discuss language education programs in the United States, and the Dual Language Immersion program at Lancaster High School in particular, including its structure and content, its members, and its purpose. I delineate the ways in which the DLI program has benefitted its students - both the White European-American students of the majority and the Latino minority youth – and describe the students' own proclamations of the program's strongpoints. I also provide an in-depth examination of the DLI program's shortcomings and failures, as professed by the students and teachers and gleaned from my own observations. In this discussion, I illustrate the ways in which a multiculturalist rather than assimilationist discourse informs the DLI program and how this rhetoric of multiculturalism plays out on the ground. As scholars described in this section have indicated, I ultimately find that everyday experiences of multiculturalism are complex, as students struggle to negotiate the language and power landscapes of the school with teachers and other students.

Chapter Five: Successes and Failures of the Dual Language Immersion Program

Examining language education programs in schools is an important and valid research endeavor, because language practices in educational institutions "reveal struggles over the establishment of authority and legitimacy" (Heller and Martin Jones 2001:ix). Language is inextricably linked to power, as language hierarchies established in schools and in broader society give certain groups that speak the 'legitimate' language power over those that do not have this linguistic knowledge. The types of language education programs that exist in U.S. schools – English-only, bilingual education, Two-Way Immersion, etc. – employ different approaches and perspectives concerning language legitimacy and validity in U.S. society.

History of Language Programs in the United States

The concept of one national language involves an "imagined community" (Anderson 1991) of speakers of a common language that occupy the same geographical space; in this construction, language and territory are united. This language ideology is tied to the conceptualization of the Unites States as a nation-state and the related paradigm of nationalism. In the United States, Standard English is the dominant language that is used to fulfill the official functions of government and education, and other languages are widely disparaged and discouraged in official realms (Freeman 2000; Lippi-Green 1997).

As discussed in chapter four, the American educational system has traditionally demanded that culturally and linguistically different children quickly assimilate into American culture and language patterns, with devastating effects: "The child would gradually see his people, his language, his culture, and himself as undesirable. He, therefore, would be psychologically damaged, divided, and impaired in his learning and intellectual development"

(Trueba 1974:9). These types of assimilationist programs have dominated U.S. school systems for much of American history (Hill 2008): In 1903, in response to a large influx of immigrants to the United States and burgeoning animosity toward foreigners, 14 states passed laws mandating English as the language of instruction (Schmid 1987). This number grew to 34 states by 1923. The ban on non-English language education in schools remained in place until the 1970s, when minority groups began demanding bilingual education.

Although multicultural and bilingual education has been on the rise since the 1970s, academics have documented the maintained prevalence of English-only programs in schools - in which Latino immigrant students are required to abandon their Spanish language and adopt English as their primary (and sometimes exclusive) means of communication (Anderson 2009; Collins 2012; DeJaeghere and McCleary 2010; Ek 2009; Gutierrez et al. 2000; Mitchell 2012; Valenzuela 1999). In these programs, the use of Spanish is often prohibited, and students are sometimes punished for communicating in the Spanish language (Collins 2012). Teachers' statements – such as "You're in this country, learn the language" (Gutierrez et al. 2000:95) and "Why do they come here if they don't speak the language? If you're going to live in the United States, you gotta speak English" (Valenzuela 1999: 213) - reflect their belief that English is the only appropriate means of communication in U.S. schools. In their research, Gutierrez et al. (2000) discovered a common refrain amongst students in the classrooms: "You're not supposed to speak Spanish cuz it's against the law" (102). Ultimately, language diversity and plurilingualism amongst students is viewed as problematic in these programs (Collins 2012; Nieto 2010) and even a basis of academic failure (Gutierrez et al. 2000; Mitchell 2012).

DeJaeghere and McCleary (2010) claim that schools employ English-only language policies as instruments to transform Latino students into exclusively English-speaking peoples.

In this sense, the promotion of exclusive English-use in the school represents an assimilationist approach imposed on the Latinos and other minority students. Scholars have noted numerous detrimental consequences of these types of programs on minority students. Mitchell (2012) explains that schools utilize this approach for multilinguals in order to quickly render them "invisible in policy and practice" (6). Yet she notes that under English-only policies, English language learners actually develop low levels of proficiency in academic English. Valenzuela (1999) discusses some additional problems with English-only programs in her study site: The ESL program segregates Spanish-speaking students from English-speaking ones, thus producing a 'cultural tracking' system. In her study of a Californian school, Valdes (1998) also notes this issue, claiming that the ESL program produces "two schools in one," or a massive division between English Learning students and English speaking students. This also contributes to the creation of course hierarchy, in which ESL students are seen as inferior, second-class 'others' (Valenzuela 1999). Furthermore, honors-classes only exist within the regular track – and thus exclude Latino students in the ESL program from enrolling in them. Similarly, Gutierrez et al. (2000) note that English-only policies preserve the achievement gap between the rich and poor, "especially the poor, linguistically different children" (101).

As problems such as these become more exposed, a growing number of educators, academics, and parents are rejecting English-only programs in favor of more diverse and equitable programs (Lopez 2013). In fact, the demand for an alternative type of language education has existed for several decades. During the 1970s, minority groups, particularly Chicanos in the southwest U.S., began to rally for bilingual education – or the instruction of limited-English students in both their native language and in English (Schmid 1987). In response, the United States passed the Equal Education Opportunity Act in 1974 requiring local

authorities to take “appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation in the instructional program” (Schmid 1987:907). Yet bilingual education was not universally accepted by all states and populations. Certain states banned or outlawed bilingual education: California in 1998 with the passage of Proposition 227, and Arizona and Massachusetts in 2001 and 2002 with state referendums. Parents are now required to sign waivers to enroll students in dual language immersion programs in these states. And in 2001, the Bilingual Education Act was repealed with the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act, which emphasizes English language proficiency amongst Latino students and other minority students and draws resources away from Spanish language education (Garcia 2014). Furthermore, many bilingual education programs are transitional, “with the explicit goal being the ‘mainstreaming’ of children into English-only classrooms” (Garcia 2014:66). Thus, the aim of these programs is to ultimately achieve monolingualism in English. Once the students are placed into English-only classrooms, they receive no maintenance instruction of their native language. Hill (2008) notes that pressure against Spanish has intensified in other realms beyond the educational context: “Organizations like US English, ProEnglish, and English First have funded dozens of state-level initiatives as well as campaigns for federal legislation to make English the ‘official’ language of the government” (122). Hill also claims that employers have become more vigilant in mandating English-only workplaces. And even beyond these spaces, public attacks and pressure against Spanish “is a ubiquitous fact of American life” (Hill 2008:123).

Yet educators, activists, and parents are spurning the push towards English in both English-only programs and transitional bilingual education programs (Lopez 2013). In the early 90s, the U.S. government began to raise federal funding of dual language immersion (DLI) and two-way immersion programs (Freeman 2000) – programs that place language-minority students

and language-majority students in the same classroom and use both languages for instruction. In 1987, only 30 DLI programs were documented in the country. Yet this number has grown dramatically in recent decades: By 1997, there were 202 DLI programs in the nation, and in 2012, there were 415 programs in 31 states (Lopez 2013). One of the main aims of DLI programs is to promote language learning through academic content instruction in both languages. Another goal is that each student becomes proficient in using both languages for communication purposes. Ultimately, DLI programs reject the ideology of English dominance that exists in most schools and official contexts (Freeman 2000). DLI programs push minority language speakers to maintain their native languages, but they also require English-speakers to cultivate the minority language and thus challenge English monolingualism through multiple avenues. The aim of DLI programs is to enrich the student's experience with two compatible languages and cultures rather than to promote monocultural, monolingual education (Trueba 1974).

Structure and Purpose of the Dual Language Immersion Program at LHS

The Dual Language Immersion program at LHS is relatively new at the high school level. At the time of my research, the program was just completing one full iteration – from kindergarten to twelfth grade. The seniors I observed and interviewed were the first kindergarten class to enter into the program in 2001. Like other DLI programs, DLI classrooms at LHS are typically composed of 50% language minority students (in this case, native Spanish speakers) and 50% language majority students (in this case, native English speakers). The high school program is a 'strand program' – in other words, the DLI program is situated in an English-mainstream public school. LHS offers only one DLI class for each grade level (ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth), and sometimes ninth and tenth graders are combined into the same DLI

classroom, as during my research period. Ninth-graders (usually) take History and Geography of the Spanish-speaking world, tenth graders take Spanish Language and Literature, eleventh-graders take AP Spanish, and twelfth graders take Spanish for Professionals. In the Lancaster School District, students in lower levels of the educational system receive more instruction in Spanish – 50% of total classroom instruction - than at the high school level. There are two elementary schools in the district that offer DLI education, and these schools are in the process of transitioning to school-wide DLI education; though the two schools still currently offer English-only classrooms for third, fourth, and fifth grades, English-only classrooms are being phased out, and new students are automatically placed in the DLI programs upon enrollment in kindergarten. At the middle school level, students in the DLI programs take two DLI classes each year – math, English, science, history, and so on.

The DLI program at LHS was originally implemented due to low test scores and poor integration of the Spanish-speaking population at the school. One of the main purposes of the DLI program at LHS is to simultaneously provide language development and academic content for this population. A major issue with traditional English-only language programs is that minority language speakers lose academic content while attempting to learn the English language, as they exclusively receive instruction in English. In order to prevent this content loss, the Spanish speakers in the DLI program receive both language development and content in Spanish while they are acquiring English. At the end of the program, the Spanish speakers should be very capable in both languages and in academics as well, so “they haven’t sacrificed one thing for the other” (Mrs. Mowen). The two teachers of the DLI program at LHS – Mrs. Mowen and Mrs. Hannan - state that although the program serves both native Spanish speakers

and native English speakers, it specifically targets Spanish speakers (though “English speakers do come out with an important skill” [Mrs. Mowen]).

Another aim of the DLI program at LHS is that both Spanish speakers and English speakers achieve bilingualism in a cooperative environment. Mrs. Mowen addressed this goal in an interview: “You’re supposed to have two groups who are really bilingual from two different backgrounds who’ve benefitted each other, worked together, helped each other.” A related goal is to reduce English as a Second Language instruction, where Spanish speakers are usually placed into a separate classroom apart from mainstream students until they acquire the English language. Finally, Mrs. Mowen emphasized that the students in the DLI program should ultimately perform better academically: “In theory that’s what a dual immersion program should do. It should really be rigorous, and it should really prepare students academically in two languages. They should be performing above and beyond an average student.”

Reasons for Enrollment

Most of the students in the DLI program at LHS entered into the program as young kindergarteners and thus yielded the decision to enroll in the program to their parents. Parents of Latino first- and second-generation immigrant students and White European-American students placed their children in the program for diverging reasons. Many of the Latino immigrant students’ parents were attracted to the large amount of Spanish instruction in the program, as well as the sizable Spanish-speaking community of students already enrolled. Juan’s parents, for example, chose an elementary school with a DLI program over another that was closer to their home, “because there were other Spanish speakers there” (Juan). Similarly, Gabriela’s family lived in a city thirty minutes from Lancaster, yet they enrolled Gabriela and her siblings in an elementary school with a DLI program in Lancaster. Scholars have found that many second-

generation Latino immigrant students are raised in Spanish-speaking homes and thus have no knowledge of the English language when they initially enter schools (Alarcon 2010). In interviews, many of the Latino immigrant students explained that their parents believed the DLI program would facilitate and improve their learning process in the new educational environment. Tomás claimed, "I was raised learning Spanish. And I think that's why I'm in the program, because when I entered kindergarten, that's when I started learning English." Gabriela's school that she originally attended did not have an ELL program to help Spanish speakers, making it "really difficult to communicate." After two years of frustration at her original school, Gabriela's parents moved her to a Lancaster school with a DLI program. Fernando's parents also placed him in a DLI program because of his lack of knowledge of the English language: "In that time, I didn't know a second language. It was kind of hard and that's why I subscribed to the bilingual program… to be in both English and Spanish."

Because of its Spanish-speaking environment, some of the Latino immigrant students' parents also expected the DLI program to assist in Spanish language *maintenance*. When I asked Natalia why her parents placed her in the program, she explained, "My mom wanted me not to forget Spanish at all. Because so many people she knows, they can't even speak to their daughters, because they really don't know Spanish." Natalia's mom hopes that by being in the DLI program, Natalia will preserve her knowledge of Spanish and continue communicating with her in the language. Natalia's maintenance of the language is crucial for their relationship, as Natalia's mother is a monolingual Spanish speaker. Emily's mother – whose father decided to teach her and her siblings only English "because he was of the opinion that [Spanish] would affect her education and the way that they were treated by people around them" – expressed the same sentiment. Her mother was not able to communicate with her own Spanish-speaking

grandparents and refused to perpetuate the same disconnect and detachment with her own children. She enrolled Emily and her siblings in a DLI program so that they could be more connected to their language and culture.

While the Latino immigrant students' parents tended to place their children in a DLI program for educational survival and language maintenance, the White European-American students' parents' interest in the program was largely impelled by their knowledge of the advantages of bilingualism. Other scholars have noted these diverging rationales between these two groups as well: In her study of the reasons mothers chose to enroll their children in a TWI Program in Texas, Lopez (2013) found the following:

> English-first mothers tended to emphasize a desire for increased academic success as a result of two-way immersion, whereas the Spanish-first mothers indicated that they wanted their children to be able to communicate with more people and be connected to their familial, cultural, and linguistic roots. [222]

Becca, Monica, and Alice all cited increased academic or occupational success as the main reason that their parents placed them in the program. Becca claimed, "It was because they knew that learning a second language was beneficial, and it's easier to learn at a young age." Alice's parents similarly viewed it "as something [she] could benefit from in the future." While these girls' parents primarily considered the potential financial benefits of learning a second language, such as better job prospects, Sally's mother's decision was instigated by a slightly different logic; she wanted Sally to be exposed to the struggles and marginalization that minorities experience in U.S. communities:

> She grew up in Alaska where it was very white, but then she moved a little bit and one of her studies is political science. And she's like ok, I want my child to not be blind by like, oh, there's more than just white. And because Oregon is so white, she just wanted me to have that experience of not being a spoiled White kid.

It is evident that Sally's mother values social awareness, and hopes to instill this value in Sally.

Successes and Benefits

Scholars have noted that DLI or TWI programs afford many benefits to both language majority and language minority students. Valdes (1997) notes that in these programs, minority language speakers have access to the curriculum while they acquire the English language – a major improvement over other language education programs that block language minority leaners from academic content. Valdes (1997) also mentions that DLI programs bring together students of different languages and ethnicities: “In dual-language immersion programs, minority children are no longer segregated from their English-speaking peers. The presence of children from two groups ends the linguistic isolation in which many minority children find themselves” (412). In her study of over 160 schools with TWI programs, Donna Christian (1996) similarly notes that TWI programs promote cross-cultural understanding. Beyond these benefits, scholars have proposed numerous other advantages to DLI programs: They help both language minority and language majority students raise test scores (Christian 1996; Thomas and Collier 2012) and graduate high school and enroll in college (Lindholm-Leary and Borsato 2001); the programs encourage language minority students to foster bicultural identities (Palmer 2009); and they enable language majority students to academically outperform those in mainstream classes (Thomas and Collier 2002).

The DLI program at LHS provides its students many of these same benefits as listed in the literature, as well as several additional advantages. Firstly, the program has successfully reduced ESL instruction; there are fewer students that remain in ESL classrooms for extended periods of time – from kindergarten through high school. The program also appears to reduce high school dropouts, with fewer DLI students dropping out of the high school than mainstream students. According to Mrs. Mowen, the primary DLI teacher, the program has also motivated

Latino students and created a sense of community and Latino presence at the school. Mrs. Mowen declared, “I think that the Latino community is benefitting because the sense of community is being strengthened through the program. And my goal is really to have the sense of community and the presence of the Latino community much stronger in this high school.”

The DLI classrooms at LHS also serve as spaces of relief and relaxation in a stressful high school environment. Mrs. Mowen related, “High school is just new and stressful and overwhelming, and there’s all these new people. Then they would come back together in my class and it was this period where they could just breathe and be themselves.” Many of the students referenced the DLI classroom as a safe place to form close friendships and bonds. Juan stated, “We are all closer together because of how small the group is now.” Monica made a similar statement, “We’re all super tight.” For some of the students, the DLI classrooms provide support in much the same way as a familial unit: “I love that I’ve known all of my friends for so long. If I didn’t have that support system, I’m not sure where I would be right now” (Sally). Becca exclaimed, “It’s like a family. Like I’ve known these people forever and so like we separate, like we all have different friend groups and everything, but we always come back this class.” His twelfth grade DLI classroom appears to function similarly for Tomás: “I just like that we can always go back to the classroom. … We all feel at home.” These statements indicate that many of these students have successfully cultivated a sense of belonging in DLI classrooms. The construction of community and bonds of solidarity is a major success of the DLI program – a point that I expand upon in chapter six - especially in the oftentimes alienating high school environment.

One of main successes of the DLI program at LHS is that it offers students a space to discuss and debate significant social and political issues across the globe, particularly those

concerning societies in Latin America and immigrant Latino communities in the U.S. During my classroom observations, the twelfth grade DLI class would often engage in critical discussions about Latin American dictatorships (Pinochet in Chile), protest music, and the poor treatment of indigenous peoples in Colombia, for example. Another common topic of discussion was race relations in the U.S. Students debated the appropriate balance between expressing pride and solidarity in one's own culture and isolating oneself from people of other ethnicities. During one class discussion, for example, Natalia mentioned the importance of forming bonds with other Latinos in order to strengthen and sustain Latino culture. Yet Tomás rebutted with concern about the divisions that oftentimes exist between Mexican barrios in the U.S. and their surrounding communities; he feared the consequences of this interethnic segregation.

Mrs. Mowen persistently encourages and invites this type of critical dialogue in her twelfth grade DLI classroom, and as a result, her students are more knowledgeable and aware of issues of justice and power throughout the world. One of the results of these types of critical discussions is a decrease in racism and discrimination amongst enrolled students, both Latino and White: "White and brown kids go through this program and they are the least racist, least discriminatory, most worldly kids that Lancaster is capable of producing. They are totally used to working side by side in a way that I don't think any of the other students are" (Mrs. Mowen). Monica's following comment manifests Mrs. Mowen's hypothesis, as she discussed the insight she has gained by being in the DLI program at LHS:

> It's definitely opened up my eyes to a lot of different stuff. Because like a lot of kids in the school, they don't realize what some of the kids in the class have gone through, and what some Chicano kids or Latino kids in the U.S. struggle with. We've had kids in the past who've come to the U.S. illegally and they've had to deal with that. Their parents are having to struggle to find work, and they're definitely living below the poverty line. They'll have family members who have gotten deported and they're separate from them. There's always this element of fear and stuff. And sometimes they leave the program, and I'm not sure where

> they went, which is a bit worrying. … There's a lot of people who talk about illegal immigration, but it kinda gets me a little bit upset with people that just see the statistics, because there's a lot of kids and people who are living this. … So I'm definitely more aware … of the discrimination that Latino kids face. And A LOT of my school has no idea.

For Monica, the DLI program has not only imparted knowledge and information about the issues of the migrant experience, illegal immigration, poverty, and social exclusion, but it also has prompted her to cultivate a sense of human compassion and caring for her fellow Latino immigrant students. In this sense, the program has transformed her awareness and understanding of social justice issues as well as her empathetic capacity.

Other White European-American students gave similar culturally-sensitive, socially-aware responses to my inquiry about the benefits of the program. Alice explained how it has opened her eyes to the injustices and power imbalances that exist in educational systems:

> It's really interesting, some of the things from the Spanish-speaking world. I just did a job shadow in Lyon with the bilingual director now. It was just really interesting like with all the statistics that came up about students living in poverty and speaking a second language. And they're definitely at a disadvantage in the system, and you can even see it carry through in our school population. I'm in a lot of honors classes and AP classes, and it's just really white. So that's definitely an effect you can see, and I notice it more I think, because the program. And then also social issues that come up, I'm more invested in them, because I have friends who are probably going through this or at least I can see like some connection, since it's a little more personal I guess, these issues.

Alice directly attributes her awareness of the inequality at her high school to the DLI program. It is clear by her above comment that the program has stimulated Alice's analysis of her own high school context and specifically the upper-level classes in which she is enrolled. Beyond a critical analysis of her environment, Alice has also become "more invested" in these issues, because she has made friends with the very students that are experiencing them. As it has for Monica, the DLI program has not only enlightened Alice to the issues of educational inequality and poverty,

but it has also provided her with a personal, empathetic connection to the victims of these power dynamics. In this sense, the DLI program at LHS has great transformative potential.

Several students also referenced another educational injustice in the United States – the tendency of U.S. schools to focus on European / North American history at the expense of Latin American history. These students declared that the DLI program facilitates their learning of Latino culture and history on a deeper and more profound level than their mainstream classes. Tomás mentioned the benefit of learning about history and cultures in Latin American countries, rather than solely receiving education on Euro-American nations as in other classes:

> We've taken History and Geography of Spanish-speaking countries [in the program]. In a [mainstream] history class, we only learn about what happened here in America, like since the Declaration and then all the wars. We'd also learn about Germany and stuff, but we never go into like what happened in Mexico, or like what happened in Chile or Brazil.

Stephanie stated, "I feel like in other classes, teachers attempt to teach their students about the history of Latin America, but I feel like it's a lot deeper in our Spanish class, because along with learning history, there's an understanding of the language and the culture that's a lot deeper." Alice agreed: "At school we wouldn't go into depth about all of these topics. It's a lot of just American history, and we'll learn little side bits about their culture, but it's never in depth, and usually it's from more of a biased viewpoint." Alice seems to recognize that the information she receives in a traditional educational setting - from a Euro-American perspective - is not necessarily neutral or equitable. The DLI program has likely prompted the students' awareness of this particular educational bias as well, as it attempts to include minority contributions and perspectives in its own curriculum.

Much to the relief of their parents, the DLI program has helped many Latino immigrant students maintain their knowledge of the Spanish language. Juan, for example, proclaimed ,

"I like that I have a class that I can come back to and just like speak Spanish and don't lose my language. Because we're in a class where we speak Spanish fluently, and we're in the language, versus other classes that are just kind of grasping the language." Gabriela also mentioned this benefit of the DLI program, but cited an additional advantage – the instruction about the history of the Spanish language and Spanish-speaking peoples:

> I don't only know the language, but I know the history of the languages and the places the language is from. A lot of people here take Spanish as a language and it's like the simple things, the simple facts. And we learn not only the simple things like how to do a sentence, but we learn more. … We learn everything about the language.

Both Juan and Gabriela contrasted the depth of instruction of Spanish that they gain in the DLI program with the surface-level overview that students in other Spanish classes receive.

The ability of the DLI program at LHS to cultivate and preserve the Spanish skills of its students is particularly significant. Many of the Spanish-speaking students passionately emphasized the importance of language maintenance, expressing embarrassment or frustration with those family members and friends that allow their knowledge of Spanish to weaken. Juan, for example, bemoaned his cousins' loss of the Spanish language in college: "They used to speak it very well, and now they don't speak it as much, just because they don't speak it in their classes or anything." Juan seems to consider the English-dominant educational system as responsible for his cousins' language deterioration. Veronica, on the other hand, places the blame of students' language loss on parents' shoulders:

> When I see someone who's in a Spanish-speaking family, and they don't know Spanish, it kind of irritates me. … If you kind of strip away a kid's right to speaking the language … and not giving them that opportunity to learn it, I feel like that's really selfish, because that language alone could open so many doors for them.

To Veronica, it is the parents' responsibility to teach their children their language, not the school system. Although she agrees that the DLI program offers enrolled students advantages over others, she does not seem as adamant that the DLI program be an essential language program for all educational institutions. Veronica's slightly indifferent attitude concerning the program is perhaps a result of her late entrance into the program; she enrolled "on accident" while trying to take a regular Spanish class. Finally, when discussing his cousins' language decline, Tomás identified both their English-only school and their older brothers as instigators. He asserted,

> I have some cousins that have older brothers and they only spoke English to them and like now they can't speak Spanish. Even though their parents are full Mexican, their brothers talk to them in English and that's what they heard at school, because they don't have the program. So now they just talk English and they can't talk to my grandma or grandpa, who don't know English. And I feel like that's kind of weird that they grew up in a Spanish-speaking home, but they don't speak Spanish. At my house, we speak Spanish all of the time. We rarely use English words.

Tomás' extended commentary indicates that he finds it odd or abnormal that "full Mexicans" do not speak the Spanish language; he uses his own household – where his family "rarely uses English words" – as an appropriate model of a Spanish-speaking home. Interestingly, to Tomás, both a Spanish-speaking home and a Spanish-speaking school environment are essential for language maintenance. These students value language maintenance for different reasons as well: For Tomás, speaking Spanish fosters cross-generational communication (grandchildren to grandparents), and for Stephanie, it "open doors."

In addition to Stephanie, most of the students – both Latino and White European-American – cited 'better job opportunities' as a major advantage of enrolling in the DLI program and gaining fluency in the Spanish language. The students seem to believe that the bilingual seal they receive on their high school diplomas will distinguish them from other students and make them more attractive to both colleges and employers. Alice claimed, "If you're bilingual you do

better in other areas scholastically. And I'll think I'll have an advantage for the rest of my life – in college, in getting employment…" Stephanie provided a similar response: "When I get to college, yeah I'll be at an advantage. And trying to work, that's going to be really helpful to actually know how to speak Spanish." Tomás believes that speaking Spanish is an asset in this day and age, as the Spanish language grows in popularity in the U.S.: "I think we'll have a little bit of our foot in the door for other jobs, because right now they're really hiring bilingual people into any job. Because there's a lot more Spanish-speaking people here in the U.S. now."

While most of the students identified their knowledge of *Spanish* as an advantage, Gabriela – who spent much of her childhood in Mexico - cited the *English* skills she has gained in the DLI program as beneficial: "For a lot of places, you get an easier job. In the summer, I worked for a guy from Ecuador, I was his assistant. I did the job in English; I had to translate for him. And it helped me so much." Thus, *all* of the students enrolled in the program -with varying levels of Spanish and English skills – gain an advantage by becoming bilingual in both English and Spanish. Juan also referenced the advantage of knowing two languages for future job possibilities, but he explicitly acknowledged his ethnic advantage as well. He declared,

> I'm interesting in engineering and health. When you think of like an engineer, you don't think of someone that's Latino; there's not a lot of Latinos to look up to. It's like, oh yeah, you speak two languages. I feel like it's just kind of white people that speak one language. And I feel like it's an advantage to have two languages and be a Latino.

Not only does Juan consider his bilingual capabilities desirable, but he also believes his ethnicity will afford him a greater likelihood of job placement and advancement. In a day and age where Latinos and other minorities are still persistently marginalized and disparaged, Juan's valuing of his 'Latino-ness' – even as a means to advance in a capitalistic system - is particularly meaningful and inspiring.

Drawbacks and Problems

The DLI program at LHS has succeeded in many ways: It has reduced ESL instruction, decreased high school dropouts, created a sense of Latino presence and community, cultivated a space for solidarity and relationship, decreased discrimination and racism amongst its students, fostered in-depth critical analysis of social and political issues, improved language maintenance, and offered better job opportunities to its students. Yet the program has several major problems and failures as well, as identified by students and teachers in interviews and observed by myself. Many of the program's issues stem from its novelty and the lack of resources and support at its current stage. Mrs. Mowen has been the primary teacher in the high school DLI program in the four years of its existence; when I conducted my research, another teacher – Mrs. Hannan – had just joined the program faculty as the ninth and tenth grade teacher. It is evident that the DLI program at LHS lacks basic curriculum resources for all of the grade levels. Mrs. Mowen related, "This year I have nothing. I have no book, I don't have anything. It's absurd. Can you see what are the objectives of the class? It's very nebulous. I think that if I were a student in this class, I would feel pretty disappointed. I would feel like, what are we doing here?" Mrs. Hannan expressed similar frustration with the scarcity of available classroom material:

> There's not enough curriculum. I don't have like any questions written. I don't have any assessment materials. The only thing I have assessment materials for are in that book. So it's really stressful because I have to come up with everything.

As mothers of small children, both Mrs. Hannan and Mrs. Mowen voiced concerns about balancing their work and family lives; they both indicated uncertainty about their abilities to devote sufficient time and effort to the program. Despite her obvious weariness and frustration, Mrs. Mowen seems optimistic about the future of the program, asserting that the program should improve "even in the worst of cases." The administration at LHS – particularly the assistant

principal who is half-Latina herself - fully supports the DLI program and is dedicated to its progress and success. The administration appears to be open to feedback; when Mrs. Mowen expressed concerns about the failures of the program, it promised more money and tools to Mrs. Mowen to build a stronger DLI class. And when I first approached the assistant principal about conducting my research at her school and in the program, she eagerly agreed to support my endeavors and spent several hours of her time with me discussing the Latino students at the school and the program itself. She helped me gain approval for my research at the district level, met with and organized teachers for my classroom observations and interviews, and expressed considerable interest in any insights and observations I garner through my study.

Most of the students I interviewed echoed the teachers' frustration with the paucity of available resources in the program. Many of Mrs. Mowen's students expressed sympathy for her as a teacher of an inadequate program. Becca lamented, "It's hard because they're constantly like giving her a subject and then she has to teach a whole class on it." Monica agreed: "We're a little bit high and dry out here because Mrs. Mowen is making up the curriculum… She's doing a phenomenal job and we're learning a lot, but we're just kind of testing the waters...." Emily made a similar comment: "Since my class has been the first to kinda make it all the way through the program, there have definitely been some kinks that need to be worked out. For example, this class doesn't have a curriculum at all. Mrs. Mowen is just kind of making it up as she goes." Despite their obvious disappointment with the program's shortcomings, the students all seemed to support and acknowledge Mrs. Mowen's struggle – a touching display of solidarity between students and teacher.

Students also expressed frustration with the program's inconsistent structure and content. The middle school program offers core classes in Spanish, such as math, science, or history.

However, the high school does not offer core DLI classes, so students must enroll in mainstream English-core classes. Thus, the students are forced to re-learn terms and materials in English at the high school level, which is particularly challenging for Latino immigrant students with limited English knowledge. Natalia explained,

> In middle school, we had science in Spanish. When we got to high school, it was so difficult because we knew everything in Spanish. It doesn't really make sense, because once you were here, you had to take science in English. It's really hard because so many of these people know these things in English, and I'm like I don't know what these things are!

Tomás mentioned another issue with the limited offerings of the DLI program at LHS – forming one's schedule to meet all of the high school requirements: "The thing that I dislike is that people kept going out of the program. They made it so their schedules wouldn't fit. Because it's only one period, because it's not like every single period there's one class for that." Because the program is not school-wide, many of the students are forced to drop out, as they need to enroll in other classes important for graduation. Furthermore, almost all of the native English speakers I interviewed complained that the program instructors at the lower levels skipped an integral component of their Spanish language education: grammar and conjugation. This presents problems for a program that supposedly fosters students' fluency in both Spanish and English: "The only problem I had was not learning the conjugation and grammar. We're so confused all the time. Like people hear us talk and we don't even have an English accent, but we can't function completely like a fluent speaker" (Becca). Alice said that she is "not fully confident" in her ability due to this lacking knowledge. And Monica expressed embarrassment that she places accent marks "where they sound right." Mrs. Mowen relayed that she is attempting to teach her twelfth grade DLI class grammatical fundamentals in order to remedy the issue. During my observations, the students spent almost an entire week of class learning correct accent mark

placement – usually a skill taught in a basic Spanish 1 class – and most of them failed the quiz at the end of the week.

Another significant issue is a considerable lack of awareness in the mainstream high school about the DLI program. Many teachers of mainstream classes merely acknowledge the program's existence and remain ignorant of even the simplest facts concerning the program's intent and goals. Mrs. Mowen explained:

> I've worked here for four years and I still have teachers that ask me what it is I do. There's always been a lack of explanation and awareness about the Dual Immersion program. They'll ask me what's the purpose of it, what are you supposed to do. There are many teachers in this building that would have that same question, if not the majority of the teachers. I think there's a total lack of awareness about that, and so I would like to see more general awareness – what is this program, what is our Latino community.

Mrs. Mowen claims that not only do the mainstream teachers lack knowledge about the DLI program, but they are also uninformed and perhaps uninterested in the Latino community and presence at the school as well - a point that I will discuss in the following chapter. Emily notes that mainstream students as well as teachers also seem largely oblivious about the DLI program: "Most of the kids at the school probably don't even know what the Dual Immersion program is, which is kind of weird for me because it's been such a big part of my life. I don't think we're as visible as we should be." For Emily, other students' lack of awareness about a program that she evidently finds incredibly meaningful is slightly disturbing and off-putting.

Issues of Inequality and Power Disparities

The invisibility of the DLI program at LHS is further compounded by its exclusionary structure and practices. The program's design renders it extremely difficult for other students to join at higher levels of education. Students in the high school program have usually been enrolled in the program for nine to thirteen years, and many have already achieved fluency in

Spanish and English. Thus, it is almost impossible for interested students to enter into the program at higher grade levels and succeed academically. Becca notes, “We’ve had people try to join, but it’s so hard to jump in late. You really have to start at the beginning.” New students also face social challenges as they attempt to penetrate the tight-knit cohort of students that have traveled together through the system. Students in the DLI program recognize this exclusion as a significant impediment to equity at the school. Veronica – a native Spanish speaker – experienced a sense of isolation and loneliness upon entering the program two years ago:

> There are always the same people in the class, and I feel like they have already built their relationships with each other. And I was new, and I just started two years ago. So I guess I feel like there should probably be more people that would be willing to get into the class instead of the same group. Because only the same group is benefitting from this, instead of people who take Spanish 1 or 2. I feel like they should benefit from this class as well.

Stephanie also pointed out that the program is very limited in its outreach to other Latino students, despite the fact that they largely constitute its purported target population: “It really doesn’t include all of the Latino students. It’s very few of them.” Both Veronica and Stephanie recognize that the program’s exclusivity is unwittingly contributing to student segregation at the school: Those in the program receive benefits and privileges over those not in the program. In this sense, too, the program is fostering student inequality of some form.

In her study of a strand Two-Way Immersion program in a Northern Californian elementary school, Deborah Palmer (2010) found that the program perpetuated a similar disparity between the students enrolled in the program and those in mainstream classes. Like LHS, her study school began the program to improve the academic achievement of Spanish-speaking students. Yet “the program as enacted reduces the number of spots available to those children in favor of mostly white, middle-class, English-speaking students” (2010: 95). Other Latino families in the school expressed interest in the program, yet they could not enroll due to

the limited number of spaces. Thus, there existed an internal segregation in the school, between those in the immersion program and those in mainstream classes. In Palmer's study, teachers of mainstream classes complained that this segregation is detrimental to the academic progress of their own students, as they do not receive the benefits of the immersion classrooms. Furthermore, the teachers labeled the immersion classrooms elitist, due to the high concentration of affluent, middle-class, White students and its exclusionary nature. Palmer notes that an increasing number of affluent parents are traveling great distances to place their kids in the DLI school. Ultimately, Palmer (2010) finds that it is "not enough simply to bring in the middle-class (often White) families and end it there. The program will invariably end up serving the needs of the dominant majority, leaving Latino and other minority students out of the picture" (110).

Interestingly, the DLI programs in the Lancaster District may be moving along the same trajectory toward elitism as the school in Palmer's (2010) study. Mrs. Hannan noted that just as in Palmer's study, the parents of White students are deliberately placing their children in her son's elementary DLI classroom. And the typical profile of a DLI parent seems to be transforming into a highly educated, successful person:

> I do think that the Dual Immersion … non-Latino population is becoming more and more 'academic.' Because they're from families where their parents are like "I want my kid in this program. This is useful." I look at my son's class and the kids have come in from other areas. Their parents are all doctors, professors… You're getting more of the educated people that are putting their kids in the program.

As evidenced by Mrs. Hannan's comment, a growing number of White, middle-class parents are realizing the advantages that bilingualism can offer their children. As previously discussed, these parents' rationales for enrolling their children in the program are mainly based on greater educational enrichment and better job opportunities. Rubinstein-Avila (2002) confirms that these "parents' interest in the acquisition of a second language is fueled primarily by their instrumental

awareness of the advantages bilingualism will afford their children in a global economy" (73). It is somewhat problematic that native English speakers' parents may support the program primarily for the economic benefits to their own children, rather than any sort of commitment to educational equality for native Spanish speakers. For the Spanish-speaking students – many of whom are working-class - the program offers them a chance to stay on top of academic content and maintain their language while still learning English, which is critical to their survival in the United States. Spanish-speaking children *must* learn English, as it is expected and required for most social and institutional interactions. Thus, as Palmer (2009) states, "the stakes are higher for Spanish-speaking children" (179). For English-speaking students, learning a second language – Spanish, in this case – is a choice and an enrichment opportunity.

However, scholars such as Palmer (2010) have also warned that oftentimes the Spanish-speaking students' needs remain unmet in DLI programs. As in Palmer's study, the White European-American students in the DLI program at LHS are the primary beneficiaries of the program. Mrs. Mowen claims that the LHS program is not truly benefitting native Spanish speakers – its target population:

> I think right now, what is mostly happening is the White kids who are learning Spanish as a second language in that program are getting the advantage of being around the native speakers. I don't know that the native speakers are getting a lot of advantage out of it.

Mrs. Mowen claims that the program is not academically rigorous, and thus is not pushing the Latino students to graduate at a higher level than their peers (which is the primary goal of the entire program, in her opinion). She places the responsibility for this issue on faculty's shoulders, claiming that the instructors encourage the Latino students to simply remain in school, rather than pushing them to succeed at higher academic levels. Mrs. Mowen seems to recognize the dangerous implications of this particular failure – namely, the reproduction of an unequal power

relationship between the Latino and White students at LHS. She lamented, “It’s kind of distressing that out of this first group of DLI graduates, there’s going to be two brown kids going to college. The White kids are moving on to college, and the brown kids aren’t. It’s really bad.” By propelling the White students toward college but failing to do the same for the Latino immigrant students, the DLI program is perpetuating the exact educational disparity that it purportedly challenges. However, Mrs. Mowen does seem focused on the academic failure / success of the Latino students over other benefits:

> Other than the sort of sense of pride and identity and some of the background information that they’ve learned about their own cultural heritage, I don’t know that academically this program has done anything more for them, than if it hadn’t existed.

To Mrs. Mowen, succeeding academically may hold higher value than cultivating a sense of self-understanding and ethnic pride.

Palmer (2009) also cautions that DLI programs can perpetuate another inequality – the symbolic dominance of English and English-speaking students. With their focus on minority language education, DLI programs certainly constitute an improvement over other ESL and transitional-bilingual classrooms that promote the predominance of English. Yet the presence of middle-class, English-speaking students oftentimes serves to reaffirm and bolster English as the language of influence (Palmer 2009). This power imbalance can be maintained in various ways: Teachers may water down their Spanish to enhance English-speaking students’ comprehension of material, and thus hinder minority speakers’ Spanish maintenance (McCollum 1999; Valdes 1997); Valdes (1997) and Palmer (2009) warn that English-speaking students can dominate classroom discussion and thus divest Latino students of critical dialogue and teacher attention; and finally, students may speak large amounts English even during Spanish-only periods (Ballinger and Lyster 2011; Palmer 2009).

The DLI program at LHS seems to be succeeding in the first two categories – the DLI teachers at the high school level appear to have an advanced knowledge of the Spanish language and offer quality instruction in the language (although Mrs. Hannan noted that some parents have complained about teachers' limited knowledge of Spanish in programs at the lower educational levels); and both Mrs. Hannan and Mrs. Mowen actively endeavor to call on *all* students, regardless of ethnicity or language ability. Yet in the three DLI classrooms I observed at LHS, students evidently preferred to speak in English – "the language of power" – rather than Spanish (Rubenstein-Avila 2002:76), despite the 'Spanish-only' requirement in these classrooms. Ballinger and Lyster (2011) and Rubinstein-Avila (2002) found the same preference for English in their studies of Two-Way Immersion programs. While students in their observations used mostly Spanish (or Portuguese, in Rubinstein-Avila's study) with their teachers, the primary language of peer interaction and unofficial talk was English.

Mrs. Hannan's two ninth and tenth grade classes seem to struggle the most with the Spanish-only requirement. During informal conversations, virtually all of the White students speak English with each other and even with the Spanish speakers in the classroom. Latino students generally speak Spanish (or Spanglish) with each other, but during small-group work, the presence of one White student in the group prompts English-use in the group rather than Spanish-use. This finding is supported by Hickey (2001), who similarly discovered that Irish-dominant students speak Irish to each other only when English-speakers are not nearby. English-dominant students in the DLI classrooms at LHS smoothly code-switch between the formal language of the classroom (Spanish) and the covert language of informal interactions (English). These students often speak phrases or pose questions to Mrs. Hannan in English. And Spanglish

is very common in the classroom – English-speaking students insert English words into their sentences when they cannot locate the appropriate Spanish word.

Mrs. Hannan makes frequent attempts to limit the amount of English in her classrooms, declaring "*Escucho mucho Inglés* [I hear a lot of English!]" multiple times during a typical class session. When students ask Mrs. Hannan questions in English, she usually responds to them in Spanish. At the end of one class session, Mrs. Hannan described to me her struggles to inhibit English-use amongst her students: "You can see I spend a lot of time telling them to speak in Spanish. It's a major problem here." In fact, teachers in the program spend so much time demanding "*En Español* [In Spanish!]" that the phrase has become a joke amongst students. I observed a group of three Latina girls working together out of their textbook in the hallway outside of the classroom. One girl shouted "damn!" and her friend laughingly responded, "*En Español, por favor* [In Spanish, please!]" One class session, I even observed Mrs. Mowen make light of her own strict Spanish-only rule: At the beginning of the period, she grabbed a can of rulers and proclaimed (in Spanish), "I have rulers, if I hear English being spoken, I'll have to smack you with a ruler." While Mrs. Mowen feigned punishment for the use of English, Mrs. Hannan actually enacted punitive measures in her classrooms. Some days, she allowed her students to choose their own seats next to their friends. Yet every time she heard a student speak English during class time, she drew a mark on the board. Once she reached three marks, she forced students to return to their required seats, according to a seating chart. Mrs. Hannan made several threats related to English-use; during one class session, for example, she warned students that if she heard any English, she would immediately collect their assignments and grade the unfinished work.

While attempting to curb English-use amongst her students, Mrs. Hannan simultaneously permits some forms of English use in her classrooms. Occasionally, she responds in English to students' inquiries, particularly during one-on-one conversations. She also periodically uses English to clarify a concept or explain complicated assignments. For example, when attempting to describe the differences between the words *estar* and *ser*, Mrs. Hannan repeated her explanation in English "for those students that don't speak Spanish in their homes." On a different occasion, Mrs. Hannan transitioned to English when students loudly complained about performing poorly on a quiz: "I am frustrated, so I need to speak in English. You all know that I am fair. I always throw out one or two questions because I know that sometimes I have a different answer than you all. You know that I'm not a crazy teacher. When I have been crazy?" She also oftentimes used Spanglish herself, making statements such as "*tienes tres changes* [you have three changes]" or "*eso es un gamechanger* [That is a gamechanger]." Mrs. Hannan's intermittent use and tolerance of English in her classroom may contribute to her difficulty with enforcing the Spanish-only requirement of the program. Furthermore, her classroom's strict Spanish-only policy was also disrupted many times during my observational period by the use of a substitute teacher in the classrooms – a middle-aged White woman. While the substitute spoke Spanish fairly well, she did not enforce the Spanish-only requirement amongst the students. Students seemed to equate the substitute teacher with lax language enforcement, as they immediately began speaking in English upon entering the classroom and realizing that Mrs. Hannan was absent for the day.

Mrs. Mowen's White students in her twelfth grade DLI class also prefer to speak English over Spanish and regularly do so during informal interactions and conversations with each other. Yet Mrs. Mowen enforces the Spanish-only policy to a much greater degree – speaking

exclusively in Spanish 100% of the time, never engaging in Spanglish herself, refusing to respond to students' statements of questions in English, and interrupting students' informal conversations to demand "*En Español*!" Her strict adherence to Spanish use results in a much greater amount of Spanish communication amongst inter-personal interactions in her classroom.

Ballinger and Lyster (2011) note that it is important to contemplate the impact of the overall language environment within the school itself, as well as the city or town surrounding the school, when attempting to explain students' language preferences. Students' English preference in the DLI classrooms at LHS may be the result of the fact that they are still immersed in a predominantly English environment. The majority of their school day – outside of the DLI classroom walls - is spent communicating in the English language. The DLI class is just one out of four (or sometimes seven) classes that they take every day. Furthermore, the Latino population at LHS constitutes a rather small percentage – 12% - of the overall student population, and the Spanish language is marginalized in most other school settings as well – hallways, the cafeteria, and extracurricular activities. In the greater context of the town of Lancaster as well, the public language of the community is overwhelmingly English. The students in the DLI program seem aware that English is the language of power and authority in all settings outside of the DLI classrooms (and Spanish is considered illegitimate). This suggests that while DLI programs are notable for their attempts to legitimize minority languages, their effectiveness in doing so is limited by the language domination of larger contexts.

The dual language immersion model is viewed as one of the most propitious educational programs for creating multicultural spaces that meet the needs of language minority and language majority students. Literature has shown that DLI can help students raise test scores (Thomas and Collier 2012), foster a bicultural identity (Palmer 2009), graduate high school and

enroll in college (Lindholm-Leary and Borsato 2001), and acquire the English language more effectively (Quintanar-Sarellana 2004). My interviews and observations at LHS confirm that this type of educational program provides many benefits and advantages to their students. The DLI program has reduced ESL instruction and decreased drop outs; bolstered the Latino community at the school; encouraged inter-student solidarity and community; decreased racism and discrimination; promoted an understanding of Latino culture, history, and issues; aided in the maintenance of the Spanish language; connected students to better job opportunities; and disrupted the English monolingual standard so embedded in American society.

Yet scholars have made several cautionary insights regarding DLI programs as well, noting several problems and issues that remain unsolved. By definition, DLI programs must address the needs of two groups of students that have diverging interests in the program. Language majority students – aware of the high value of Spanish in the world of business, law, politics, and healthcare – attempt to acquire a non-English language. Language minority students, on the other hand, strive for educational survival and success by learning in their first language "and with a school context in which Spanish is more valued than it is in the majority society" (Valdes 1997:413). Educators must integrate these two groups that diverge linguistically, as well as in their social status and resources (Cervantes-Soon 2014). Scholars have noted that this complex multicultural environment breeds inequality and power imbalances amongst the students in the classroom: Oftentimes, English reigns as the language of power and status (Ballinger and Lyster 2011; Palmer 2009), English-speaking students dominate classroom discourse (Palmer 2009; Valdes 1997), Spanish-speaking students' linguistic resources are undervalued by a 'dumming down' of their language (McCollum 1999; Valdes 1997), and English speakers become the main beneficiaries of the program. The DLI program at LHS

experiences some of these power issues, as well as other problems in program structure and content, school-wide awareness, and support. As noted in the previous chapter, although the multicultural model of DLI education promotes cultural pluralism and diversity, in practice, this oftentimes equates to a re-inscription of racial and class hierarchies, as in the LHS case. Ultimately, these conclusions suggest that while DLI programs can be powerful programs for improving the educational experiences of both majority language speakers and minority language speakers, we must turn a critical eye to the implementation of such programs. As Palmer (2010) claims:

> We must explicitly examine issues of race and their impact on language programs, and we must explicitly work to develop ways to better serve speakers of both minority languages and dialects of English within enrichment bilingual programs to ensure equitable access to a powerful bilingual education to all members of our community. [110]

Valdes (1997) also introduces a significant critical question regarding the classroom dynamics of DLI or TWI programs: How do DLI programs affect interethnic relations? Do they indeed foster intergroup communication and solidarity, or do discriminatory practices and segregation exist internally as well? Furthermore, does this focus on interethnic communication extend outward to mainstream classrooms? How do teachers and students in the larger school context regard the Latino community at the school? In the following chapter, I address some of these questions as I examine interethnic relationships in the Dual Language Immersion classrooms at LHS, as well as in the broader school community. One of the goals of multicultural education is the development of cross-cultural understanding (Ulichny 1996), and I explore to what extent this occurs at Lancaster High School.

Chapter Six: Interethnic Relationships in the School Context

Multicultural Education and Interethnic Relationships amongst Students

As U.S. minority populations increasingly live in close proximity to each other, schools are experiencing ethnic enclaving once again, reversing the trend toward desegregation that the 1970s and early 80s promoted (Ulichny 1996). Clement and Harding (1978) report that even legally desegregated schools in the U.S. still retain patterns of informal segregation forbidden at the formal level. In their study of desegregated public elementary school in North Carolina, the authors find that student friendship groups at the school are segregated by social race. While the students amiably interact with students of other ethnicities, the category "friend" is largely restricted to those of their same social race group. Scholars have shown that even youth in schools across the globe mirror ethnic divisions in larger society by segregating themselves along ethnic lines (Smith et al. 2014). In a survey of thousands of adolescents in schools across England, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden, Smith et al. (2014) found that the teenagers exhibit ethnic homophily – or a preference to befriend same ethnic peers.

As societies become more and more diverse, proponents of multicultural education in the United States point to the necessity for increased understanding across racial and ethnic groups (Ulichny 1996). Advocates assert that the multicultural model serves as an effective solution for segregation, discrimination, and hostility, claiming that the model facilitates tolerance and appreciation of difference (Ulichny 1996). Yet some scholars have cautioned that on the ground, the multicultural model may not, in fact, alleviate ethnic and racial tensions; in some cases, the model even aggravates conflict (Lustig 1997; Ulichny 1996). In her ethnography of an urban school, for example, Ulichny (1996) found that despite multicultural reforms in the school, students exhibited a separation into groups by ethnicity in the lunchroom, hallways, and after-

school activities. African-American students complained that teachers favor Latino students, whereas Latino and Haitian students claimed that African American students "dissed" their languages and foreign statuses.

Similarly, in her study of an inner-city California high school with large African-American and Latino student populations, Lustig (1997) discovered interethnic norms of indifference, self-segregation, and even violence and hostility amidst a multicultural agenda. During a Cinco de Mayo assembly, for example, many African-American students refused to stand up for the singing of the Mexican national anthem, "largely from apathy" (Lustig 1997:581). Lustig argues that this segregation and cross-cultural indifference can be in part attributed to administrators' and faculty's portrayal of cultural events as only for students of that culture, in isolation from other groups. Ultimately, Lustig finds that the school, like most, enacts a superficial form of multiculturalism, simply adding multicultural events and heroes, such as food fairs and costume shows. This token multiculturalism actually exacerbates tensions by encapsulating ethnicities. Nieto (2010) also warns of this essentializing and romanticizing tendency: "Multicultural education without critique may result in cultures remaining at the romantic or exotic stage" (257). Nieto claims that multicultural programs should not merely *tolerate* difference, but encourage affirmation, solidarity and critique. Lustig, Ulichny, and Nieto do not advocate for an abandoning of multicultural education ideology, but rather its transformation into a system that aggressively explores "societal patterns of discrimination and inequality that are based on class, race, and place of origin" (Ulichny 1996:343).

Interethnic Relationships in Dual Language Immersion Classrooms

As part of the multicultural education initiative, one of the goals of dual language immersion programs is to encourage interethnic communication. According to Christian (1996), there are eight criteria that are necessary to the success of DLI programs, one of which concerns intergroup relations: "Positive interactions among students should be facilitated by the use of strategies such as cooperative learning" (68). DLI programs have been praised for embodying multicultural ethics of cultural pluralism and cross-cultural interaction and communication, as they bring together majority and minority children in one classroom (usually following the 50% / 50% model) (Cazabon et al. 1993; Valdes 1997). Valdes notes that this demographic structure has significant benefits in a U.S. society that fosters residential and linguistic segregation. Traditional English language education oftentimes amplifies this partition, as minority language speakers are placed in ESL classes away from majority students, thus producing a cultural tracking system in which minority students are viewed as second-class citizens (Valenzuela 1999). Valdes claims that in DLI programs, "the presence of children from two groups ends the linguistic isolation in which minority children find themselves" (412). In their progress report on the Amigos Two-Way bilingual education program in Massachusetts, Cazabon et al. (1993) note that the third-grade children formed friendships with each other in an "ethnic-blind and color-blind random fashion. In other words, the third graders chose individuals, not members of particular ethnic or racial groups" (22).

Yet Valdes (1997) also provides a cautionary note regarding interethnic relationships in DLI classrooms. She states, "Majority children bring to their interactions with less privileged peers a mixed bag of attitudes and feelings. … We know little about what impact mainstream children's original attitudes have on minority children with whom they interact" (1997:417).

Valdes warns that these DLI spaces are potentially dangerous experiments in this sense, as majority children may carry with them into the school context damaging prejudices and stigmas of the minority culture from external society. In her ethnographic study of a DLI elementary school in Texas, Freeman (1996) found that though the students all seem to accommodate diversity and cooperate in class, they exhibit ethnic and class divisions in their social interactions at the school: Dark-skinned Latinas sit apart from light-skinned Latinas, and African American anglophones remain somewhat separate from White Euro-American anglophones. This seems to suggest that despite program personnel's best efforts to construct alternative practices, the mainstream U.S. societal discourse of ethnic / class hierarchies and segregation prevails in these spaces: "Because the norms are distinct in the two discourse worlds, leakage between the ideal plan and actual outcomes is to be expected" (Freeman 1996:579).

Forming Interethnic Friendships in Dual Language Immersion Classrooms at LHS

My findings of the DLI program at LHS confirm scholarship that indicates the potential for relationship-building between minority and majority students in DLI classrooms. Students in the DLI program seem willing to reach across ethnic divides and form friendships with students of other ethnicities. In all three DLI classrooms, I observed many of the students engaging in playful interactions with each other, such as stealing hats, taking sips out of each other's drinks, hitting each other on the head, or offering each other hair ties. Some of the students' closest friends in the classroom are evidently students of other ethnicities, as they sit next to them during 'free time' and converse mostly with these students. Much interethnic communication revolves around language assistance; oftentimes, White English speakers ask Latino Spanish speakers how to translate words from English to Spanish, such as "loyal" or "effort." Sometimes the assistance goes much further, with Latino students spending considerable time helping White

students read a passage from a novel, or complete an assignment. Remarkably, there is no shaming of English speakers that have limited knowledge of the Spanish language. Alice, for example, evidently struggled to give responses in Spanish during discussions, oftentimes speaking slowly and making several grammatical errors. Not one student giggled or ridiculed Alice during these times; in fact, some of the Spanish-speaking students jumped to her rescue with the correct pronunciation or word on these occasions.

I also observed touching examples of interethnic solidarity beyond language assistance. During one class period, Mrs. Hannan's class read and analyzed a poem titled "*El Perro Ha Muerto* [The Dog Has Died]." After she passed out copies of the poem to each student, a White girl shouted, "Ms. Hannan! Manuel does not have a paper! He doesn't have a poem!" The girl served as voice for Manuel, who was a new student that had just entered the class the previous day. On another occasion, I observed a conversation between Amy and Mrs. Hannan, as students began working in small groups on an assignment. Amy complained to Mrs. Hannan that there was no one left to work with, and Mrs. Hannan told her to approach a group of three Latina students, claiming "now there is new blood, someone different." Amy responded, "We are all blood brothers." These moments of interethnic unity occurred regularly in all of the DLI classrooms during my three-month observational period.

The interethnic solidarity I observed during classroom activities was bolstered and confirmed by students' responses in interviews. When I asked students if they can relate to students of other ethnicities in the DLI classrooms, almost all responded in the affirmative. Many of the students – both Latinos and Whites - believe that the common experience of bilingualism connects them to the other students in the class. Tomás remarked, "I feel like we're not really that much apart. You know, we have some cultural background differences, but we all grew up at

the same time, so we can talk about this song if it's in Spanish or English." For Tomás, the connection between the students derives from both their bilingualism and the fact that they were raised together. Natalia claimed:

> I think especially with those that have been in the program since like kindergarten. You can see it's easier to relate to them, because they know Spanish and they know English like me. Experiences that they've had, I've had them. But people that haven't spoken Spanish that much, I mean it's okay, but it's not like the same type of connection.

Natalia's connection with the White students in the class not only stems from their similar bilingual abilities, but also the White students' knowledge of Spanish. Juan made a similar statement: "I think it definitely helps that we both speak Spanish. … I think we get along because of it." From these students' statements, it is evident that language plays a large role in forming and sustaining inter-personal ties.

Beyond language, an understanding of culture is crucial to the creation of interethnic solidarity and community. Becca described the significance of cultural awareness and appreciation:

> We've moved past learning a language and now we're learning more about the culture. We'll have like Mexican parties. … It's really fun because clearly we're very different. We have our Whites and we have our Latinos in our class. But we don't feel like that anymore - like we've overlapped traditions rather than just languages.

Becca emphasizes that forming connections with her Latino classmates is not merely dependent on learning their language, but also learning their culture, and significantly, *participating* in their traditions. Monica also referenced the importance of actively engaging in cultural activities, such as cooking and consuming "authentic Mexican dinners" in their homes. She spoke of the value of classroom parties that combine elements of their two cultures: "Whenever we have parties, there's a lot of Mexican food and then there's pudding from my parents." Tomás also mentioned

that during these parties, the Latinos will start to salsa dance, and “[the Whites] are not like ‘oh, what’s that,’ because they’ve seen it before.” For Tomás, the White students’ familiarity with cultural traditions and activities such as salsa is a relief; he is able to perform his own identity without being judged or misunderstood – a rare occurrence when one is an ethnic minority amongst a school full of majority students. In the following dialogue, Monica describes the moment when she realized her own understanding of Mexican culture:

> We watched a George Lopez skit the beginning of this year. And a lot of people don’t get George Lopez, because a lot of it is Mexican-American humor. It’s a lot about Chicano culture. And when we watched it, and we all laughed together. I felt kind of proud at the end of it because I got a lot of the jokes, and it was a lot about growing up here. Obviously I hadn’t had that experience, but I could get it, and it was a really funny skit. I showed it to my mom, and she didn’t really get half of it. I mean, she was like “this is funny, but I don’t know why.” So that was kind of a cool moment, to be like wow, we really connected with our cultures.

Monica’s ability to understand and participate in jokes regarding the Chicano lifestyle and experience lends credence to the notion that the DLI program at LHS is engendering cross-cultural understanding, awareness, and cohesion.

Indeed, several of the White students feel so connected to Latino culture through their participation in the DLI program that they consider themselves *bicultural*, not just bilingual. For example, Becca made the following comment about the 50 / 50 split in the classroom between Latino and White students: “The overlap is actually really interesting, because it makes us more bicultural rather than just bilingual.” Interestingly, while many of the Latino immigrants in the class remarked on their own bicultural identities (see chapter three), Becca includes herself (with the word “us”) in this category as well. Monica also referenced herself as bicultural in her interview, claiming that the DLI program has transformed her identity: “I definitely think [the program] has influenced my biculturalism and how I see the world. You know, I want to fight for social justice in these specific areas, since it’s close to me.” Monica went even further to declare

herself more *Latino* through her participation in the DLI program. During one of my observations, the class began discussing the new Spanish club that Monica had helped create. Mrs. Mowen asked if there are a lot of Latinos in the club, and Monica responded, “Yes, us three” [referring to herself and two other Latinos]. The class erupted in laughter, as Monica flashed a big smile. Monica’s joke seemed humorous to the students in the classroom, as Monica’s ‘Whiteness’ is very apparent. Yet a conversation with Tomás about identity during a later interview revealed that Monica’s comment may not have been entirely ludicrous:

> Tomás: It’s kinda like in-between, like Chicano. That’s what I would identify myself as.
>
> Hayden: What does Chicano mean?
>
> Tomás: Having your parents’ culture in the background, as support, and growing on the culture that you are living in. … Going in depth, it’s two cultures but those two cultures make up that one culture, make up Chicano culture.
>
> Hayden: What makes a person Chicano, and what makes a person not Chicano? Would Monica be considered a Chicano because she’s in that classroom with two different cultures?
>
> Tomás: Hmmm, I don’t know. [laughs]. I don’t think she would be considered Chicano, but she still has like that culture of it. Like she understands it. She’s not like “Oh, I’m White.” It’s kind of like she is, but she isn’t. Because she’s been like with us through all of it. And she’s learned some of our culture, but at home she hasn’t experienced any of that culture, you know?
>
> Hayden: Right. So technically she’s not…
>
> Tomás: But she kind of is!

Tomás clearly struggles to categorize Monica – a White girl with a deep awareness of Latino culture, values, and struggles – under one ethnicity. To him, Monica is not White, but “kind of” Chicano. Her understanding of his culture allows her some access to the Chicano experience, yet her home life and her parents’ own identities as White bar her from claiming a

Chicano identity. His comments speak to the sometimes limited and inoperative nature of ethnic categories. Yet they also indicate the effectiveness of the DLI program in engendering cross-cultural understanding and empathy. This thought is inspirational, yet one must remain cautionary: It could be problematic for students of other ethnicities to claim a Latino or Chicano identity, as this has the potential to appropriate an ethnic group's sense of self and community.

A Classroom Divided?

Although the students in the DLI classrooms at LHS are willing to reach across ethnic boundaries to communicate, interact, and assist, there still exists an ethnic divide in the classrooms, as in Freeman's study (1996). This partition manifests clearly in the seating patterns of the students. In Mrs. Mowen's class, the White students sit together on the right side of the room, while the Latino students congregate on the left side of the room. This separation even translates to environments outside of the classroom: During class sessions held in the computer lab, students mimic their classroom seating patterns, choosing to sit in rows with those of their ethnicity. Mrs. Mowen's students seem very aware of their ethnic differences and even make jokes concerning their separate identities. When the students split up into small groups for an in-class activity, for example, I overheard a group of three Latinas laughingly proclaim, "We should have at least one White girl in our group!" Sally echoed this distinction during an interview, claiming that "the White girls in the class are especially close. That's what we call ourselves."

The students in Mrs. Hannan's two DLI classrooms exhibit a slightly more pronounced divide along ethnic lines. Although Mrs. Hannan originally placed the students in a seating chart that was relatively ethnically inter-mixed, oftentimes she permits students to move to seats of their choosing to work on small-group assignments. In these cases, students almost universally elect to sit beside and work with students of their own ethnicities. When some form of

intermingling exists, it is usually within already established friend groups. For example, when a new Latino student entered Mrs. Hannan's classroom and was allowed to choose his own seat, he immediately sat next to another Latino boy.

In interviews, students attributed this partition to the friendships they formed years ago. Monica explained,

> Yeah, I don't know how that spread out. I think it's mostly just like sitting with your best friends. But um, I mean there's a little bit of a cultural divide, because we definitely have different backgrounds, but it's kind of weird because the years before, we've just been completely intermixed. So I think, you know, there's like fifteen kids in the class, and we all have our little best friends. So umm…it's kind of weird that we're not together.

While it may be true that the students merely sit next to their close friends, it is interesting to note that these friendships themselves originally formed along ethnic lines as well. Most of the students in the DLI classes have been in the same classrooms together since kindergarten, and they evidently became close friends with those of their *own* ethnicity over the years, and not those of *other* ethnicities.

In her response, Monica questioned her classmates' current separation in their seating, claiming that they were much more blended in past years. In an interview, Mrs. Mowen explained the divergence in patterns: This year, she finally allowed her twelfth grade students to choose their own seats; in years past, she constructed a seating chart, and always placed a native English speaker next to a native Spanish speaker. Thus, the students' true preference was finally realized in their senior year, when they independently elected to remain within ethnic boundaries. Interestingly, Mrs. Mowen noted that her students' degree of interethnic blending has varied over the years:

> I have definitely noticed that since I first met them in the eighth grade, they've gone through some waves. Eighth grade they were very separated. I mean like the Mexican kids were Mexican, and the White kids were White. And they really

> were not very good at mixing. It wasn't any animosity or anything, it was just I think where they were comfortable. And in the ninth grade, they totally all came back together and just clung to each other because they came to high school, and it was like I know you from kindergarten. And I think they knew many, and embraced the familiarity they had with each other. And then sophomore year, it kind of started to even out, and I would say junior year was pretty even. And senior year, I'm starting to notice a little more of a divide again.

It is somewhat troubling that in their final year of high school – just before they move on to college or enter the workforce – the students are beginning to separate once again. This disconcerting observation complicates the DLI program goal of cross-cultural communication and challenges the ability of the program to engender sustained ethnic integration and transformation. Like Freeman's results (1996), these findings suggest that the DLI students carry with them into the program norms of ethnic segregation from mainstream societal discourse, and these ideologies seem particularly entrenched in the students' minds and behavioral patterns.

Interethnic Divisions in the Larger LHS Student Body

The DLI classrooms at LHS are largely ethnically integrated, yet still evidently retain some issues with sustained and in-depth cross-cultural communication. This disconnect, however, is amplified to a considerable extent in the broader LHS community. In the general school, there seems to exist a massive divide between the Latino students and those of other ethnicities. In hallways, meetings areas, and study hall sessions, the students remain within ethnic boundaries for many interactions and communications. The cafeteria – a large space that offers substantial opportunities for interethnic interaction – presents the clearest picture of this divide between students: The Latino students are sectioned off from the rest of the lunchroom community in several tables. The students seem very cognizant of this ethnic segregation, making several references to it in interviews. Fernando stated, "Sometimes I'll be in the lunch area eating with Mexican guys. And all the desks is Mexican. There will not be any Whites there.

We have a bunch of Mexican dudes and every time we use three tables. It's like we're separate." Juan also mentioned the cafeteria as a major symbol of the school's segregation:

> I think there's something dividing us. … I really don't know what it is. I see it because when I go to lunch, I sit on the senior steps. And it's like I'm the only Mexican there. And then the rest are in the cafeteria in their own groups.

While Juan clearly struggles to find the impetus behind the ethnic divide, other students hold various hypotheses about its source. Rachel believes that language plays a large role, claiming that she naturally gravitated toward largely White English speakers in kindergarten because she could play with them and talk to them: "It was just kind of comfort level of dominant language, I think." Alice pointed to a cultural gap between the Latino students and those of other ethnicities: "I think it's easier when you make friends, you kind of tend to identify with your own culture, with those people of your own ethnicity. Just based on common interests." Interestingly, many of the White students placed the responsibility for the division on the Latino students' shoulders. Becca, for example, stated, "It's not like the other kids backing away from the Latinos. It's just that they're all together, so they identify together, and then so we're a different group." Rachel agreed: "I would even say that they kind of separate themselves." And Monica provided a similar comment: "I feel like a lot of the Latino kids at our school kinda stick together." In this sense, these students portray the Latino students as perpetrators of the ethnic divide, and the White students as victims, to some extent. In her book *The Everyday Language of White Racism*, Jane Hill (2008) explains that the idea that prejudice is natural is part of a folk theory that "invites Whites to focus, no on their own practices, but on those of their victims" (7).

However, a few of the White students acknowledge that the mainstream culture is perhaps culpable to some extent for neglecting to provide a welcoming, open environment for

other students. Monica added, “I think it’s also a defense mechanism against the mainstream culture that doesn’t really understand and is definitely focused on other things.” And Alice commented, “They’re a minority group, and we have a really White school. I understand why you would want to stick together.” These girls seem aware that the unequal demographic structure of the school may contribute to the Latino students’ feelings of isolation and separation.

In a similar vein, some of the students even fault LHS as an institution for this disconnect. Monica, for example, discussed the disproportionate amount of resources that are available to the mainstream, privileged students: “I feel like there is a lot of attention paid to kids who are doing great, and there's not a lot to those that are like falling behind or not necessarily part of that giant group.” Mrs. Mowen also explicitly views the school as responsible:

> I can't put that on the kids. I mean, it's not the kids. I think it’s a big absence of modeling. I just think that they don't see it. It's not already built into the student body and it's NOT built into the staff, and it's not built into the community of Lancaster. They just don't see this model of pride and of being able to stand out as Mexican or stand out as Latino or stand out as brown, but also be a part of the whole community. … You look at the cultural majority, the White kids who are here, who I guess kind of live the status quo of the Lancaster lifestyle. I think partly they’re not interested because they’re not really aware and there’s nothing making them really aware that like this is here, this is right here in your school.

Mrs. Mowen recognizes that there is no institutional model of ethnic communication and solidarity for the students to reference. Although it is unclear who takes on the perpetrator role in this phenomenon and who occupies the position of the victim – the White students, the Latino students, or the high school institution - the fact remains that there is a large visible gap between the Latinos in the school and people of other ethnicities.

The Invisibility of the Latino Community

Mrs. Mowen's above comment also sheds light on another related issue – the invisibility of the Latino community in the school. Walking around the high school, it is very apparent that

the faculty community is somewhat homogenous. Particularly noticeable is that the head faculty are largely White, whereas Latinos oftentimes occupy supportive roles for students with disabilities, for example (though Mrs. Mowen is half Costa Rican, and the assistant principal is purportedly half-Latina). The Latino students are aware of this faculty homogeneity, as many of them addressed it during interviews and expressed its ‘strangeness.’ Tomás stated, “All of our teachers since kindergarten have been White. … So it kind of throws us off. I think it’s kind of weird, like, oh why don’t we have one?” A few of the White students in the DLI program even made references in interviews to the lack of diverse teachers at LHS. Alice, for example, related a story to me about the recent hire of a new principal of LHS. Mrs. Mowen's class interviewed several candidates for the position, and Alice posed the following question to one of them: “How do you plan to deal with the increasingly diverse student body when you have no diversity in the teaching staff?”

Mrs. Mowen discussed the challenges of finding a remedy for this problem, explaining that “you can’t go around firing people because they’re White, and you can’t hire Latino people if they’re not there.” Although the principal and assistant principal of LHS are actively attempting to diversify the staff, Latino teachers are simply not applying to schools in Lancaster. The reason, according to Mrs. Mowen, is that Lancaster is not an accessible, open community for people of other ethnicities:

> What Latino guy or what Latina woman wants to come teach high school here? If you don’ t have another reason to be here, if you’re not here for some reason related to the university or something, why would you come here? It’s *not* a welcoming community for Latinos!

Mrs. Mowen extends the division between Latinos and students of other ethnicities within LHS to the broader community of Lancaster itself, which she labels a “bubble.”

The town of Lancaster and LHS maintain a reputation of being culturally-aware and progressive. While this is certainly true in some respects (and indeed, the very existence of the DLI program and the informed and open administration at LHS are proof), several of the students deconstructed this image in interviews, using the apparent ethnic divide amongst students as counter-evidence. Monica explained,

> I think a lot of people here like to think they are very open-minded and they are very accepting of different cultures and they want to be the nicest person ever. And of course they care about Chicano culture [stated sarcastically]. But I don't think anyone would go necessarily seek it out.

Alice agreed: "Our school is supposed to be the nicest people ever, like a really nice school. … No one is just outright rude to people, but I think sometimes there's a little stigma around, especially if you're not conforming to our culture or something." When I asked Mrs. Mowen about Lancaster's purported welcoming, culturally-open, tolerant attitude, she replied,

> That's probably White people saying that about other White people. I mean I've never felt that here, and I think that the Latino students totally feel segregated in this community, in and outside the school. I think it's just not a community where we have that kind of interweaving. … I think minority communities in Lancaster in general tend to be really invisible. Not just by color and not just culture, you know like black people, brown people. Those cultures are pretty invisible, but also poverty, homelessness, those cultures are really invisible in Lancaster. My experience is that in places where race relations really exist, people are comfortable talking about them, and the communication exists. So I don't know if it's that it's new in Lancaster, or it hasn't ever been established in Lancaster, but it's as if those relations don't exist. You know, it's as if there's a sort of parallel existence, but there's no mixing. And so people I think don't even know how to talk about being from a different culture, different language, different color, different race, different nationality.

Mrs. Mowen's observation that the purported cross-cultural communication in the city is perhaps surface-level is further evidenced by the spatial segregation of minorities in the city. The minority communities in Lancaster are largely isolated in the southern part of the city, which is effectively a food desert with few grocery stores and restaurants. This geographic segregation

may contribute to the lack of communication, and thus, true race relations between minority and majority populations in Lancaster, and would be an important topic for future research.

The 'Othering' of the Latino Community and Culture

Some of the Latino immigrant students in the DLI program feel that other students go beyond mere ignorance of their community and actually hold negative stigmas of their people and culture. They claim that the predominant perception of Latino students at the school is that they perform poorly academically. Juan stated, "I see all of us with a lot of potential, but some us just aren't able to reach that potential for one reason or another. And I feel like that's how a lot of people see us." As described in chapter three, Juan is often called "White Mexican" by his peers, because of his interests and activities in two cultural spheres. Here, he mentions another reason why this nickname was coined:

> I feel like especially here at the school, just being in higher level classes is just referred to as like 'oh, you're too White. You're just too up there to be Mexican.' It's like no, I just like learning and want to challenge myself and not stay in basic classes. Which there's nothing wrong with that. I just think it's kind of funny how like being in upper level classes, I'm referred to as White.

Some of the students that use this nickname for Juan evidently equate 'Whiteness' with high academic performance and 'Mexicanness' with lower level academics, and Juan recognizes that this conceptualization is problematic.

Both Natalia and Gabriela referenced the same stigma. Natalia declared, "From what I've seen, some people think of us like 'oh, they don't really try in school.' They don't really think highly of us." Similarly, Gabriela described experiences of isolation and ridicule in her classrooms for being 'different':

> Sometimes I hear people saying jokes about our culture and their information is wrong. I mean, in the classes I have, you can see that I am the minority. For Anatomy, we only have three Latinas in there. And Sally is in the bilingual

> program, but the rest are Whites. Sometimes I feel like I am afraid of speaking up what I think, because people don't even listen to what I have to say. I feel like in a lot of classes, I get along with my teachers and everything, I just think some students just ignore or block you out of the way of how you are, just cause they see that you are different. I hear comments and see people laughing at me when I try to give my answer. I've always liked to ask if I need help. Even if I get it, I just want to confirm the information I have. And a lot of people just say "you ask the bad questions." … Around the students, I just think it's generation after generation.

Gabriela's profession that she feels belittled by some of her classmates in "a lot" of her classes signifies that this may be a regular occurrence. She seems very aware of her minority status in most of her classes and articulates an understanding of the process of 'othering' based on difference. Interestingly, Gabriela also seems knowledgeable about the transmission of such prejudice from generation to generation.

Though from these conversations, it appears that the Latino students at LHS are stigmatized to some degree, they experience low levels of blatant racism and discrimination at the school. Some of the students view LHS as much more tolerant than other high schools. Tomás, for example, stated that his cousin transferred to LHS after being called a racial slur at her old school. Though none of the Latino students I interviewed have experienced brazen acts of racism or discrimination such as name-calling, a few of the students related subtle instances of bigotry, such as Gabriela with her above story. Natalia, for example, described an event in her mainstream World Literature class her junior year that made her feel "kind of bad about where [she] came from." Each student in the class was required to write a research paper on a problem in society and then present their paper to the classroom. One young man's presentation discussed Latinos 'taking away jobs' from Whites. Natalia describes her response:

> Me and my friends, four people, were the only Latino people in that class. I never say anything usually when there's a lot of Caucasians. In this class [Mrs. Mowen's 12th grade DLI class] I would say something, but in another class I'm just whatever. You can think what you want to think. It was funny because in that

> class, another kid raised his hand and was like, "Well, that's not true. I don't think your parents want to work in the fields, do they?" And the other guy was like "Oh, well, umm, uhhh." He didn't know what to say. And people were like "Oh that's true!" And it kind of made me feel better. So yeah, I guess I have [experienced discrimination] a few certain times with certain people. Not with a general big group of people, not really. With certain people, they're kind of picky, or they don't really like people who speak Spanish, but I ignore them.

Natalia's account raises several important points: Firstly, she evidently feels silenced in most of her classes, where she is the minority in a White-dominant demographic. Alternatively, the DLI classrooms give Natalia (and presumably other minority students) a voice by which she can express resistance, critique, or discontent of distorted or unequitable classroom discourse. Secondly, the interethnic solidarity that Natalia experienced after the student's discriminatory comment is significant. Although the remark itself constitutes discrimination, *many more* students in the classroom contested the young man's statement, indicating that they have internalized an awareness of cultural difference and even structural power issues. And indeed, Natalia confirms that she has experienced discrimination at the hands of certain individuals, yet not from the majority of the student body at LHS.

Teacher –Student Interethnic Relationships in Dual Language Immersion Classrooms

Interethnic relationships between students at LHS vary to a great extent: Some are amiable and close-knit (a greater likelihood in DLI classrooms), while others are tenuous and strained (more prevalent in mainstream classrooms). Interethnic interactions between students and their teachers also fluctuate across DLI and mainstream classrooms. The two DLI teachers – Mrs. Mowen and Mrs. Hannan – exhibit strong bonds with their Latino students, in both their formal / scholastic interactions and their unofficial communications.

Latino Migration and Education scholars have professed the importance of examining teachers' behavior and treatment of their Latino students in relation to the other students in the

class (DeJaeghere and McCleary 2010; Patthey-Chavez and Genevieve 1993; Valenzuela 1999). In their research, these scholars analyzed such things as the teachers' language and terminology use in reference to their Latino students, their pronunciation of the students' names, their classroom rules, and how they presented curriculum content related to Latin America. They observed teachers mispronouncing Latino students' names, disregarding their questions and opinions during classroom discussions, and glossing over the U.S.'s historical connection to Mexico. Through actions such as these, the teachers in their studies undervalue the Latino students' personhoods and culture, as they attempt to strip them of their cultural identities and voice. Ultimately, the teachers in these studies employ a broader ideology of Americanization to push students toward White, European-American values and identities.

My observations of the DLI teachers at LHS contradict these findings. Both Mrs. Hannan and Mrs. Mowen exhibit tenacious commitments to their Latino students' academic success. In their scholastic interactions with their students, the teachers pay substantial attention to both White and Latino students (and even sometimes focused their efforts on the Latinos). While students worked quietly on assignments, I observed both teachers giving individual assistance to each student in the classroom regardless of ethnicity, sometimes spending large amounts of time with students that required sustained support. For example, while students were writing in-class essays one day, I observed Mrs. Mowen spend ten minutes with Gabriela explaining the concept of a 'thesis statement.' Furthermore, the teachers make notable attempts to counteract the English-speaking students' dominance of classroom discourse by bypassing the most vocal English-speaking students to call on Spanish-speaking students, or gently cutting English-speaking students' tangential monologues short. On several occasions, for example, Mrs. Hannan directly encouraged her Spanish-speaking students to speak up ("*Quiero oir de los estudiantes*

que hablan Español muy bien [I want to hear from the students that speak Spanish very well"]) during classroom discussions about complex meanings of words and phrases, thus signifying the significance and value of *their* voices in particular. In her study of DLI teachers in a Northern California primary school, Palmer (2009) finds that the "exceptional teacher" balances the 'linguistic market' within the classroom; she rebuffs those English-speaking students that monopolize classroom dialogue and thus creates an equitable learning environment. Mrs. Hannan and Mrs. Mowen similarly ensure that *all* students contribute to classroom discussions, even those with shy demeanors, and thus participate in the academic life of their learning environment.

Furthermore, as discussed in chapter five, the teachers in the DLI program devote substantial classroom time to the study of the geographies, linguistics, histories, and social landscapes of Spanish-speaking peoples in other countries and in the U.S., and thus academically invest in and explore the Latino students' own histories. Topics of study in Mrs. Mowen's classroom include regionalism, geography, evolutionary linguistics, and history of the colonies; peninsular literature and Latin American literature; Chicano history and bilingual communities in the U.S; and the history of Mexico and the U.S. Mrs. Mowen explained:

> Through the academic stuff, I think they have had a big awareness of who they are in this society and in this moment in history. You know, what their personal histories are, not just themselves as individual students, but their personal histories going back through their parents and grandparents and ancestors. And then I think we've done a lot of work in class to dispel stereotypes about what it is to be Latino or Latina or to be brown or to be bilingual.

Through such curriculum focus on her Latino students' backgrounds, histories, and identities, Mrs. Mowen counteracts the paucity of such content in mainstream classrooms and demonstrates a deep commitment to equitable and unbiased education. Freeman (1996) found the same curriculum emphasis on minority contributions in her study of a DLI elementary school. There,

teachers encourage students "to look critically at representations of different groups in the curriculum content and to relate their own lived experiences to the various constructions of history that they read about in school" (573). Freeman argues that these attempts reflect the program's efforts to elevate the subordinate status of minority languages and social identities. I would argue the same for the DLI program at LHS.

Scholars have also discussed the importance of teachers employing pedagogies of caring in their interactions with Latino students. Unfortunately, the literature shows that this is notably inadequate in many schools across the country (Sepulveda 2011; Valenzuela 1999). Valenzuela, for example, found that in a Texas high school, the Latino students' chief concern is a lack of caring on the part of teachers. The teachers do not ascribe to the students' definition of caring, as characterized in the Spanish term *educación*. *Educación* expands upon the English word 'education' by including social competence, which is measured by respect of others' dignity and individuality. Rather, the teachers at the school define caring and education in a technical or aesthetic sense (as opposed to authentic): They focus on strictly academic knowledge and skills, or objects rather than persons. Similarly, Sepulveda (2011) suggests that Latino immigrant students' need are not being met by their educational institutions, as the institutions do not attempt to connect to these students in any personal way. In his study of Latino immigrant students at a Northern Californian school, he found that teachers narrowly focus on curricular content / objectives and classroom management rather than engaging with their immigrant students and their personal lives; many of the teachers know very little about the border-crossing experiences that their students have undergone. The emotional distance between teachers and their students contributes to an environment of exclusion rather than inclusion for the Latino

immigrant students. Sepulveda (2011) proclaims, "I felt the school strongly lacked a sense of community and belonging" (500).

Unlike the teachers in Sepulveda and Valenzuela's studies, both Mrs. Mowen and Mrs. Hannan have formed personal connections with their students outside of their formal positions as authorities. In each class session, I observed the teachers laughing and joking with their students and inquiring about their home lives or family events. The following example constitutes a typical exchange between Mrs. Mowen and her students:

> Mrs. Mowen: *Porque no hiciste nada, Juan* [Why didn't you do anything, Juan?!]
>
> Juan: *No sé* [I don't know.]
>
> Mrs. Mowen: *No tienes preocupada. Eres mi favorito. Menos Tomás* [Don't worry, you're my favorite. Besides Tomás.]
>
> Tomás: What?!

In fact, Mrs. Mowen reports that she has achieved such a level of comradeship with her students that it has become somewhat problematic:

> We've had a lot of discussion that's not been part of the academic study that's just their experience. I've known them since eighth grade, and so I've been a facilitator of those discussions. I think that's been problematic ultimately for the academics [laughs]. The familiarity is such in my classroom that it's a hindrance to teaching and learning.

Yet evidently, Mrs. Mowen values this familiarity and understands its importance for forming empathetic bonds with her students. She deliberately chooses to practice this sort of engaged, caring pedagogy over one that is distant or removed from the personal lives of her students.

Sepulveda (2011) introduces a new concept in his paper – a pedagogy of *acompañamiento* - in which educators guide their Latino immigrant students through the liminal space of schooling: "Far from being the passive receptor of global modernity, *acompañamiento* represents the creative acts of a people making space, creating place, and building community in

an increasingly fragmented global world" (568). This involves educators and school administrators actively constructing alternative spaces of education in which the Latino immigrant students can engage in meaningful discussion about the migrant experience, discrimination, racism, identity, and social exclusion. Furthermore, a pedagogy of *acompañamiento* requires a sense of empathy or "empathetic fusion" on the part of the educators. The resulting constructed spaces "aim to create a sense of belonging, a cultural citizenry" for the Latino immigrant students (559).

My research shows that the DLI teachers at LHS are effectively employing pedagogies of *acompañamiento* in their interactions with their Latino students. In interviews, both teachers displayed a significant level of familiarity with their students and their backgrounds, including first- and second-generation status, birth places, stories of parents' migrations, and details about their siblings. When I inquired about one of her disabled students, for example, Mrs. Mowen was able to describe his condition, as well as his migration history. Both Mrs. Mowen and Mrs. Hannan discussed the importance of meeting with the students' parents and understanding their home lives, as this undeniably affects the students' academic learning at school. It is obvious that they have invested considerable time in their students' personal lives and stories. Furthermore, Mrs. Mowen actively attempts to design her classroom as an "alternative place" where students can discuss their experiences and construct a meaningful sense of self:

> My class and this program in the high school has really functioned as the sort of place for social work. I think we've had a lot of discussion about their experiences as people in high school, just separate from whatever we're studying at the time. And how comfortable they are, what they're observing as they're in this period of adolescence. I've had a lot of students, like Juan is one, who in high school was the first time he realized that he belongs to these two groups that are very different. … So we've had a lot of discussion that's not been part of the academic study that's just been their experience. … I've been a facilitator of those discussions.

By creating a safe place for these discussions to take place, Mrs. Mowen has achieved Sepulveda's goal of engendering a sense of belonging and "cultural citizenry" (2011:559) amongst her Latino immigrant students: As discussed in the previous chapter, the Latino immigrant students in Mrs. Mowen's class "feel at home" (Tomás) in her classroom.

One interesting type of interaction I observed between Mrs. Hannan and her Latino students involves the students assisting Mrs. Hannan with her Spanish language skills. During class sessions, Mrs. Hannan frequently asks students to translate words from English to Spanish, such as "pretzel," "grief," "jump rope," "ipod cord," "washing machine" and "elevator." Sometimes, she prefaces her request by saying "I'm still learning Spanish. It's not my native language." Occasionally, Mrs. Hannan mispronounces Spanish words, uses the incorrect article, or emphasizes the incorrect syllable. When this occurs, the Latino students immediately correct her, and she repeats the word after them. For example, when she placed the emphasis on the second to last syllable of *abónico* (as if to say *aboníco*), several Spanish-speaking students immediately yelled, "No, it's *abónico*!" and the rest of the class giggled. At the end of one class period, Mrs. Hannan explained to me that it can be difficult to maintain confidence in her Spanish ability while teaching in DLI classrooms, because many of her students grew up in Spanish-speaking homes, and she can never reach that language level. When I asked Mrs. Hannan if her Spanish-speaking students ever challenge her legitimacy as an authority figure due to her language ability and ethnicity, she replied,

> The kids know that I struggle sometimes and I ask them questions. I ask them 'how do you say this' all the time. But I don't feel like my legitimacy has really been questioned. … I would generally say that they're very accepting and appreciative of what I have to offer.

Indeed, the Spanish-speaking students' reactions to Mrs. Hannan's mistakes in class are gentle and nonjudgmental. Oftentimes, the students work together to pinpoint the correct translation,

and the class celebrates when the task is complete. This show of interethnic solidarity is heartening. Furthermore, I suggest that perhaps the altered power dynamic between teacher and student in these scenarios is beneficial, as it reveals the value and significance of the Latino students' own knowledge (which may be depreciated in mainstream classrooms). The Spanish-speaking students are a vital component to the success of the DLI classrooms, and as a result, their status is elevated.

Teacher –Student Interethnic Relationships in Mainstream Classrooms

Though teacher-student interethnic interactions tend to be positive in DLI classrooms at LHS, these relationships may be more distant in some mainstream classrooms. When I asked Natalia how her mainstream teachers regard her and other Latino students, she referenced some of her teachers' lack of interest: "I think there are few teachers that are kinda picky in that way. They don't really try that hard. … There are a few I think that are picky. Like 'Oh you didn't do your homework.' I see them saying that about some people." Here, Natalia indicates that certain mainstream teachers may hold the same stereotypes – namely, that Latinos are poor academic performers with apathetic attitudes – as some of the students at the school. Natalia, however, added that "there are not so many" teachers that hold these views.

Although still low, the Latino population in the city of Lancaster has grown over the past several years. Due to the recent influx of Latino students, many of the mainstream teachers at LHS may lack the necessary knowledge to effectively address the needs of this new minority population. Mrs. Mowen observes that teachers of higher-level classes in particular seem to be struggling with this demographic shift:

> Teachers who are used to working with very high level students suddenly have a first-generation potential college student Latino Spanish-speaker in their class. And I don't think that many of our teachers who teach higher level classes are

> versed in how do you help a student who should be here, who can be here, but doesn't just have all the support and the background and the familiarity with the system that 95% of your students do.

Mrs. Mowen explains that many of the Latino students have not had the same opportunities to develop academic vocabularies as middle-class White students, or they are excluded from social networks of support amongst students. Furthermore, many Latino students have significant family responsibilities after school, such as watching younger children or translating for their parents at doctor's appointments. Unfortunately, some of the staff at LHS may be unaware of these academic and social roadblocks for their Latino students. Though they do not discriminate based on race or color, according to Mrs. Mowen, some teachers at LHS seem to be working within a framework of colorblindness: "They see that one black student or one brown student, that doesn't make a difference. I think teachers are not culturally responsive all the time. … But I think the students feel like that's really important." Mrs. Mowen related a conversation she had with a science teacher at the high school: "He said, 'You know, the formula for success in my class is really easy.' And I just wanted to wring his neck. The formula is easy if you understand the equation! But if you don't even know what it means, it's not an easy formula." Latino students that come from underprivileged backgrounds may not have the same familiarity with the academic system / academic vocabularies, family support systems, and resources (i.e. "the equation") that privileged (often White) students can access.

Scholars have demonstrated that though it appears rather innocuous on the surface, the discourse of colorblindness is just as damaging as those with explicit discriminatory orientations (Dorn 2005; Shanklin 1998; Zamudio and Rios 2006). Zamudio and Rios (2006) explain that colorblindness allows modern citizens to construct racism as a problem of the past, claim a level playing field, or blame current racial inequality on individual and cultural deficits in

communities of color. The ideology of colorblindness has dangerous ramifications for minority students. In her study of interethnic relationships in an inner-city California high school, Lustig (1997) found that minority students experience exclusion due to "the failure of teachers to explicitly acknowledge that they have students of different ethnicities" (580). The teachers in the school largely fail to address ethnic tensions in their classrooms. When incidents occur, rather than encouraging a group discussion of ethnicity, language, and discrimination, the teachers instead focus on keeping the peace and maintaining order. Similarly, in Natalia's account (described in the previous section) about her classmate's discriminatory remark, the mainstream teacher responded by quickly transitioning to a new topic of discussion, avoiding the comment and resulting interethnic tension altogether.

Mrs. Mowen suggests that by ignoring their students' ethnic differences, some mainstream teachers at LHS further isolate their students, which oftentimes results in the students dropping out of their classes:

> I've seen a lot of kids drop out of higher level classes. Like they get all this encouragement, like you can do it! You did really well your freshman year, sophomore year, why don't you try taking some honors courses, why don't you take an AP class. And they get in there and they're just like, "I can't do that. I don't know those kids, they don't know me. We have nothing in common. Nobody talks to me. I'm the only Mexican." I mean I've had students say to me so many times, "I'm the only Mexican." And that's huge to them, and I think teachers forget that too. I think teachers who kinda shrug their shoulders and say you know, "They need to talk to other kids in class, study with them, work with them, get some help." It's like, just signing up for this class was huge. Just coming to sit in the back!

Mrs. Beckler - the teacher of the mainstream Anatomy & Physiology classroom I observed on occasion – confirmed Mrs. Mowen's sentiment. When I asked her if LHS is a welcoming place for Latino students, she replied:

> *NO*. I think that there are certain teachers and administration that do a good job in making sure they feel welcome. But I don't think all of our teachers make our

> Latino students feel welcome. And I think culturally a lot of people are either insensitive or just don't understand, or don't care and aren't willing to make sure your Latino students are sitting in the front row rather than letting them clump in the back and choosing their seats.

Mrs. Beckler has her ELL endorsement, worked in an inner city school in Los Angeles with a 70% Latino student population, and is known as a "safe teacher [for Latinos] to be with" (Mrs. Beckler). She is the epitome of a culturally-responsive, understanding teacher, as I observed her constantly assisting her Latino students during class and encouraging them to participate in larger group discussions. Unfortunately, it appears that mainstream teachers like Mrs. Beckler – that are especially attuned to her Latino students' needs – may be less common at LHS. Future research is required to determine the extent of cultural understanding amongst mainstream LHS faculty. As most of my data collection took place in DLI classrooms at LHS, I can only hypothesize from interviews with students, Mrs. Mowen, and Mrs. Beckler.

Interethnic relationships at LHS, between students themselves and teachers and students, appear weak in mainstream classrooms, as students self-segregate along ethnic lines in classrooms, the cafeteria, hallways, and other meeting places. Many Latino students feel isolated, invisible, and stigmatized to some extent in the school, though they also report a lack of blatant discrimination and racism. DLI classrooms at LHS, however, serve as alternative spaces for Latino students to form connections with teachers and students of other ethnicities. Furthermore, these classes encourage the exploration of salient global issues such as race, marginalization, and power imbalances, and thus effectively embody a deeper form of multiculturalism than that observed by Lustig (1997) and Ulichny (1996). Yet as discussed in this chapter, these spaces exhibit some interethnic divisions as well and cast doubt on the actualization of other multicultural goals – namely sustained, in-depth interethnic communication and understanding.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

Concluding Remarks

The assimilationist model has been widely promoted by the U.S. government and its institutions for much of history, and involves immigrants renouncing their cultural practices, identities, and subjectivities for those of the U.S. nation-state (Glick Schiller et al. 1995). This model incorporates ideologies of nationhood and citizenship, which extend belonging to some immigrants and link them to a homogenous American identity (Ong 2003; Smith 2004). The assimilationist model remains in use in official realms and is still widely perpetuated in state institutions such as public schools through a process of social reproduction (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990). Schools with English-only language education programs often employ an assimilationist framework, as they ban the Spanish language and promote exclusive English-use in their classrooms (Anderson 2009; Collins 2012). By employing this framework, these programs mark Spanish and Spanish speakers as 'illegitimate' and offer power to the majority group – English speakers (and oftentimes, concurrently, White, middle-class persons) (Palmer 2009). This exclusionary process can ultimately reproduce hierarchies of race and class.

Though many schools still employ an assimilationist framework, in recent years, a new discourse – that of multiculturalism – has gained popularity in the United States. This ideology is often lauded for its culturally-relevant approach, as it encourages cultural pluralism, language diversity, and cross-cultural communication (Dávila 1999). As an embodiment of this discourse, multicultural education has become more prevalent in the past forty years and has promoted bilingual and dual language immersion programs that incorporate minority languages into class content and instruction (Gibson 1984; Palmer 2010). Yet anthropologists and social scientists have provided cautionary remarks concerning multiculturalism's purported tolerance of

difference (Comaroff 2009; Davila 1999; Eller 1997; Glick Schiller et al. 1995; Grillo 2010; Hale 2002; Paap 1995; Rahier 2008). Scholars warn that multicultural education can in fact leave many structures of power intact (or even recreate new ones) and exacerbate interethnic tensions (Lustig 1997; Ulichny 1996).

With the specific goal of achieving bilingualism in a cooperative environment with both minority and majority speakers, the DLI program at Lancaster High School in Oregon employs a multicultural rather than assimilationist framework. The program's educational discourse largely counteracts that of mainstream U.S. society with respect to language use, curriculum content, and intergroup relations. By promoting and even requiring the use of Spanish in its classrooms, the program elevates the status of the language, encourages bilingualism, and thereby challenges the dominant U.S. ideology of English monolingualism. Furthermore, due to the link between identity and language, teaching Spanish in school contexts enhances the symbolic social identity of Spanish speakers (and oftentimes Latino immigrants) as well:

> Because of the close relationship between language use and social identity, if students are socialized to view Spanish as a legitimate means of fulfilling the official educational function, by extension they will see Spanish speakers as legitimate participants in the educational discourse. [Freeman 1996:572]

Rather than emphasizing Eurocentric curriculum that glosses over Latin American perspectives or the U.S.'s historical connection to Mexico, as scholars have frequently documented in mainstream classrooms (Nieto 2010; Valenzuela 1999), the DLI classrooms at LHS provide students in-depth examinations of minority contributions – such as Latin American and Chicano literature, history, and political and social issues - as well as encourage students to relate their own lived experiences to these narratives. Through this particular focus, it also appears that the DLI program may foster Latino immigrant students' cultivation of hybrid identities that reflect their transborder and diasporic imaginaries and experiences. By creatively

forming these ‘in-between’ identities, the students engage in resistance of the dominant U.S. assimilationist agenda, which attempts to link immigrants to a uniform American identity (Glick Schiller et al. 1995). The students also critique the pan-ethnic terms ‘Latino’ and ‘Hispanic,’ which the U.S. government has employed to further homogenize diverse Latino subgroups and depoliticize their histories of conquest and colonization (Dávila 2001). These findings substantiate that youth are agents in the formation and negotiation of their own identities – a particularly important observation, given that youth are widely discounted as cultural agents possessing control over their own lives (James 2007). Finally, the DLI program at LHS encourages interethnic solidarity between students themselves, as well as between students and teachers. Students in DLI classrooms seem to be some of the least discriminatory and prejudiced students in the school. This focus on interethnic relations contrasts with discourses in mainstream U.S. society that oftentimes seek to either exclude Latino immigrants from civic life (by labeling them outsiders, invaders, or others) or assimilate them into a homogeneous American citizenry (DeJaeghere and McCleary 2010).

However, my findings have also shown that despite these advances, the DLI program at LHS leaves several structures of power intact. Although the program goes to great lengths to raise the status of Spanish to an equal level as English (and perhaps even higher), English still remains the more favored language amongst students in the program, as well as the larger school population and mainstream society. The program itself is exclusionary, as it only includes a small percentage of the Latino population at the school and is largely difficult to penetrate at the advanced grade levels. As related by the primary DLI teacher, the White students appear to be the main beneficiaries of the program rather than the Latino students – the intended target population. Furthermore, though the DLI classrooms foster interethnic communication to some

extent, there still seems to exist an ethnic divide in the classrooms. These findings ultimately affirm that the classroom is a continually contested space, where students and teachers struggle to negotiate issues of power, language, ethnicity and identity.

Study Implications

These observations reveal that on-the-ground experiences of multiculturalism are complex. Though multiculturalism appears to be the ideal framework for an increasingly diverse society, we cannot romanticize the effects of such a discourse in practice. I am not advocating for an abandonment of the multicultural approach. As Ulichny (1996) notes, "A return to the assimilationist viewpoint that prevails in the white and western supremacy model that had dominated American culture is simply not an alternative" (334). Rather, I stress that the successful implementation of a multicultural framework requires a critical examination of the ways in which the policies affect all groups of students, as well as their relationships to each other. In today's increasingly diverse societies, schools are becoming cultural 'contact' zones, and administrators face the challenge of meeting the diverse needs of students within the same institutional context (Ulichny 1996). Dual language immersion programs have the potential to achieve this goal, yet they must be implemented in a critical and careful fashion.

Recommended Future Steps

As the assistant principal of LHS and the superintendent of the school district have requested, based on my findings, I provide several recommendations for the DLI program at LHS going forward. Firstly, if possible, the program should transition to a school-wide program (or at least expand its course offerings). Many of the issues surrounding the program at the high school level seem to stem from its 'strand' structure, or the fact that it is situated in an English-

mainstream public school. This contributes to the program's exclusivity, as there are limited slots available in each DLI class offered per grade level. Expanding the program will create more space for Latino students – its target population – as well as counteract the mainstream students' and teachers' ignorance about the DLI program as a whole. An expansion of the DLI program should make the Latino community more visible at LHS, as well as Latino history and social / political issues, as the DLI curriculum promotes these perspectives. Furthermore, offering core classes in the DLI format at LHS will provide continuity between the lower and higher levels of education, allowing students to steadily and logically progress through the system. Finally, expanding the program may serve to academically benefit the Latino immigrant students; in its current form, because the program is so limited, it is difficult for the intended advantages to truly take effect for the Latino immigrant students. The students only attend one DLI class out of their entire school day and then spend the remainder of their time in mainstream classes that may not effectively address their needs. As discussed in chapter five, DLI classrooms cultivate a sense of belonging for the Latino immigrant students, which is especially significant given the fact that they largely feel isolated in their mainstream classrooms and broader school community.

I also recommend that the administration at LHS invest substantial time and resources in the training of mainstream teachers in culturally-responsive attitudes and practices. Teachers could be instructed on the academic and social roadblocks for the Latino student population in particular. From teachers' comments detailed in this thesis, it appears that some of the teachers at LHS are unaware of how to appropriately address the unique needs of minority populations. More research is required to understand how mainstream teachers perceive their Latino students and implement color-blind (or other) ideologies in their dealings with them. Students in mainstream classrooms could also be made aware of Latino historical and contemporary issues

and the Latino community at the school. Hosting events that pertain to Latino holidays and culture may serve to educate students of other ethnicities about Latino community values, which in turn could decrease ethnic segregation in the school. Mainstream curriculum should be expanded to include minority contributions, rather than solely Eurocentric perspectives.

Finally, I offer several suggestions for growth within the DLI program itself based on my findings. Firstly, to resist potential elitism, administrators and teachers should strive to continually orient the program back toward the needs and desires of Latino immigrant students and their parents, acknowledging that the students' academic survival may largely depend on the program. Perhaps discussion forums would be useful for students and parents to voice their concerns. To foster deeper interethnic communication, teachers may consider implementing seating patterns that promote interethnic blending, as well as forming mixed-ethnic discussion groups. Any interethnic tension should be addressed in an open and collaborative manner in the classroom. To counteract the symbolic dominance of English and impart value to the Spanish language (and by extension, Spanish speakers), teachers can maintain a strict Spanish-only environment, as well as strive to give equal voice and representation to minority students in their classrooms.

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