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FOR THE LOVE OF LANGUAGE: MICRORITUEL IN THE SOCIALIZATION OF
LANGUAGE TEACHERS

By

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Dissertation

presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in Anthropology, Anthropology of Education

The University of Montana
Missoula, MT

May 2022

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For the Love of Language: Microrituel in the socialization of language teachers

Chairperson: G.G. Weix, PhD in Anthropology

Abstract: Language and social interaction have been determined to be intricately linked. Over the past century, studies surrounding how to learn languages have shifted the conversation on how to teach them. With the introduction of Hymes' (1971) *Communicative Competence* into pedagogical literature, learning language within social context replaced the formally grammar based, traditional methods. During the early 1960's the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Language led the charge on providing standards and learning objectives to shift language learning towards a more integrated and communicative approach. However, based on the research of Celce-Murcia (2007), Aguilar (2007), and Ishihara & Cohen (2010) and studies done by Burke (2011), Busch (2010), Bangou (2010), Chaudron (1988), Byram (1997), Holmes (2014), the traditional, largely grammar focused methods endure. However, studies that include qualitative research methods on educator experiences are few and far between (Bailey & Nunan 1996). To fully understand what is taking place in the current language classroom, this qualitative research study examines what factors shape language educator beliefs, perspectives, and attitudes about teaching and learning languages other than English. This study pulls from Duff's (2011; 2017) work on language socialization, Riley (2012) and Kroskrity's (2004) work on language ideology, and finally Javeau's (1994) work on microrituel, to examine language educator experiences in a largely rural state in the Rocky Mountain west. The aim of this research is to identify barriers and opportunities to shift educators' perspectives and ultimately provide insight into how changes in practice can be accomplished.

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Preface: A letter to the participants

Dear language educators,

I want to thank you for your time, expertise, and feedback throughout this process. Without you, this project would not have been possible. I deeply appreciate that you were willing to share your stories on becoming educators with me. Now I will share mine, as it is a key element to my motivations in pursuing this research. I too unexpectedly fell in love with the study of French. For five years, I taught French in two schools on the east coast. Prior to that I lived in France for two years. During my undergraduate degree I also had the opportunity to study at the university in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso and live with a host family for three weeks. While those experiences were life changing, one of my most formative experiences was struggling in my high school French class. My teacher told me that *maybe it just wasn't my thing*, which almost deterred me from discovering my passion for teaching French. Had it not been for my extreme curiosity for learning language and the deep desire to study abroad, I may have listened to this educator. Even still, throughout my undergraduate and master's degrees, I struggled with whether I was capable to be an effective language teacher. However, I was fortunate to have had mentors along the way who shifted my understanding of what it means to learn language. Without them, and without my experiences as a teacher, I would not have been inspired to embark on this project.

While my experiences inspired to me to start this project, your stories motivated me to complete it. Your dedication to your students and your desire to incite as much love for language as you have experienced is evident in the way that you speak about your craft, your experiences, and your learners. I have learned a great deal from you and I look forward to opportunities for collaboration and partnership with you in the future. Thank you for all you do and all the lives you have changed. And thank you for your contributions to this study.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Language and social interaction are inextricably linked. How language is used and how it is studied can be a means to both open minds as well as to perpetuate dominant societal structures. The complexities behind language and dialectical variance inform a great deal on the communities we interact with as well as ourselves. During the early 20th century, language was seen as something to be regulated, and one language would be equivalent to one nation-state (Morgan 2007). This meant that minority dialects were defined as improper. During the mid to late 20th century, Dell Hymes and his team of socio-linguistics reframed the study of language to incorporate social interaction and suggested that the one-to-one ratio of one language is one community is a falsehood (Saville-Troike 1989). For example, Dell Hymes would suggest even English should be placed in quotes, as there are many dialects of English, used by diverse communities (Hymes 1971). With these new studies came deeper understandings about the power dynamics between minority languages and dominant communities seeking to promote a particular system of interaction (Riley 2011; Kroskrity 2004).

These new understandings about language, social interaction, and linguistic diversity were brought to the educational literature during the 1980s. The study of languages other than English¹ was shifted by Hymes' (1971) work on *communicative competence*², or the ability of a speaker to use a language for social interaction. From the sociolinguists to education, Canale and Swain (1980) were among those who would incorporate the idea of communicative competence into educational literature on language pedagogy. Moreover, the conversation surrounding language pedagogy shifted in the early 90s when the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) received a federal grant to develop standards and guidelines so that the United States could “educate students who are equipped linguistically and culturally to

¹Please note that unless used in a quote or an official title, I avoid the use of “foreign language” to describe the subject matter being taught or studied. This is to move away from the juxtaposition of any language other than English with the word and idea that they are foreign. Many Americans speak Spanish, French, Chinese, Arabic, not to mention the many indigenous languages that are under revitalization. Therefore, suggesting that any language other than English is foreign is to perpetuate a mindset about language that I would like to avoid.

² For reference, there is a glossary of terms available in Appendix 2

communicate successfully in pluralistic American society and abroad” (2007, 67). These *World-Readiness Standards* have undergone several revisions and adaptations meant to reflect the improved understandings of diversity and the complexities surrounding language education. Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC) was selected as one of the main targets used to measure successful language acquisition (Byram 1997; Bailey 1996; Celce-Murcia 2007). By gaining ICC, the learner can communicate in another language and be adaptable in several communities. Additionally, the learner will gain a clearer awareness of her own community. Ultimately, the goal of ICC within the realm of language acquisition is to diversify what a learner understands about dialectical variance and socio-cultural norms. This refocus also meant that educators should move away from the explicit grammar lessons and cultural pop out days and move towards utilizing the social context as a basis for language instruction and acquisition. These standards led to an overall push for more diversity in the communities presented to language learners as well as communicative approaches to teaching language in the classroom.

While standards and understandings have changed, implementation is not happening quickly. Based on the research of Celce-Murcia (2007), Aguilar (2007), and Ishihara & Cohen (2010) along with studies done by Busch (2010), Bangou (2010), Chaudron (1988), Byram (1997), and Holmes (2014), the pedagogies that support ICC as integrated part of the curriculum are largely underutilized. Otherwise, language education remains largely taught in what has been deemed the *traditional manner*, or as Burke (2011) entitles it, *Deep Structure*. Beginning with communicative strategies towards infants, socialization continues as the individual enters a new environment such as a school, a workplace, or a social setting (Zuengler & Cole 2005). Early language socialization is a lifelong and ongoing process, however, when language learners develop beliefs about the acquisition of language at a young age and in a classroom setting, they are more likely to maintain the same beliefs about language acquisition despite teacher training (Duff 2011; Wortham 2015; Nespors 1987; Ishihara & Cohen 2010). As such, if language educators are not new to the context of a language classroom, then the initial socialization can endure even as educators undergo professional socialization through teacher training programs and teaching practicum (Duff 2011; Nespors 1987).

Furthermore, Pajares (1992), Cuban (1984), and Bartram (2010) agree that attitudes and beliefs in the teaching profession are particularly difficult to break.

Furthermore, languages themselves are imbued with ideologies and values. When a particular dialect or language features are taught over other dialects, an indirect but powerful ideology is transferred in that context (Philips 2004; Kroskrity 2004). Moreover, the language courses themselves often called “French class” or “French 1” lead to a particular assumption about who French speakers are and that “French culture” is a homogeneous part of this process. The prestige standard, or the variety of language held to be worth learning, reflects the community valued by that designation. Therefore, what a learner is taught, and then what they teach, perpetuates this cycle of value, implicitly.

Language education has held a precarious place throughout American history. To start, the “international status” held by English often leads to the notion that other languages are unnecessary or a waste of time and money (Bartram 2010). Additionally, the values surrounding cultural groups viewed as “foreigners” or “outsiders” led to the attitude that languages other than English are dangerous or untrustworthy (Bartram 2010; Macedo 2019). This is supported by the Bush-era administration’s funding within the defense department that led to supporting language education (Bartram 2010; Macedo 2019). The reasoning behind this funding was to utilize language study as a defense tactic because it was thought that not learning languages other than English made the United State vulnerable to an attack.

Furthermore, despite the changes in language education standards as well as a greater promotion of programming through ACTFL, language education remains largely under-supported in American schools. Of the 40 states, only 27 have adopted modern languages as a core subject, and even they are not introduced to that subject until grades nine through twelve (“History of ACTFL” 2022). In many states, learning a language other than English either isn’t a requirement until college or is only a requirement if students are college-bound. For example, in this rural state in the Western Rockies, learners are not consistently required to take two years of language unless they plan to attend college out of state. Moreover, Macedo (2019) reports that only about 1% of Americans leave their high school language classrooms being proficient in the language

of study. This statistic highlights the fact that most language classrooms in the United States are either ineffective in language instruction or, more likely, that Americans are not required to take enough years to become proficient. As such, educators are tasked with trying to encourage learners to stay or take language courses despite their elective status, as well as take on the community's potential skepticism about languages other than English (Kramsch 2019).

Language education is said to be a field of study that can broaden perspectives and change not only how one sees other communities but also their own. However, language transmission and acquisition are imbued with beliefs and ideologies that can, for better or worse, perpetuate unwanted beliefs surrounding cultural groups and languages. It also has some of the greatest potential to shift beliefs, because part of the process of studying a language can be to study and live in communities other than one's own. Therefore, language learning also has the potential to fracture the learner from what is familiar and in doing so create an integration into the unfamiliar. This resembles elements of van Gennep's (1988) rites of passage, and Srinivas's (2018) contemporary work on ritual, where ritual can be a place for transformation through wonder and curiosity.

The creative ritual framework offers a means for identifying where socialized beliefs may have an opportunity to be transformed. If goals of language education include broadening perspectives and cultivating a more open mindset, and if language ideologies and socialization do the contrary, then what contextual factors, if any, can contribute to the shifting of beliefs in language educators to ensure these ideologies aren't being perpetuated through current educator perspectives? As language socialization is the process by which we learn how to interact, and creative ritual is the process by which we can reframe or fracture from what's normal and expected, highlighting educators' experiences will offer a means to determine when socialization and its corresponding ideologies are perpetuated or when a ritual has created the opportunity for a new norm to be established.

Further qualitative studies have been requested to understand how language education can change and what has shifted about educator beliefs (Duff 2017; Chaudron 1988; Bailey 1996; Celce-Murcia 2007; Bartram 2010). Educational research targeting

the educator perspective would allow for a deeper analysis of how individuals navigate the challenging world of teaching and would also provide key insights into what is and is not working in the language classroom. Considering the broader context wherein languages other than English may be viewed with skepticism at best, educators are tasked with both accurately representing languages and communities as well as converting their learners, the parents of learners, and at times their community to value this process. And they often have as little as two years to do so.

In this study, I aim to shed light on the disparity between research and practice by looking more closely at the factors that shape language educator beliefs in a largely rural state in the Rocky Mountain West. This project will also analyze how educator perspectives and experiences may inform future progress in language pedagogy and practice. The field site I chose for this study is a largely rural state in the western Rocky Mountains, as it offers a unique opportunity to address beliefs about the language classroom as well as the study of languages other than English. This western Rocky Mountain state, like many American states, does not have a language requirement to graduate from high school; the subject matter is considered an elective. Additionally, this state is largely rural: the 2000 census reported that 94% of the population speaks English at home. Additionally, the chosen field site because it offers a sample of educators who may have to travel further and spend more money to go abroad and gain the expertise they need to become language educators, unlike those in more populated areas. Since the majority of American adults speak only one language, this site offers a field in which a large array of questions might be asked about how language teachers are trained and what their work is like.

This qualitative study presents testimonies from nine educators who teach languages other than English in this largely rural state in the Rocky Mountain west. To further understand patterns of socialization, ritual, and professionalization, a closer look is necessary to determine what changes have been made to language education and what beliefs persist. How did educators in this largely rural state come to turn their language of study into a profession? What brought them to the classroom in the first place? How do they perceive their profession? How do they perceive the current pedagogies? What do

they consider best practices? And how can their stories help us move the profession forward and offer more support such that the community can become stronger?

First, I will present a literature review focused on the diverse theories that will help frame understandings of communicative competences, educational and ritual-based change, and language ideologies. In chapter two I will highlight my methods of data collection and analysis, followed by the *récits de vie* that will contextualize the participants of the study. In chapter three, I will begin my thematic analysis of the educators' interviews. Chapter three will also present early socialization and educators' journeys to becoming language teachers. In chapter four I will present their study abroad experiences as rites of passage. In chapter five, I will address their professionalization and the role of community and mentorship in adopting new perspectives. In chapter six, I will offer educator perspectives on the resources and materials they use and how this highlights the shifts in professionalization which took place. In chapter seven I will highlight perspectives on the learners and how these relate back to the educator as a learner. Finally, I will conclude with a chapter on reflexivity, study limitations, opportunities for further research, and broader implications.

Literature Review

Theories surrounding how language should be taught, studied, and learned have interdisciplinary origins. For decades researchers in linguistics, socio-cultural anthropology, and education have examined how language is formed, how it's used, and when and why it's used. To examine language educator beliefs and perspectives, I will present the theoretical foundations for this study. First, I will offer the linguistic influences in educational theory, including concepts of speech communities, communicative competence, and intercultural communicative competence. Next, I will present the barriers for changing educational practice, including both concepts on beliefs, language ideologies, and socialization. Finally, I will present a framework to evaluate and identify phases of change and educational reform by applying contemporary theories on creative ritual.

I. Linguistic influences in educational theory

The critical focus on language and community as well as educational research on language acquisition over the last century has brought to light some of the initial agendas of nation-state development. Encouraging official languages in association with countries was painted a means to facilitate communication and cultivate national identities (Macedo 2019). As such, the initial concept of *speech community* was that one language would equal one nation-state (Morgan 2007). However, this mindset presented by Bloomfield and others led to a marginalization of communities who spoke “unofficial” languages – unofficial in the sense that they were unrecognized by government or political entities. According to Morgan’s (2007) essay describing the theoretical evolution of speech community, this concept of homogeneity wasn’t put into question until Noam Chomsky (1965). He presented a theoretical frame to look at language as structure, rather than language as affiliated with a nation-state. Chomsky abandoned the idea of speech community and presented the model where “human linguistic capacity was found in the cognitive, psychological self that develops irrespective of where performance of that knowledge resided – the speech community” (7). Chomsky took language out of the community altogether, focusing instead on the concept of universal grammar.

i. Communicative competence

However, Gumperz as cited by Morgan (2007) and further developed by Hymes (1971), rekindled the concept of *speech community*. In their work, they argued for the influences of social interaction and context on communication. They argued that the boundary set by a governmental entity or a nation-state was overly simplistic (Morgan 2007). Grumperez considered it a construct of social interaction. He suggested that any community that held “regular and frequent interaction” and utilized a “shared byody of verbal signs” should be considered a speech community (Morgan 2007, 8). From Gumperz work emerged the concept and interpretation of Dell Hymes, who defined speech community as a “fundamental concept for the relation between language, speech, and social structure” (1964: 385) (Morgan 2007, 8). Moreover, in his essay *On*

Communicative Competence, Hymes (1971) argued that the homogenous model of speech community places too much value on one dialect and neglects that socially-imbued elements of language influence the real actors. This therefore creates problematic power dynamics for minority varieties of language and creates a false impression of dialects as being improper.

From these new definitions of speech community, Hymes ignited further discussions of *communicative competence* by proposing that communication and social practice are intertwined within the communicative. He further breaks this up into four main parameters to measure communicative competence. These include *knowledge*, ability for *use*, *appropriate use*, and *performance*. He proposes that *knowledge* is separate from what one can do but is “recognized facts of personal knowledge.” In other words, this is one’s tacit or implicit ability to know what is and isn’t appropriate. The next competence is the ability for *use*, which is not just about putting knowledge into practice but is also about capability within interaction. These capabilities include “courage, gameness, gallantry, composure, presence of mind, dignity, stage confidence” (64). Therefore, ability for use is putting into the action language in the appropriate context. The third element he proposes is *appropriate use*, to which he equates “grammaticalness” or intuition and personal judgements. This is the knowledge of grammatical structures that supports using language correctly. The final element he proposes is a redefinition of performance as being an essential piece of studying communicative competence. He defines it as “ability for use, relative to means of implementation in the brain” (64). Communicative competence was therefore seen as an evolution of skills from knowledge to performance, for socio-culturally appropriate communication to take place.

ii. Intercultural communicative competence

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the concept of communicative competence entered the educational sphere. From the discussion on CC in the linguistic literature, Canale & Swain (1980) saw the opportunity to apply similar concepts to language pedagogy. Canale (2013) addresses this context in his essay, “From communicative competence to language pedagogy,” in which he argues that communicative competence is a layered ability whereby skill and performance meet to produce communication. The

skills involved include grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence (Canale & Swaine 1980). Despite the focus on communication and learning a language as being an imperfect process, as communicative competence became further integrated into educational literature, it became more frequently juxtaposed to ‘native fluency’ (Byram 1997). Even as recently as the essays in *Intercultural Language use and Learning*, Aguilar (2007), defines communicative competence as an unachievable goal for the non-native language learner. Rather than highlighting linguistic diversity, as Hymes (1971) intended, this redefinition started to return to the notion that a language and a community were a one-to-one ratio (Byram 1997).

The juxtaposition of native fluency with communicative competence inspired a new concept based more closely to the sociocultural underpinnings of Hymes’ (1971) communicative competence: Intercultural communicative competence (ICC). This concept refocused the discussion on diversity, as Hymes initially intended, for communicative competence. It also included the notion that one should have the ability to adapt to new dialects and varieties of the languages being studied. This would allow the individual to interact with multiple speech communities (Byram 1997). According to Byram’s (1997) interpretation of Hymes (1971), communicative competence was not about achieving native fluency. Furthermore, according to Byram, the transition from communicative competence to intercultural communicative competence came from the necessity to redefine what was expected for the language learner. He argues that “the more desirable outcome is a learner with the ability to see and manage the relationships between themselves and their own cultural beliefs, behaviors and meanings, as expressed in a foreign language, and those of their interlocutors, expressed in the same language –or even a combination of languages –which may be the interlocutors’ native language, or not” (Byram 1997, 12). Aguilar (2007) supports this definition of ICC as well, contending that part of ICC is gaining knowledge and awareness of the learner’s social practices. Both Byram (1997) and Aguilar (2007) argue that this intercultural communicative competence leads to “an openness of mind and reflection on the relativity of their acquired values” (73). This concept was therefore an attempt to move away from

the goal of achieving native fluency and instead moving to build upon to the original intent of Hymes' (1971) communicative competence.

II. Barriers to change – beliefs, values, and ideologies

To continue, these socio-linguistic concepts on language learning and acquisition led to an eventual shift in best practices in the educational literature for language teachers. A push for a more holistic approach in which language was taught in context and the grammatical components learned more intuitively and implicitly was considered a more effective means to achieve competences such as *communicative* and *intercultural communicative*. The movement towards a more holistic approach to language education was further supported by the American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages in the 90s and then re-evaluated in the early 2000s. The cited goal of these *World-Readiness Standards*:

Language and communication are at the heart of human experience. The United States must educate students who are equipped linguistically and culturally to communicate successfully in a pluralistic society and abroad. This imperative envisions a future in which ALL students will develop and maintain proficiency in English and at least one other language, modern or classical. (*Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century* 2006, 7)

However, as mentioned previously, numerous studies suggest that between theory to practice there seems to be a gap in fully implementing these changes (Celce-Murcia 2007; Aguilar 2007; Ishiarha & Cohen; Bartram 2010; Estajii 2018). Considering the American context for language education and the socialization of language educators, there may be both emic and etic reasons for the slow adoption of cutting-edge pedagogy. In Cuban's study published in 1984, *How Teachers Taught*, he presents an array of findings on changing practices in education. His findings suggest that the change of teaching practices typically takes place slowly. He presents five key arguments behind the stability in teaching practices. Three of these arguments included the difficulty of changing long standing beliefs about how children develop, the entrenched socialization of educators having been in the classroom for two decades, and finally that what might determine changes in instructional practice "is whether or not reforms were *effectively*

implemented in classrooms.” To better understand where reforms take place and how, there is a need to evaluate both internal and external factors that will therefore highlight where changes are happening.

i. Community values on languages

First, etic perspectives from the community towards the content the educator is transmitting could impede what an educator can or cannot do in the class. As the majority of Americans hold beliefs and attitudes surrounding languages other than English that are negative or skeptical, then the barriers educators face would be larger than how best to teach language. Educators would also be faced with overcoming these negative mindsets within their learners (Bartram 2010). As Hymes (1973), Duff (2011), Pajares (1992), and Burke (2011) demonstrate, beliefs, values, and ideologies are slow to transform. Within American communities, the use of languages other than English has been discouraged and can be associated with “xenophobia, racism, and other unsavory attitudes” (Bartram 2010, 30). If the communities being taught by educators have the mindset highlighted by Bartram (2010), then educators wanting to change their practice may first have to focus on creating more openness in the mindsets of their learners and communities. Therefore, changing practice more slowly and incrementally may be a result of external factors or beliefs held by the community.

ii. Internal socializations about language teaching

Second, while there may be new pedagogies and standards around language acquisition, the “internalization of attitudes towards a language and its uses is particularly important, as is internalization of attitudes toward use of language itself” (Hymes 1971, 60). Language socialization that has taken place in the classroom setting could lead to internal barriers for change. Defined by Burke (2011) as *Deep Structure*, there are five components that define this ingrained pedagogy. These components include use of translation, grammar practice, non-contextual explicit grammar, culture abbreviated, and English use. This style of language teaching is criticized for its oversimplification of language and furthermore perpetuating the homogenization of speech communities.

Furthermore, the power of experience and socialization in the language classroom would be stronger than that of a teaching practicum (Duff 2011) and would cultivate implicit beliefs that would be difficult to identify and reform (Burke 2011; Pajares 1992; Busch 2010). Within the realm of the language classroom, then, there are beliefs about language use, language communities, and social practices that can be transmitted without the knowledge or awareness from the educator.

iii. Language ideologies and social practice

These beliefs can be further defined by evaluating potential language ideologies that may be transmitted. Language ideologies are unconscious beliefs and values about a community transferred and embedded in the socialization process in language use (Kroskrity 2004; Phillips 2004; Riley 2011;). In her article entitled “Language Socialization and Language Ideologies,” Riley (2011) discusses the complicated relationship between socialization and ideology. More specifically, Riley (2011) argues that “language ideologies influence the sociocultural contexts that shape language socialization, and language ideologies are among the many cultural values socialized through language use” (493). In other words, if elements of language use reflect the power dynamics among communities, then this too will be passed along with the language acquisition. As part of a broader discussion, language ideologies can be broken into many types. However, there are two types that are relevant for this study that include the language acquisition ideology (LAI) and semiotic and contextual understanding ideologies (SCUI) as presented by Riley (2011).

iv. Language acquisition ideology

Language acquisition ideology is defined as a perpetuation of social hierarchies with regards to language acquisition. These hierarchies tend to include age and gender, power dynamics about whose language should be transmitted. According to Riley (2011), “cultural beliefs about language acquisition affect the language socialization routines used by caregivers and educators. Assumptions about the contextual use of language have an impact on the socialization of communicative competence” (494). Additionally, the

impact that a language acquisition ideology can have on learners includes which grammars become valued as well as what forms of language are to be acquired and used (Riley 2011). In other words, when French of a particular demographic in France is more esteemed than French from groups in Burkina Faso or from Québec, an understanding about which speech community is more valuable is also transmitted.

v. Semiotic and contextual usage ideology

Furthermore, Riley (2011) presents the semiotic and contextual usage ideology. These ideologies are characterized by being “power infused” and “power enforcing.” They lead to a value system that perpetuates beliefs about minority varieties as less desirable and less valued than those of the dominant community. In other words, this ideology focuses on how, when, and which variety of a language is used. In this ideology, Riley’s discussion focuses largely on immigrants and the struggles of those who might have grown up speaking a different variety of language at home. “The linguistic fact that these varieties differ is less relevant than is the semiotic fact that children continue to be socialized to believe the ideology that some varieties are better or worse than others” (508). While she focuses largely on immigrants adapting to a host culture, I think this work would have implications for the “dominant culture” as well, specifically via the language classroom.

The awareness of these language ideologies and socialization are doubly important for the language classroom. As learners embark on a new subject in a new language, the language classroom can offer opportunities to rethink language and what a speech community means. The way students are corrected, what they are presented, and how they view another language can offer an opportunity to recognize the same power dynamics within their own communities. In this way, the language classroom, the teacher’s use of culture, and the transmission of language and intercultural competency may not only impact the exterior worldview³ of the student, but also the worldview they

³ The definition of worldview originates from an interpreted meaning as presented in the educational literature as well as by the participants of this study. When referring to worldview – I am utilizing this word in terms of broadening perspectives surrounding social practice and community. The cognitive function of language in understanding or seeing the world, in this case worldview is addressing social practice and community.

hold about their own surroundings. Ultimately, the way language is being taught goes beyond the ability to use it and encapsulates identities of the communities being presented as well as those underrepresented. For example, if language learners that later become educators have been socialized to value the “standard” variety of a language, this puts all other varieties spoken by communities at a lesser value. In this case Riley is speaking of the prestige standard, or the variety of a language that is often considered most worthwhile to learn. This selection is value-laden and therefore perpetuates the system of dominance.

III. Creative ritual and transformation

Considering the barriers both within the context of educator beliefs and the influences of community, a desire to change educational practice would seem impossible. Furthermore, the educational literature supports the likelihood that a teacher is more likely to model their pedagogy after their teachers than they are to adopt new practices through their teaching practicum (Busch 2010; Chaudron 1988; Celce-Murcia 2007; Ishihara & Cohen 2010). As beliefs and ideologies are imbedded within language education pedagogies, textbooks, and teaching practices, where would such change begin? Cuban’s (1984) work highlights teaching practices as being slow to change, but he also argued that aggregated data could potentially overly homogenize findings and create a false picture of stability rather than change. He makes the case that education has changed over the past century. By collecting and analyzing documentation, photographs, textbooks, tests, parent notes, grade books, and articles, Cuban demonstrated that when looking at an aggregated data set it may seem like things don’t change. However, looking more closely at individual schools, groups, and teachers, the evidence of change is more apparent. Cuban (1984) therefore recommends more regional and community analyses should be performed to avoid the falsely homogenous “American classroom.”

i. Understanding change in social context

Similarly, Janette Ryan’s (2013) essay on “Comparing Learning Characteristics in Chinese and Anglophone Cultures: Pitfalls and Insights” suggests there is a common

practice of “homogenizing” cultures of learning. For instance, she suggests moving away from generalizing “Chinese Education” or “The American classroom,” and instead looking more closely at particular communities of learners. In her view, this oversimplification leads to misunderstandings about where and what might be changing within a particular context. She notes that “assumptions about Chinese learners in Anglophone countries are generally made on the basis of judgements about newly arrived Chinese international students who are struggling to adapt to the requirements of their new teaching and learning environments” (Ryan 2013, 48). She goes on to suggest that due to the discomfort in the learning environment, assumptions are made about their skills and knowledge as being non-existent. This belief is then transferred to any exchange student who is adjusting to a new culture and environment, and an assumption is made about their abilities based on language proficiency. Furthermore, she argues that these labels of West versus East are becoming less and less useful as “educational systems are becoming less static, and the accelerating interconnections between systems – such as through academic and student mobility, joint ventures and international collaborative research -means that educational cultural boundaries are becoming less permeable and previous ‘labels’ less useful” (Ryan 2013, 48).

The benefit of highlighting diversity may provide insight into barriers to progress. What Cuban (1984) and Ryan (2013) are presenting is the fact that nuance within communities of learning, much like nuances that exist within speech communities, are essential when evaluating what has changed or what can change in the learning environment. To better understand educator what has or hasn’t changed about language education, a more nuanced, qualitative approach is necessary. Educators may be perpetuating certain practices, because they have been socialized to carry beliefs and perspectives about language acquisition. To understand what “proper reform” might look like and what variables might be involved identifying language ideologies in how educators teach in the language classroom, understanding educator perspectives would be necessary.

ii. *A frame for transformation: creative ritual, microrituel,⁴ and rites of passage*

As beliefs and ideologies can be slow to change, a means through which they are identified and shifted requires a framework for evaluation. Historically, concepts of ritual have been used to frame sacred events and perpetuating processes (Srinivas 2018). However, Srinivas (2018) and Javeau (1994) offer more contemporary interpretations wherein ritual is a means to adapt to change. The three concepts used to frame perspectives on change include creative ritual by Srinivas (2018), microrituel by Javeau (1994) and van Gennep's (1988) rites of passage. As the concepts have been adopted into common discourse, a certain level of power in their meaning has become lost.

First, Srinivas (2018) took it upon herself to capture the power of ritual in her ethnography, *The Cow in the Elevator: An Ethnography of Wonder*. Her work offers some fresh perspectives about the power of creative ritual that can spur change and “fracture” expectations to reimagine the normal. Similarly, the concept of microrituel as presented by Javeau (1992) can provide a means to integrate the new into the normal through the process of daily ritual. These two concepts offer a means to re-think the educator's experience where change might happen or be most likely to happen. Regardless, Srinivas would argue that “wonder is both a symptom and a mode to challenge existing ontological assumptions about being and becoming, a tiny space of resistance that stands within the brokenness and precocity of everyday life” (Srinivas 2018, 4-5).

Furthermore, van Gennep's (1988) *Rites de Passage* offers a framework to review the educator's professionalization process through the lens of change through phases. As they adjust to a new role they have taken in their community, this process reflects the stages an educator goes through to go from learner to teacher, including the removal of that individual from their community and placement in another. In this new community they must shed their previous identities and adopt new ones.

Finally, the microrituel as presented by Javeau (1992), based upon Goffman's rites of interaction and embedded in van Gennep's (1988) *rites de passage*, Javeau (1992)

⁴ As the social scientist being cited is Javeau, and the text in French, I opted to leave the term used here in French.

aims to examine how the micro can provide stability in a time of change. He makes a clear distinction between the microrituel and the microactivité which is more imbedded in routinization. The microrituel frame offers a means to evaluate change on the quotidian level in three phrases. The phases begin with the *episode*, followed by *integration*, and finally the phase of *incorporation*. For example, with the loss of a loved one, a new daily ritual may be incorporated to adjust to the absence of the loved one. This final piece in incorporation allows for the new to become the norm. With respect to language education, the microrituel could be evaluated in how the professional socialization of language educators may or may not break the initial language ideologies within which they were socialized. While an event can incite change, change itself is a process.

As beliefs and ideologies are difficult to identify and consequently change, understanding how ritual, microrituel, and rites of passage provides a framework to evaluate how these changes in language teaching perspectives can take place. For language educators, there is an opportunity to get a better sense of what's slow to change and what might be different about the way they see language education today from when they were learners. Additionally, the element of leaving one community and taking on a new identity in another is of particular interest for those who might be coming from a rural state. What sparks this interest to go abroad, and how does that interest become their profession? To get a better sense of reforms that have influenced educator perspectives, and what educators are seeing in their classrooms, I will present interviews from nine participants who have taught languages other than English in a largely rural state in the Rocky Mountain west. In the next section I will present the methods I used to collect these stories of these educators and what forms of analysis I used.

IV. Complexities of educator understandings

As we are all subject to socialization and therefore the potential perpetuation of unwanted language ideologies, beliefs, and attitudes, understanding how change can take place requires a nuanced and microscopic evaluation of individual stories. As such, I utilize qualitative research methods with the goal to uncover teacher beliefs and attitudes and to evaluate their relationship to the social contexts in which they reside. As beliefs and ideologies can be difficult to identify, and practices are slow to change due to these

beliefs, then exploring educator perspectives on language education and practice will provide a foundation for future research in language education as well as on educational research and reform.

Overall, educator identities and backgrounds can offer a key starting place to better understand how beliefs and language ideologies persist or change within a particular context. Understanding these perspectives can lead to more effective methods for changing such beliefs, starting with educators. As Duff explains, “prior baggage exposure and socialization, conflicted identities, and often uncertain future trajectories and/or investments in the target language and its community(ies)” all play a role in how language is perceived (Duff 2011, 567). Furthermore, in Duff’s work on educator identities, she found that overall educator identities are not only associated with their ascribed role within the community but also their own perceived identity in relation to others (Duff 2017).

There are a number of factors that need to be taken into account when evaluating teacher perspectives about their pedagogical practices. Ishihara & Cohen (2010) offer several contexts to evaluate educator perspectives, beliefs, and practices. These include “experiences as a language learner in the classroom; experiences outside the classroom; established instructional practices in the educational community; theories, approaches, methods, or techniques informed through teacher preparation and other; professional development opportunities; personality factors (extroverted/introverted) and finally, classroom teaching experiences” (26). These factors, in conjunction with the barriers educators face, offer a starting point to collect educator stories and testimonies to better understand what has or hasn’t changed about educator perspectives on the language teaching profession. The lack of existing qualitative research means that, in order to better understand the dynamics of changing educational practices, one must first understand educator beliefs and perspectives (Bailey & Nunan 1996). In the next chapter, I will present how I designed this qualitative research study as well as the methods of qualitative data collection I utilized. Then I will explain the methods of data analysis used as well as the profiles of educators that participated in this study.

Chapter 2: Methods and Analysis

I. Methods and development of the study

In order to learn about the ideologies, processes of socialization, and the beliefs about language education from the perspectives of the educator, along with the presence of microrituels in the field, the ethnographic field methods offered the most detailed approach to gaining understandings of the nuances in perspectives. Inspired by Cuban's (1984) in-depth analysis of educational practice and theory and Ryan's (2013) research suggesting more qualitative studies can provide a more nuanced understanding of educational differences, this study on language educator's experiences would provide a baseline for understanding perspectives, attitudes, and beliefs around language teaching. From the outset, I knew this project would require rich qualitative data from both an emic and etic perspective to provide context to how language educators in a largely rural state in the rocky mountain west came to the profession, what they believe about their pedagogy, and what they think about language educational theory and practice. This qualitative research study found several questions to explore:

- 1) How did these educators choose the profession?
- 2) What are their perspectives on learners and current pedagogies and how do they differ from their backgrounds?
- 3) How do they view communicative competence?
- 4) What materials do they utilize to support their learners?

With little data from either inside the classroom or from the perspectives of educators, I identified a need to work from the ground up.

i. Daily reflections

At the beginning of the project, I began taking notes daily. These notes were based on articles I read, reflections I had while teaching, and times I had observed language instruction in other schools across the United States. This ultimately inspired me to dive deeper into how language is taught. While observations of practice would be a boon to this project, with so few testimonies of language educators available for an initial analysis, understanding what educators think about their practice needs to be established.

At this stage, I determined that a better understanding the context of language education within a largely rural state in the rocky mountain west would be a key place to begin before developing the methods of data collection.

ii. Observational context

During the Spring of 2019, informally, I began my fieldwork upon the discovery of the state's Association of Language Teachers (ALT). Having read about language education and socialization in the works of Patricia Duff (2011, 2017), as well as in *Hidden Curriculum* by Sieber (1978), I decided to attend the ALT conference to observe and get to know a little about the world of language education in This Rocky Mountain state. ALT organizes and holds this conference every year in the spring. Additionally, ALT hosts a conference every fall in collaboration with the State Federation of Professional Employees (SFPE). With each conference, they aim to provide educators with an up-to-date pedagogical method, as requested by their membership. I attended the conference to familiarize myself with the community of educators in the western state in the Rocky Mountains, see what the presenter had to offer, and listen to what folks might have to say about it. The ALT conferences are unusual. Unlike many of the language conferences I have attended around the country, this conference typically consists of one presenter, providing educators with a full day and a half workshop on a particular concept. In this first workshop the concept was "Comprehensible Input" or CI, which is similar to Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS). This concept is instructor-based and rarely requires a textbook. The other two themes presented were Teaching Culture, and Social Justice in the Language Classroom. Only the first of these was in person, while the other two were held remotely on Zoom.

At the time, I did not realize the level of importance this conference would have for my research, as I tried to connect with folks for interviews and classroom observations. With fieldwork conditions drastically changing in 2020, the in-person conferences were shifted to remote and online. While online conferences still present plenty of information on the newest in popular pedagogy, remote access leaves something to be desired when trying to connect with overworked, burnt-out educators. The CI conference provided me with a way to meet with educators during the breaks and

make connections during the post-conference happy hour. When I left that conference, I had several contacts who became some of my participants in this study.

Becoming a member of ALT and attending several conferences also provided me with key talking points during my interviews. While I had researched the various pedagogical theories that ACTFL promotes, attending these conferences allowed me to observe the most current ones that seemed to be of interest for the community. As such, I was able to ask my participants what they thought of these pedagogies, whether they were implementing them, and if they were, then how. Finally, in order to obtain participants, my connections with ALT led to the board advocating for participation in my project from within their membership, on top of my initial set of participants.

While several of my participants came from ALT, I also attempted to connect with educators through email. While this was not entirely fruitful, I was able to connect with at least one educator who allowed me to observe her. Additionally, she connected me with another French teacher, and allowed me to observe the French camp in the summer of 2021. Between my cold-emails, my connections through ALT, and other connections I had made around this largely rural state in the Rocky Mountain west, I found nine willing interview participants, and one classroom observation participant.

iii. Conducting semi-structured interviews

Contextual observations, along with field notes and journal entries, led to my determination that a deeper understanding of the educator's perspectives would be needed in order to provide a foundation for further research in the language classroom. This was further supported by the literature that suggests a lack of qualitative research in the language classroom leads to many answers about socialization remaining under-explored (Bailey & Freeman 1992; Busch 2010). Furthermore, a semi-structured interview process would allow for educators to recount their life story as opposed to a structured interview style in which the participant is directly answering questions (Castillo-Montoya 2016). The interview questions and themes were developed using the Interview Protocol Refinement Framework (PRF) by Castillo-Montoya (2016). The preliminary design of interview questions and themes used information from survey work and interview work done by Busch (2010), Chaudron (1988), Bangou (2010), and Estaji

(2018), as well as the research on socialization by Duff (2011, 2017), Sieber (1978), and attitudes and beliefs by Bartram (2010), Burke (2011), and Pajares (1994). The major themes chosen for interview flow were *historical understandings, language and culture, assessment and student engagement, daily planning, and background* (Appendix 1). While these themes were useful to organize the questions, I followed the testimonies of the participants rather than strictly adhering to this organization or flow of questioning. However, I did utilize this guide to ensure that all elements and questions were answered during the interview. As the PRF also demands, these preliminary interviews were tested prior to implementation, ensuring validation of interview responses. A total of nine interviews were conducted and each interview resulted in between one and two hours of material. (See Appendix 1 for the interview questions used.)

Five of the educators were originally from the same state in the Rocky Mountain West, while the other four were from different states in the Midwest. One of the educators was male and the rest were female. I interviewed four Spanish educators, four French educators, and one German educator. Each of the educators had experience teaching at the secondary or high school level. Please see tables 1-3 for the breakdown in demographic information.

Tables 1-3 - Educator Profiles and Demographics

Table 1: Educator gender and age

Age	M	F
30-39		3
40-49		2
50-59	1	3
60-69		
70-79		
80-89		
90-99		1

Table 2: Language and years of teaching

Number of years teaching	French	German	Spanish
5-10	2		
11-15	1		2
16-20		1	
21-25			
26-30			1
31-35	1		1

Table 3: Experience in teaching grades

Participant	K-8	9-12	Higher Education
Sandra		X	
Chuck		X	
Jackie	X	X	
Danielle	X	X	X
Bailey	X	X	
Kylie		X	X
Kendall	X	X	X
Marie		X	X
Laura		X	

The overall diversity of generations, the participants' experiences teaching different age groups, and the variety of years teaching all allowed for a rich analysis on the perspectives surrounding changes in language education. However, I would have appreciated participation from newer educators to solidify the shifts in perspectives over time. Another element that would be worthwhile to ameliorate in this study would be the perspectives of non-western language educators. As the three languages presented here were German, French and Spanish, to further understand the dynamics of teaching languages other than English in this largely rural state in the rocky mountain west would be to include languages such as Chinese, Arabic, or Indigenous languages. Still, the data collected in these nine interviews offers a rich place to begin and offers a foundation for future studies.

iv. Participant observation

The final stage of data collection was in the form of participant observation in a Secondary Education institution, Highland High School, with the only full time French teacher. This included nine to ten separate observational days ranging from two to six hours per day. The first week, the observations took place from the start of the school day

through the end of the school day, followed by a debrief with the educator. Then over the course of the next few weeks observations took the form of repeated visits to French 2 class, until the rotations switched to French 1 and French 4. I took handwritten notes for the duration of each class. Then I typed reflections at the end of each visit. Following the entirety of the observation period, I conducted an informal debrief interview. The limitation of this participant observation meant that including

II. Methods of Analysis

Having established the methods of data collection, next the methods of analysis will take on three key phases. The three phases include memoic notes, *récits de vie*⁵, and finally comparative thematic analysis. Next, each phase of analysis provided a triangulated insight into the data of the individuals, the comparison amongst the individuals, and ultimately my own perspectives, biases and subjectivities.

i. Contextual analysis of observational data in memoic notes

The first phase is that of memoic notes taken regularly based on the interview themes, as well as on emerging themes surrounding attitudes towards grammar and culture (Bernard 2018). Additionally, this phase of analysis addressed the researcher's bias in observational data as presented by Peshkin's (1988) "In Search of Subjectivity – One's own," by identifying the emotional reactions to educator perspectives and practices. This helped to identify when my observational comments and notes were focused too much from a place of personal bias. Ultimately the goal of this analysis was to cultivate a sense of awareness so I could more effectively represent the comments and perspectives of the participants in this study.

ii. Recit de vie

The second phase of analysis was conducted in a bibliographic style called *récit de vie* as presented by (Bertaux 1997). This method of analysis aims to present background information about the participants. However, it is not just any biographical

⁵ *Récits de vie* or "recounts of life"

information, it presents the part of the participant's life most relevant for the research question at hand. Bertaux (1997) explains that by presenting several *récits de vie* one after another, the researcher has the goal of presenting commonalities amongst the participants, in their "social dimensions." In the case of this study, my goal was to uncover the relationship between background information and current perspectives about language education and the language classroom, therefore these *récits de vie* present the educator's journey to the profession. The benefit of this phase is that the reader may first familiarize herself with the details about each individual participant before moving to the portion that will compare the participant's experiences.

iii. Semi-structured interviews and thematic comparative analysis

Finally, the third phase of analysis was conducted in a comparative thematic style. For this phase I utilized the Thematic Network Analysis, wherein basic themes, organizing themes, and global themes are developed (Attride-Stirling 2001). Next thematic comparative analysis was performed to further mobilize any details that form the *récits de vie* to better perceive any commonalities amongst the participants. Notes were taken during interviews on top of full recordings, conducted either on Zoom or with an audio-recorder. Each interview lasted between one and two hours. Interviews were then transcribed by myself, which took approximately three to six hours depending upon the length of the interview and how quickly the participant spoke. The process of transcription meant I could become more intimately familiar with each participant's story, and how those stories were being told. After initial completion of the interviews, an additional listen was performed to ensure transcription accuracy. Finally, each transcription was re-read to identify and color-code emerging themes of *background information, professionalization, perspectives on language learners, perspectives on pedagogy and curriculum, and culture and communication*. Two of the nine interviews took place in French at the suggestion of the participant. The translations of those transcriptions appear in italics through this document.

The breadth of data analysis possible for these nine participant interviews, three professional development event observations, and classroom participant observation meant I was able to examine their experiences to better understand their beliefs and

ideologies surrounding language education. In this qualitative study, I will lay a foundation for future qualitative research, using anthropological perspective to address methods of world language teaching in American classrooms. Moreover, it will promote a shift towards understanding the influence of educators' backgrounds on their methods of teaching, and consequently, examine intercultural communicative competence as a standard. Finally, through this cross-analysis, a better understanding of when an educator breaks with socialization, and how this takes place, can demonstrate what might otherwise be hidden in a quantitative analysis.

Chapter 3: Récits de vie

I. Who are the participants

The experiences of these participants range from teaching in the 1970s to the present, during a global pandemic. As such their experiences stretch from before any language standards were developed to ACTFL's third version of the *World-Readiness Standards*. During that time, ACTFL set up a headquarters in New York, and slowly expanded to host both national and regional conferences. Additionally, they boast a membership of over 13,000 language educators and administrators. This sample size therefore spans the same time period when language education underwent changes in policy and practice as implemented by ACTFL. While it is not a large enough sample to conclude whether those changes are widespread, it does provide an interesting point for understanding which perspectives on language education have endured, and which have changed. These participants have all visited or lived abroad in a range of places, including Martinique, Mexico, France, Spain, and Germany. Some have worked abroad at international schools, or at companies (e.g. engineering firms). All participants express a deep desire to cultivate a love of language in their learners, and that ultimately their own pathways to becoming language educators were motivated by their own desire to be life-long learners.

In the first part of my analysis, I will present the *récit de vie* for each participant. I will begin with their early experience with the language, their experiences abroad, and then what brought them to the profession of teaching. Finally, I will highlight how long they have been teaching at the time of the interview as well as what their cited goals are for their learners. This section will provide the foundational details for the next part of analysis: the comparative thematic analysis.

Note: All demographic information is accurate including years taught, gender, language taught, and grade levels taught. However, their names and details about the locations of the participants have been changed to protect their identities.

Sandra, retired French teacher

This interview took place at her home in the Fall of 2020. Sandra has an important place in the Rocky Mountain west's French community. She is the founder of an Alliance Française chapter, and she was a significant contributor to the annual summer French camp. She is originally from the Midwest. Sandra's adventures with French began when she attended Sweet Berry College in an off-year from Rowlands College. Her roommate discovered you could take a year off to attend Sweet Berry, in order to go to the Sorbonne in Paris and earn academic credit at Rowlands College. Sandra lived with a French family near the Jardin de Luxembourg. She returned to the states to finish school, then met her husband, whose job took them back to Paris for two more years, during the post WWII, French reconstruction. They lived in a suburb called "Mal-Maison." Sandra's family returned to the Midwest and then eventually made their way to the Rocky Mountain West. At this point, Sandra's children were older, and she felt ready to do something with her French language skills. She obtained some teacher training and took on a long-term substitute position at Rocky Senior High School. When the former teacher couldn't return, Sandra took on the full-time position, and remained there for about three years. When her husband was transferred to another town, Sandra continued to work on her French skills, taking courses at the University, and finding ways to get involved in the community. She eventually stumbled upon a long-term substitute position at Highland High School, and much like her time at Rocky Senior High, that position became permanent for her. She worked at Highland for three more years, until she left the profession for medical issues in the family.

Sandra's time as an educator was short-lived, and many years ago, and therefore the details of her classroom experience were limited. However, she recalled thoroughly enjoying it. When discussing her teaching, Sandra was surprised she liked it so well. She had sworn off three professions, three things she would never do, teaching being one of them. Sandra may not have been in the classroom long, but she says every now and then she'll have a student approach her and say "bonjour." At the time of interview she mentioned a nurse that stopped by and said, "Madame , comment c'est un plaisir de vous voir." Her experience offers an interesting glimpse back in time as she studied and lived in France during the post WWII reconstruction, and she taught French in the 1970s.

For Sandra, her time abroad was the most remarkable. She easily recalled her neighbors in Mal-Maison and what it was like to live in France during reconstruction. She cited using these pieces of her experience in the classroom to highlight French culture and community, and to try to bring those elements of French culture alive. Sandra's experiences took place during a pre-global time, on the cusp of open borders and travel. She studied and lived abroad during a period when world wars were still impacting how communities were learning to interact. Her experience also represents a prerequisite to when ACTFL and the World-Readiness Standards were being developed. Therefore, her experiences, amongst others, paved the way for the changes in how we see language. In Sandra's opinion, language provides her learners with a broader worldview.

Chuck, retired Spanish teacher

Chuck's interest in learning Spanish was piqued in middle school, when a student from Mexico joined his class. Because this student spoke little English, Chuck was inspired to take three years of Spanish in high school to communicate with his classmate. He found he enjoyed it. He then went on to take courses in college to fulfill requirements. After two years of Spanish instruction, he decided to study abroad after his sophomore year of college. He spent a summer in Querétaro, colonial Mexico. When he returned to the University of Rocky Mountain West he decided to study Spanish Education with the intention to return to Mexico after college. Upon his graduation in August, he headed to Marchia Michacan, Mexico without any connections or plans. After four months there, he returned to the US, where he got three job offers. He took the position at American Falls, ID and taught there for two years before getting a position at his alma mater, Highland High School. He taught at Highland for 24 years, bringing his total Spanish-teaching experience to 26 years. He retired in 2016, just as the school was implementing the international baccalaureate (IB) program. He still works with students one-on-one. Chuck describes his experience learning Spanish and becoming a Spanish teacher as "typical" of his Spanish buddies.

As Chuck's experiences began in the 90s and finished in 2016, his learning and teaching experiences straddle the implementation of ACTFL's *World-Readiness Standards*, as well as the movement towards more integrated language classes, where

culture and communication are emphasized and perfecting grammatical structures are de-emphasized. For Chuck the goal was always to be flexible and to engage the students. He expressed wanting to bring his students a broader understanding of language and how it works. He was not a fan of the more communicative pedagogies. Finally, he wanted to show them a “slice of life,” through videos, music, and stories.

Jackie, retired French language teacher

Originally from a Midwestern state, Jackie’s story is full of twists and turns which led her to teach all levels of French at Rocky Mountain High School, until her retirement in the spring of 2021. During her undergraduate degree, she wanted to avoid the teaching profession, but the more courses in English and French she took, the more she found herself being pulled towards the profession. She ended up studying in Burgundy, France, which solidified her interest in living and working abroad. She stayed with a host family for six weeks, and describes the experience as being one of the most challenging she’s ever had. She said while living with the family she learned “some of the less positive sides of French family culture.” This did not deter her from returning as an “Assistant de Langue” to teach English in Dijon. Her husband joined her on this adventure, and she recalls this time as being simple, when they didn’t have much but “they made it work.” Upon her return to the Rocky Mountain West, she taught at South School – a private K-8 school, where she taught Language Arts and French for 21 years. At this institution she focused on experiential learning, taking students to the local French bakery, or the grocery store, and using language to navigate the store. After 21 years, she moved to Vietnam where she taught English and led French club on the side, then returned to South School for a year. After one year more there, she moved on the International School. While she loved teaching at IS, she and her husband decided to move closer to their children, which meant returning to the Rocky Mountain west. Jackie found a position at Rocky Mountain High School and taught there for five years before her retirement.

During her interview she mentioned that for many of her students, even the prospect of other people speaking French was somewhat surprising. For the students she taught, her travel was not commonplace, and this led Jackie to incorporate more of her experiences abroad into her curriculum. Jackie experienced several insecurities about her

career at Rocky Mountain High, especially at the outset. Having so many years of experience in the classroom she felt that her struggles were unwarranted. However, she had previously taught at private and international schools, which meant a student with very different cultural capital and exposure to language and travel. This created a challenging entry into the Rocky Mountain High School environment, as she often felt that based on her years of teaching she *shouldn't* have been struggling so much. Ultimately, though, she found working with students at Rocky Mountain High was very rewarding. Unlike some of her private school days, this population wasn't as likely to travel or have traveled, and she found that through sharing her experiences abroad, she could bridge that gap. She hoped to inspire and cultivate a curiosity for other languages and cultures in her students such that they would develop an "absolute love of language."

Laura, Spanish teacher

Laura is a Spanish teacher at Farmington High School. At the time of interview, she was in her 30th year of teaching, with 29 of those years as Farmington and one year as a long-term substitute at Brockman High School. However, 30 years of teaching Spanish was not what Laura had in mind for herself. When she started at the University, she selected pre-law as her major, citing that crime TV shows were "big at the time." Once she got into her program, she realized it wasn't for her. She took a Spanish class that she "had no intention of taking," only to discover that it could be a gateway for another goal of hers: to travel. She spent a quarter, or three months, in Salamanca, Spain and "by accident fell in love with Spanish," as well as with navigating other communities. When she returned home to the University of Rocky Mountain West, she decided to pursue a degree in Spanish education, after which she went on to teach. While this wasn't her initial intention, she confessed that secretly she had always wanted to teach. Over the years, Laura has attended numerous professional development workshops and noticed changes in styles of instruction and pedagogical methods.

In her early days as an educator, she attended an event she claims changed what she expected of her students. The presenter used only Russian, so she realized it was possible to use more of the target language even with novice learners. Laura made several changes to the way she teaches, including using more target language, and integrating

culture as part of her curriculum instead of only having cultural days. She has witnessed the shifts in language pedagogy by attending professional development seminars hosted by ALT and the ACTFL. She currently teaches Spanish 1, 3, and AP Spanish. Laura is from a largely rural state in the Rocky Mountain west, and while there is no place she'd rather be, she feels it's important to cultivate an awareness, curiosity, and interest of the world "on the other side of our beautiful mountains."

Marie, French teacher

Her passion for language and curiosity led to an extensive conversation at the post-conference happy hour. To my surprise, she was also the childhood friend of the same friend who introduced me to Chuck, so when it came time to find participants, she was more than willing to give her time, send me documents from her classroom, and offer any follow-up time I might need.

Originally from a largely rural town, Garden-fellows, in the Rocky Mountain West, Marie became a French teacher as a third career. Her father was a veteran, and she mentions being able to travel with him. Additionally, her grandparents were from the Midsouth, and they traveled extensively. She recalled the gifts they brought her from around the world, and it was those gestures which inspired her to want to travel one day. At sixteen, her family moved to a larger metropolitan town, Rocky East, where she had the opportunity to take a language. While everyone else seemed to lean towards Spanish, she chose French, "to do something different." When asked about her experiences as a high school student, she didn't recall much, but she did remember being part of the after school French club program. Her high school also offered a foreign exchange program, through which she ended up in Denmark. She realized it was common for people to speak three or more languages outside the United States. She felt embarrassed by her lack of knowledge and ability to speak a language other than English, and upon her return to the United States she decided it was necessary for her to master French.

Her journey with the language continues in college where she minored in French and majored in Economics and Mathematics. With her French studies, she took the introductory levels and then studied abroad for six months with the IES (International Education of Students) program in Paris. She notes that being in Paris as a student was a

unique experience; that is, one could truly experience the culture of Paris, its museums, theatres, opera, etc., for little to no cost. She was hooked. At the end of her time abroad, she decided to find a job in Paris so she wouldn't have to return home. "I knew my father would make me come back if I didn't have a job." So she went door-to-door searching for an internship for the summer. This internship led to a job for which she returned to Paris after she graduated.

After working and living abroad for many years, she desired a change, and she started a second career in psychology to be more flexible with her family. However, Marie found this career to be "feast or famine": at times too much to handle, at others not a source of stable income. This led her to her third career as a teacher. She had been debating whether to teach math or French. She chose French for two reasons. First, mathematics had changed so much since she was in the field and in school that she'd have had to take several content courses in addition to teacher training. She also didn't want to lose all the French she had gained in her time abroad; even with a French husband, she wanted to keep her French at a higher level. So, upon her return to the largely rural state in the Rocky Mountain West, she offered to help at Rocky Mountain State University, in Rocky East. However, there wasn't much need for more instructors at that level. This is when Marie decided to explore teaching at the high school level. She applied for a provisional license that allowed her to take Curriculum & Instruction courses and do student teaching for three years while also teaching. She started her tenure as a substitute teacher until she got a full-time teaching position. At the time of the interview, she had taught lower French levels at Rocky Senior High School for four years. Finally, Marie started her own younger student program teaching French for five- to ten-year-olds. She feels that students need to be exposed to languages at a younger age, not only because of the research demonstrating this is the most effective time to learn the languages, but also to cultivate a stronger pipeline for learning languages throughout a lifetime.

Marie's main goal in the classroom is to get them to "speak" and to feel okay to make mistakes when using the language. She also wants them to see the difference between French and American perspectives, to recognize there is more than one way to look at an issue. She is an active member of ALT and says that ALT plays an important

part of her overall pedagogical style as did her “Foreign Language Education Methods” course.

Danielle, Spanish linguist

Danielle is from the “middle of nowhere” in the Rocky Mountain West. Currently, Danielle is a linguistics professor at the University of the Rocky Mountain West. She teaches the “Foreign Language Education Methods” course. Danielle began learning Spanish in middle school, continued through high school, and then college. When she entered university, she did not feel confident in her Spanish level and so she restarted at the 100 level. Next, she took extra course work over the summer, after which she was able to enter upper division courses. She continued with her language learning to maintain her skills but felt that she reached proficiency after studying abroad at Quaxa, Mexico. The semester she spent there in 2009 changed the trajectory of her career. Initially, she thought she would be a Spanish and English teacher, but while studying abroad she had the opportunity to collect data for a group of researchers from CUNY and she found she preferred the linguistic research aspect. She now studies language variation and changes both in minority and bilingual varieties.

In addition to her research experiences, Danielle has taught middle school and university-level Spanish. She taught at the middle school level for six years and then at the university level in the Northeastern part of the United States, and then at the University of the Rocky Mountain West. She has experience teaching upper and lower division courses, as well as the Foreign Language Education Methods course. Depending on the level of student she is teaching, Danielle has different goals for each, including oral proficiency, and understanding of prescribed bias associated with minority languages. Danielle was a member of ALT earlier in her career but isn’t any longer. She does encourage her students in the Methods course to be part of ALT and ACTFL. Overall, Danielle wants to cultivate an ability to use the language and be comfortable identifying different varieties.

Kendall, German teacher

Kendall is a German educator at Rocky Mountain State University. Prior to her time at Rocky Mountain State, she did her graduate work and taught at a university and grade school in the Midwest. Originally from the Midwest, Kendall started taking German and Spanish at the high school level. She continued learning German in college, with the intention to be an English major, but found she liked her German classes more. She studied abroad for an academic year and graduated with the mindset that she would eventually teach German. She then returned to Germany and worked as a nanny for a year. When she returned to the States, she decided to get her MA in Education. She started a family and lived in Sweden for a few years, where she taught Spanish, German, and Cultural Studies. She discovered that she could complete a MA in German at Midwest University and teach in exchange for her tuition. She opted for this route. Within this part of her story, Kendall admits that she is happiest in the classroom, especially teaching college students.

She taught middle and high school students for six years before moving on to teach college, but she found that the elements of behavior and classroom management would be more frustrating and aggravating than when she was in a college-level classroom. “I would have two bad days and three good days or three bad days and two good days,” she stated. However, her time in the high school setting was fruitful, as one of her most notable mentors was Tony Tyson, a French teacher and ACTFL president in the early 2000s. She is an active ALT member, which is how I was able to connect with this participant. Most recently, Kendall, along with other German educators, have been working on collaborating with high school programs to provide extracurricular experiences. One of the main things Kendall wants her students to get out of her class is to take risks in the language and make communication happen, even if it’s imperfect.

Bailey, Spanish teacher

Bailey is a Spanish educator in the rural Rocky Mountain Western Public Schools. She has taught Spanish for eleven years, starting with a private school. At the time of the interview, she was also the president of ALT, and had been one of the longest standing officers. Originally from a largely rural state in the Rocky Mountain west, she

had not always intended to be a Spanish educator. She earned her BA in Spanish Language and Literatures by accident, alongside her degree in Business Management. She studied abroad in Mexico and, prior to graduation, she was told she had enough credits for a second major. She worked in finance for two years after graduating, and then decided that a move back to her hometown made sense for her at that time.

She went back to school to get her MA in Education. Her first year of teaching proved to be a significant challenge for her. One reason Bailey is so supportive of ALT is she felt she received more support for practices surrounding teaching the language. In her view, her teacher training offered plenty in the realm of classroom management, but lacked the pedagogy support she needed. In fact, she credits the professional development community provided by ALT as the reason she's still teaching. As the Spanish language teacher, she must navigate rural America, where some folks are travelers, some are supportive of learning about other cultures and places, and some view her class as having a political agenda. She teaches levels one through four with a heritage language course. She also volunteers her time to be an intermediary for heritage language speakers, who are often children of refugees. She has two main goals for her learners. First, she wants them to walk away with a functional knowledge of the language and teaches proficiency and "can do" statements. Her second goal, and the one that came up several times throughout her interview, is to cultivate a positive association with the language.

Kylie, French teacher

Kylie is a full-time French language educator at Highland High School. Originally from the Midwest, she currently teaches levels one through four, where level three and four are the International Baccalaureate program courses. She also helps students prepare for the French AP exam, should they choose to take it. She earned her bachelor's degree in French and went on to take French and Education courses through the University of the Rocky Mountain West. Majoring and teaching in French were not her initial goals. She happened upon the major when she was told she needed to select a major at The Midwest University. When they pointed out how many credits in French she had, she decided to go that route.

She had two important study abroad experiences. The first took place while she was in high school, when she spent a week in France with a French family. The second was a three-week stay in Martinique. While she values these experiences, she also expressed regret that she never lived abroad for a longer period of time. She felt she missed out on the opportunity to integrate more fully into another community because she didn't have enough time to cultivate friendships.

In Kylie's final year of undergraduate education, she added a handful of education courses and was planning to attend The Midwest State with a French Education degree. However, her (now) husband, got a job with the Forest Service, and she decided to move with him. She worked as a teaching assistant at the University of the Rocky Mountain West and then as a substitute teacher for two years. For the past 10 years she has been working at Highland High School, bringing her total time in the classroom to fourteen years. While this was not necessarily her plan all along, she feels things couldn't have worked out better for her. She loves teaching, having something different every day, and challenging herself to be a better educator. The one critique she expressed was the feeling of isolation at times, wanting to collaborate more with her colleagues within the world languages department; COVID has only exacerbated this feeling. Kylie has also been the director of an Alliance Française-sponsored French camp for several summers, and she works closely with other French educators in town. She has not yet been part of ALT, but, prior to the pandemic, she had planned to go to the Spring ALT conference. She described three important things she wants to leave with her students. First, she wants them to have the ability to learn another language, whether French or otherwise. Second, she wants them to realize that what is normal for those in the largely rural state in the Rocky Mountain west might be different someplace else, and finally, that they gain a plurality of perspectives.

Thematic analysis:

Now that I have presented the *récits de vie* for each educator, one can see that their experiences and pathways to becoming a language educator are largely varied. However, each educator has a goal for their learners, as well as experience living, studying, or working abroad. In the next section I will present a comparative analysis of

these educator's perspectives on their early socialization and professionalization, including their views on pedagogy and community, their perspectives on language learners, and their views on resources. Each section will provide insight into how the views of these educators support or shift expectations with regards to unchanging attitudes about language teaching. Finally, I will present creative ritual, micro-ritual, and the rites of passage as a potential framework for understanding how changes in perspectives may have occurred and how changes can continue to be supported.

Chapter 4: Socialization and Rites of Passage

To begin, if language socialization begins early and educators typically teach how they were taught, the original thought was that educators would be pulling from their early exposure to the language to teach it. In order to better understand what this looks like for educators working in a largely rural state in the Rocky Mountains, this first section is meant to capture the background of educators. Understanding how they learned the language and what elements of the process that present as important may also inform on the power of socialization and Deep Structure within the language classroom (Burke, 2011; Duff, 2011; Aguilar, 2007). Furthermore, if educators teach how they were taught, these early years would provide insight into what one might see happening today (Ishihara & Cohen, 2010). While the early years learning the language still play a role in these educators' stories, the findings of this study suggest that not all educators follow the exact methods and practices of their early experiences. Instead, they glean pieces from several stages as they grow from learners to teachers. In this chapter I will present testimonies on early exposure to the language, the influences of their early teachers, their study abroad experiences, and finally on the decision to become language educators themselves. Ultimately, these educators had different stages of socialization, the first being more about the affinity or positive association for the classroom, the second a curiosity for the unknown, then finally their decisions to become educators: each of which formed and solidified their love of language.

I. Early Socialization

Early language socialization might lead to an understanding of practices that could be challenging to negate. For some, it happened as late as at 16 years old, for others they were exposed to language courses in middle school. This section will present and examine the reflections and perspectives of the participants on their time being learners themselves. Early memories indicate their initial experiences in a language classroom were less remarkable than I initially thought. However, as regards learning to use language, they nonetheless recall a positive feeling.

i. On being learners

Beliefs and expectations about how one learns and how one interacts can be deeply ingrained in our experience. Pajares (1992), for example, discusses how early experiences can shape beliefs on an unconscious level and make them difficult to change. “People are often loath to engage in discussions that touch on what they feel are their most deeply held beliefs (never argue politics or religion), but, when they do, they usually manage to survive the ordeal with preconceptions comfortably intact” (317). This is further supported by the studies performed by Bangou (2010) Busch (2010), whose work demonstrates that even when intervention is utilized in the study to change educator beliefs about what’s possible, the early beliefs and understandings can resurface. At the outset of the interviews, I anticipated this early exposure would have a tremendous impact on everyone’s reasons for becoming educators as well as how they teach in the classroom. While the latter may still be true, for the most part when reflecting on their time in high school, the participants didn’t spend much time discussing those early years.

For example, when asked about what the classroom was like, several educators had difficulty recalling details. For instance, when asked to describe her early years learning Spanish, Danielle offered,

I really have very few memories of what that was like, honestly, I think there were a lot more worksheets going on? (Danielle 2020)

While Danielle expressed enjoying Spanish, she didn’t feel that she “really” started learning it until later on. This suggests that these early years may have provided an introduction to the language without necessarily instructing them how to use it or providing example methods of instruction that she pulls from today. Danielle is not the only educator that found it difficult to recall what their early years were like. Marie also has some things to say about her early experiences with French.

Il y avait plein de monde qui prenait l’espagnol et je voulais faire quelque chose d’un peu different...Le cours lui-même, c’était... j’ai pas de souvenir! (Marie 2020)

Translation: There were plenty of people taking Spanish and I wanted to do something a little different...the class-itself? I have no memory!”

Marie recalls making the decision to take French instead of Spanish, largely because it seemed more interesting to her. She was drawn to the language and its cultural activities, but with regards to the actual class, compared to her mathematical class she states “j’ai pas de souvenir!” When describing the early years, these participants didn’t have much to report. This therefore makes it challenging to fully assess on what level socialization may have taken place in those early years, as well as what kinds of beliefs may have formed.

However, there are small clues to what they did take away from the classroom. Small descriptions of early years of language study, suggests that skills cultivated didn’t lead to an ability to communicate. Words or expressions such as “didn’t *really* learn” or “it wasn’t *quality*” evoke a current understanding that past language learning wasn’t representative of what should or could be taking place. This is further supported by the fact that several participants mentioned that even with their high school years of language instruction, they restarted at the college level, often feeling their skills were inadequate. For example, Danielle states,

I started quote unquote in middle school, but then really actually started learning it in high school. (Danielle 2020)

Even still, Danielle describes her early years in college doing an accelerated 100 level summer course in Spanish before being bumped up to the 300, so even if her skill set might have been ready, she didn’t feel “confident” to move into a higher level. Similarly, Marie reported that she didn’t feel prepared to move to an advanced level after her high school language experiences.

J’étais pas aussi bonne pour être à niveau 3 ou 103...donc j’ai recommencé pendant les études supérieurs, et le niveau est beaucoup accéléré là. (Marie 2020)

Translation: *I wasn’t good enough to be in level 3 or 103, so I restarted during my high education years and the level was more accelerated there.*

Not feeling “strong enough” for level 103, she started again at the beginning of her language studies. This highlights the fact that they didn’t feel prepared for higher levels and started the process again. Laura affirms that her time in high school “wasn’t quality,” and when she got into college, she started to *really* study the language. Having had these courses but not remembering them may also suggest that as learners the method of

presenting the materials was less engaging or simplified as compared to the college years. Regardless, through my interviews I did not fully find what I was expecting, which was a direct link between an educator's current classroom practice and their past experiences in the high school classroom. As such, an assessment of the impacts from the initial socialization are more difficult to examine than has been anticipated.

Furthermore, how Bailey experienced language education may provide further insight into the frustration that can result from a particular type of language instruction. For example, reflecting on when the language started to make sense for her, Bailey recalls that her years in high school were not only challenging, but they didn't help her to make the connection between grammar and communication.

When I started using the language more for actual things because in high school it was definitely just a lot of just grammar and that never made sense to me, and I didn't really know. I was like 'oh I can't memorize all the stuff like this...' it was so hard, and I was not good at it. (Bailey 2021)

Bailey is referring to what has been termed *traditional* by Celce-Murcia (2007) or what Burke (2011) would call *Deep Structure* styles of teaching language. By having explicit grammar taught outside of the communicative and cultural context, learners can feel frustration, because the relationship between structure and use isn't obvious. This style can make recall more challenging for those who learn more effectively through context and not pattern (Chaudron 1988; Celce-Murcia 2007). The relationship between learning language through memorizing phrases and grammatical structures, feeling bad at those things, and thinking one isn't capable of learning a language stands out as a common misconception (Busch 2010; Bartram 2010). For Bailey her early years with the language were memorable because she struggled to understand the way grammar was being presented, she struggled to memorize vocabulary outside of a communicative context. Despite this, she continued with the language beyond the high school years.

A clear differentiation is emerging which suggests that the newer methods surrounding language education is about communication and the old is to produce and memorize structures. Rather than seeing their early years as being the central influencer on best practices and the Deep Structure format of language education, their perceptions on their initial socialization as learners suggests they are moving away from those earlier

methods of teaching language. Furthermore, this may be in relation to the later experiences they had, where in learning to speak the language, they also shifted their beliefs. In contrast, if they had only learned the language in this environment then they may not be as receptive to trying new methods. Bangou (2010), Aguilar (2007) and Pajares (1992) support the concept that teacher beliefs and experiences play a key role in the adaptability and flexibility of an educator's understanding of language teaching, and ultimately what stands in the way of changing a teacher's pedagogy. If beliefs about how to learn a language are formed at a young age, and these educators were first learners, then the surprising element of this portion of the study is that they express seeing and practicing their craft differently from their early years. Therefore, as I examine the experiences of these educators, I will explore where change can take place.

ii. Perspectives on their teachers (mentors)

A key component of learning and socializing are the experts or mentors that bring us to learn ways of interacting (Duff 2011). While the majority of the participants claimed they did not pull much from their early years as learners into their classrooms, there is still a common association they glean from their experiences. Most participants reported a positive association with their instructors during those early years, regardless of the level of efficacy in the teaching methods. Another key element for continued study is the positive association learners have with their instructors. Bartram's (2010) study cites the role of the educator as being one of the most important in keeping learners in the language classroom. Kendall and Kylie both come from the Midwest, and both express different memories about their exposure to language in high school.

I love my French teacher from Homespeak, from High School, you know she's –we're Facebook friends and we still talk and everything and she began this journey that I think about how we learned about Cathedral and Jean de la Fontaine and we did the Little Prince and I still do that because I love it...I can't NOT do the Little Prince. (Kylie 2020)

In other words, Kylie is not only still in contact with her high school language teacher, but she also pulls from her early course work. The mentorship component is an important part of learning the nuances of a language and social interaction (Duff 2011). Kylie's early connection with her educator played a key role in her continuing on in the language

as well as what she selects for her classroom. Kendall reflects on her high school teachers with a similar admiration, and yet within her testimony there is an important nuance.

And I had really, pretty amazing German teachers, like my high school German teacher was kind of a nut. But whatever, I loved that class—it was more of an emotional attachment like that was fun class. High School, like my professors were really great...I mean we covered a grammar book from front to back and wrote sentences at nauseum, and wrote essays and corrected essays so yeah, but nothin' you know that I was like ugh...this is awful, because I loved it all. Still do. So when I have those students who are like we want grammar we want grammar, I'm like "I know you want grammar I love it, but not the way we're gonna do it. (Kendall 2021)

Kendall's remarks, such as "it was more of an emotional attachment like that was fun class," suggest the style of pedagogy she experienced in high school may not reflect what she's doing now, but that her early education in German still has a positive memory, a fondness for her time in high school. However, there is reflexivity surrounding whether the content of her high school years would really help her achieve her goals. Similarly, Jackie describes her French teacher from middle school with fondness and a fully-painted picture of Madame Rose that puts you right into her classroom.

I actually hadn't taken French or a language in high school and I like to tell my students this story because you know sometimes, I think they think you have to have studied it since you were a kid to be any good at it. And I had taken French in middle school from a woman by the name of Madame Rose and she was sort of a —she really kind of looked like Marie Antoinette— she had this hair piled up and this bright orange lip stick. I loved Madame Rose. But we really just sort of played games and I didn't really learn that much but it had a real positive feeling. (Jackie 2021)

At the end of her story, we learn about Madame Rose and the kind of emotional impact it left on Jackie as a learner. Even though Jackie reports not having "learned" much, the positive association she gained from that experience provided a foundation to further cultivate her curiosity for other languages and cultures. Danielle too found that working with educators she looked up to led to a shift towards Spanish Linguistics.

Because I started learning about linguistics in Spanish, I guess. Yeah. I wish I had a better answer. But I mean I think probably just the teachers I had were people I really looked up to right? And like said things that resonated with me and made things fun [laughs] is probably why I stuck around initially. (Danielle 2020)

As Danielle describes her learning experience and the integral part her educators played in keeping her studying the language, her apology about wishing she had a better answer highlights the expectation that these things can't "just happen."

Finally, for the early exposure to the language, the positive association that educators have with the classroom experience may be a central part to their own goals later on. Marie also had little to no memory of her courses, but she did remember the extracurricular activities, the experiences that were mimicking French life.

Mais en français, bon ça me disait trop rien, sauf après l'école on a fait quelques *fundraisers* et un repas je me rappelle, un repas très français avec entrée, plat, dessert, j'avais jamais eu un expérience comme ça. Donc ça commençait être plus intéressant." (Marie 2020)

Translation: *But in French, that didn't really jive with me too much. Except after school when we did a few fundraisers and a dinner I remember, a French meal with starter, entrée, and dessert. I had never had an experience like that and so that started to be more interesting to me.*

As Marie describes her classroom experience versus experiencing the cultural activities after school, she recalls enjoying the process of experiencing how a French meal differed from what she experienced at home. Finding that her coursework was less engaging, her key take-away from learning a language was more about learning another way of living.

To continue, the memorable moments from the early years of language learning highlight the relationship with engagement more so than with language acquisition. In the case of Madame Rose or Kendall's German teacher who was a "nut," the positive association with being in the language class left a lasting mark, but not necessarily the level of functionality they obtained with the language. In her study on educator beliefs, Nespor (1987) found that as learners, if educators had an experience that was particularly negative, this might frame what not to do in the classroom. As such the mentor can also become the "anti-teaching" example. While most of these educators describe positive feelings about their teachers, they do not cite those early experiences for how to learn to use the language, particularly in an oral setting.

This might explain why several educators started back at the 100 level once entering the college sphere, because their high school classes may not have had the goal

of language functionality. This may also reflect the “older traditional” methods of language learning that focused on explicit grammar instruction, translation, cultural days, experiences that allow students to eat “crêpes” or “tortillas” but without fully engaging in the relationship between languages and cultures as being integrated entities that reflect communities (Burke 2011). Furthermore, if their initial use of language in context wasn’t until college or until studying in the host community, then their initial language socialization didn’t happen in the high school classroom. As such, their early socialization would have continued past these high school years. However, what they were socialized in might have been the need to cultivate affect within their learners, which I will discuss in the chapter on perspectives on learners.

II. Study abroad and rites of passage

Considering the unusual nature of these participant perspectives on their early socialization in language education, further examination of their learning experiences included their time abroad. As they identified past methods of language instruction as being inadequate, these participants are also highlighting the fact that somewhere their understanding of what language instruction *should* be has shifted. Regardless of the strength of early second language socialization, these educators go through their own rite of passage through the study abroad experience. Often called the “hook” or where everything “clicks,” stepping out of one’s community into another appears to play a key role in shaping how these language educators view language instruction. Incidentally, this also places them in a large minority, since only about 10% of Americans study abroad (Macedo 2019). By removing themselves from the communities they know and entering into another space, they also open themselves up for transformation (van Gennep 1988; Srinivas 2018). These educators chose to enter the unknown, liminal space of living in new communities. Next, by entering these communities, they were changed by their experiences and their understanding of the world shifted. Finally, upon re-entry they chose to share their experiences through the teaching profession. These three phases reflect the rites of separation, the transition rite, and the rites of incorporation.

i. Rites of separation – a hunger for the unknown

To begin, the first phase in the rites of passage is the rite of separation. The rite of separation provides the first step in breaking one's reality and the potential to shift what is considered normal (van Gennep 1988). One of the motivating factors to study a language was the opportunity to travel and explore new worlds beyond the Rocky Mountains. For those who are originally from a largely rural state in the Rocky Mountains, particularly the smaller towns, the language was their avenue to travel and see the world. There seemed to be an underlying understanding that they had a curiosity about the world beyond the mountains and saw the language as the vehicle to get them beyond Rocky Mountain country. Having found themselves in a required class and thinking they might as well take advantage of the opportunity to travel and get out of their hometowns, the language classroom acted as a kind of ignitor for a desire to become proficient in their language of study. For instance, when asked about her reasons for learning Spanish, Laura provided the context that seeing more of the world was a key factor.

And really to be quite honest, the biggest thing was I knew I needed out of this largely rural state in the Rocky Mountains. I knew I needed to see something more and a professor whose class I was in was taking a trip- was taking a group of students—Tony Val Trummel – who use to teach at the University of The Rocky Mountain West, was taking a group of students to Salamanca, Spain. They still do that trip and told me about it. He just came into the restaurant I was working in and I got chatting with him and he said that, and I thought “oh that would be a good thing for me to do. I'd really like to go somewhere else,” and kind of by accident fell in love with Spain and Spanish. (Laura 2020)

The value Laura recounted about this experience is very clear: that for her it was important to understand what the world was like outside of what she had been raised in. Regardless of how she feels about this western state in the Rocky Mountains, she expressed that encouraging her own students to travel and see parts of the world outside of this one remains an important piece of her work as an educator. This is because going abroad gave her a surprising pathway to a career she loves. Comparatively, Danielle describes her dedication to learning Spanish as due in part to the fact that she wanted the opportunity to travel.

It was a great opportunity to travel because I was like from the middle of no-where in The Rocky Mountains. And I was like well I'm gonna at least have to do a study abroad if I do this so... (Danielle 2020)

Also from a small town, Danielle felt pulled to explore communities beyond her own. For each educator, going abroad was one of the benefits of studying the language, an opportunity to go elsewhere. Underneath this opportunity is also an expressed pull or curiosity towards exploring new places. For example, Marie recalls being a young girl and admiring the stories of travel shared with her by her grandparents.

Je voyais ces puppets qui venaient de France ou Amérique du sud, etc...ça me faisait rêver. Donc j'ai toujours trouvé ça assez chouette. (Marie 2020)

Translation: *I saw these toys they'd bring from France or South America etc and that made me dream. So, I have always thought that was pretty cool.*

As Marie discusses this memory, she connects it with one of the main reasons she had a curiosity to travel. Not only did Marie end up going abroad, she also worked abroad for many years.

Moreover, as the participant with the most life experience, Sandra found herself with the opportunity to study and eventually work abroad. Her initial time abroad would have been in the early 1900s, which means she went abroad prior to the modern era in which study abroad programs are more abundant.

Well, I didn't start out at Rowland as a French major. I was taking some French; I'd had it in high school. Um...but ...I had a wonderful roommate we lived in an off-campus house. And she said about the middle of our sophomore year, she said, 'you know we could drop out of Rowland for a year and they will accept credits from Sweet Berry, the women's college from the south, and you can go to school at the Sorbonne' and it turned out it didn't cost our parents any more than it would have gone a year at Rowland. *But it was something that was so tempting*, that we did it. We went over and spent a year living in a home with a French speaking hostess. (Sandra 2020)

As she describes her opportunity to go, there is little room to question whether this was the right choice for her or not. Similar to Marie, there is an expressed desire to live in another community, a kind of pull. Vocabulary used to describe this going abroad such as *tempting, dream, needed out, and have to*, all evoke a level of intrinsic motivation and curiosity to explore the unknown. Or could the affect cultivated in the early classroom

years be enough to evoke this kind of motivation to go abroad and engage in a rite of separation? While their early experiences aren't associated with the best practices for learning language, the positive association they cultivated may have socialized learners to be open and curious enough about other speech communities to travel. Therefore, these participants were able to engage in rites of separation and potentially shift what they understood as the best practices in the language classroom.

ii. Transition rite – a different understanding

The transition rite is the stage where participants learn about themselves by finding a deeper understanding of the language they are studying. In this rite they also discover understandings of how other communities live, work, and spend time together. Moreover, the time abroad is described as a significant and remarkable step that led to language proficiency. Unlike the memories surrounding high school classrooms, all nine participants had extensive stories of their time abroad, whether that included teaching ESL in Mexico, meeting Aimé Césaire in Martinique, living in Paris during reconstruction, working as a nanny in Munich, or as an English assistant in Dijon, the abroad experience is not only the time when these participants discover what it means to effectively communicate in a language other than their native tongue, but also a time when they learn about themselves, who they are, and what they want to do with their lives.

The initial abroad experience acts as the rite of transition for becoming a life-long learner. Several participants reflect on this first time as being the moment they “fall in love” with the language or find themselves impatient to learn more. As Kendall suggests, “that’s kind of the hook, your study abroad experience” (2020). As it provides an entirely new venue to experience communication and social interaction, the transition rite leads the educator to face unexpected realities. When Marie had her first abroad experience in Denmark as a high schooler, the different lifeways she experienced made her realize that not every culture surrounds their dinner conversation about work. Furthermore, she experienced deep embarrassment about her inability to speak a language other than English, which inspired her to return home and dedicate her life to mastering French.

Donc cette expérience au Danemark j'arrivais à maîtriser le danois après trois mois, j'étais humiliée parce que les danois parlaient l'anglais mais impeccable [laughs] et donc j'avais un peu honte d'être la naïve américaine...l'américaine naïve et bête, après cette expérience je me suis dit il faut que je maîtrise le français. (Marie 2020)

Translation: So the experience in Denmark, I had just started mastering Danish after three months but I was humiliated because the Danish spoke impeccable English so I was a little ashamed to be the naïve American, the American naïve, and stupid. After this experience I told myself that I had to master French.

The feelings of humiliation and shame that Marie discovers in this first study abroad experience motivated her to further go abroad and master French so she wouldn't be the "naïve and stupid American." While this moment brought on a difficult realization about herself and her community, it also challenged her to change the narrative and become an American who could speak French fluently.

Equally, Sandra's memories of living abroad highlight some differences between French and American cultures and while she did say "I really did learn a lot of French," the underlying message is that she managed to integrate into a small community outside of Paris, Mal-Maison.

And it turned out that John and I, on this short street were the only married couple with children. They was very....it was SO hard to get a divorce in France in those days. And Lucien and Valdine, were charming and very nice and didn't speak English, or he spoke a little bit but not much. SO it was a gain, completely...and their maid Clementine of course didn't speak English. And then when Valdine went to Africa on a business trip and brought back a monkey, we had a monkey who didn't speak English, but loved playing with our son who was born in Paris. And umm...so you know I was just inundated in French by this time. John had taken it in college and did fairly well. (Sandra 2020)

The details that Sandra recalls here are incredible, considering the amount of time that has passed. As she describes these memories, the important details that come up are more about the way she lived and how the culture might have been different or the history of the place, than was the learning of French.

For Jackie as well, studying the language in college was at first intimidating, but she found that going abroad was an integral part of her life experiences.

So then I was forced to take a language to get this English degree which is what I had finally decided I wanted to do. And I was nervous about it. I thought, I was intimidated at the college level, I just thought it would be super hard. And then I started taking it and then the next thing I knew I really *liked* it and I had a pretty incredible professor here named Roman Ziloui kind of an old school guy here and he's not around here anymore, but he was wonderful and next thing I knew I did a study abroad; I did the Burgundy program they used to have here. (Jackie 2021)

Furthermore, Jackie spoke with living the French life as being a key takeaway from both her abroad experiences, one being more positive and the other more challenging. For her first experience, the family life was particularly challenging. She lived in Burgundy for a quarter, not taking classes but working on a research project and living with a family. She describes the conflict she ran into living with this family who seemed to take advantage of the exchange by having her work more hours than was agreed upon.

Jackie: It was a *very complex you know and to do that all in another language*. The good side is that none of 'em spoke English at ALL and I was incredibly isolated and so *if I wanted to do anything I had to just completely submerge myself in the language and so that's what I did. I mean I'm very very grateful for the learning I did*. Whereas some of my students—some of my colleagues they lived—you don't really say colleagues co-students?

Researcher: Classmates?

Jackie: Classmates! There you go. They lived in other situations that were much more friendly and happy, but they learned I think, less. They you know their families wanted them to teach English or whatever. So there's good things that come out of everything, right? And I learned about myself. And I learned some of the less positive sides of French family culture. I didn't know that could happen anywhere, but some of it was because they were French. So. Anyway.

While it may be easy to romanticize living abroad, Jackie's story reminds us that there are struggles that come from putting oneself into a new community and not necessarily knowing how to navigate it. In her own reflection she suggests that by facing this conflict and having to navigate cultural conflict in a language she wasn't comfortable in led her to learn more about herself than those who might have had a more "friendly and happy" experience. She mentions that this time was really an incredible lesson that not all French life is glamorous. Jackie returned to France as an Assistant de Langue in Dijon, where she and her husband lived for about a year.

It wasn't an extravagant time so we really... we felt we really were more interested in just culture and just sittin' in a café, and I've always felt that way even in Paris like yes you have to see all the things, but it really is more fun to go to a grocery store and you know...go to a movie, just sit around. (Jackie 2021)

For Jackie, this time was about experiencing the lifestyle more so than touring museums or going to monuments. For her this daily ritual of living as the French lived became the most remarkable component of her time abroad. She went on to work in international schools in Denmark and Vietnam. For Jackie, the travel bug and the desire to experience other cultures continued until her daughters encouraged her to return home. This transition rite led Jackie to discover her love for living in other communities and led to her continuing to seek out new communities and cultures.

The adaption to new daily life practices is in and of itself a microrituel. As these travelers experience the transition rite, the microrituel that shifts how they see daily life, new social practices become more and more integrated into their new norm (Javeau 1994). While living abroad in France, she expressed feeling completely taken by the Parisian way of life.

J'ai fait six mois à Paris...ça m'a complètement, je l'ai adoré. Si on vient de rural Rockies et um...on...j'ai vu tous les tableaux que j'avais étudiés en *Honors English*. Je trouvais quand même on pouvait vivre à Paris en étant étudiant, pour pas, c'était pas une question d'argent. (Marie 2020)

Translation : *I spent six months in Paris, and it completely—, I loved it. If one is from the Rocky Mountain West and um...I saw all of the paintings that I had studied in Honors English. I found that one could live in Paris as a student for little, and money wasn't an issue.*

For Marie, she was influenced by the fact that as a student she could live a full life and money wasn't a barrier. Juxtaposed to her life as an American student, she found she could experience the theatre, the opera, good food, and still have some money left over. This afforded her freedoms she didn't have at home. The time she spent abroad brought those elements of study alive. She therefore continued to return, looking for internships and eventually a job that would keep her there for many years. Even though she majored in mathematics and economics, she held on to her French by continuing as a minor. As

her daily practices shifted, Marie's expectations for daily life also shifted, which opened her up to staying in France for many years after her studies were completed.

iii. Rites of separation – going back for more

The degree of separation may lead to a greater degree of transition and therefore transformation. Several educators returned to live, study, and work abroad for a second time. In this instance, the case was made for fine tuning or solidifying language skills. Ultimately, the educators identify that this method of acquiring language was not only more effective but also more enjoyable.

So after my sophomore year, I headed to Mexico, colonial Mexico –Quedethrero – Central Mexico and just did a summer program there with the University of the Pacific Northwest. So uh went to the University, I did a summer program that was six weeks. Uh--of class, living with a family and then two weeks of traveling with a couple of buddies there, I just really really enjoyed it. So, then it was a kind of a matter after sophomore summer of saying, okay, through two more years of college get done and then get back to Mexico *to really fine tune my skills.* (Chuck 2020)

Upon completion of the first experience, the second seems to come from a motivation to bring their language acquisition to a new level. Similar to Chuck, several participants describe the motivation to return to a speech community after undergrad to achieve a higher level of proficiency. Going abroad as a necessary part of proficiency reflects the fact that living in context provides both constant feedback and opportunity to practice bringing someone to a new level of proficiency more quickly. This is due in part to the ability to further separate from one's native community and integrate more completely into the host community. For example, Kendall describes the importance of her return to Germany to be a nanny for a year.

Which is where *I actually like really solidified* my German experience I think like, when I lived in college I went with a whole group of American students so there was a lot of English spoken, even though we did German in our courses but like in our free time it was all English. So then when I was a nanny it was full immersion. (Kendall 2021)

There is an act of making something more permanent when “solidifying” is used. This would follow the proficiency standards as presented by ACTFL that suggests mastery of a language takes continual and consistent exposure and practice. Similarly, Danielle also

described her time in Quaxa, Mexico as being a time when her “Spanish really solidified.” In both cases this suggests that what’s needed for living, working, or studying abroad can lead to a new level of proficiency where the language becomes more integrated and more instinctual when an individual needs to use it. Furthermore, the fact that Kendall pointed to being more integrated in a community as a nanny instead of in her college programs suggests that necessity has a role to play in pushing even the motivated to acquire proficiency in a language. If the choice to go abroad represents the rite of separation, and the rite of transition takes place while abroad, then the degree to which one transitions may also be related to the degree to which they separate. Therefore, returning for a secondary experience may reflect a larger separation and therefore transition.

To continue the necessity of communication proved to be key in Bailey’s journey with language acquisition. Having been frustrated with her communication skills and struggling when it came time to use language to do anything “practical,” she was able to recall and articulate a key moment in her own language study that shifted how she saw language and therefore how she conceived of the process of learning it.

So there’s one moment that I always think of as like “oh, now I know Spanish, Spanish is making sense to me now” and it was when I started thinking about uh words as sound instead of um written words. So when I was listening to people and like part of my um and I think part of why—I don’t know I guess like my literacy is based on written language and so I—and whatever most people their literacy is based on written language, but we think of words as like words and uh how they’re written and where the separations are and so I think I remember being in Mexico, and I’d never taken any linguistics classes before, but I remember being in Mexico and having such a hard time hearing meaning from people when they were speaking to me and I was just like “I can’t tell where the words end” and it occurred to me one day that I was like they said something like you know um” I don’t know like *vamos el parque* or something and I was like--- I don’t know what *salparke* is and I was like combining part of one word with another word ... I remember being like “oh okay I just need to focus on sound and attaching meaning to sound instead of going from sound to word to like picturing it written out in my head [laughs] to then like “oh” ... And yeah I remember that moment and being like “oh I don’t need to do that, I’m just going to try and skip that whole step and just go straight from *vamos-el-parque* meaning something about we’re gonna go to the park or something, I don’t even know---like I don’t even *have to* know exactly what it means. This moment was integral to Bailey’s confidence in communicating in the language and made it so she was able to let go of barriers that were getting in her way. Additionally,

this may also reflect how her brain was thinking about language prior to her necessitating its use in the target community. As her early training reflected the older or more explicitly grammatical instruction, this may have been a barrier for her to use the language. Once she moved past this rigid instruction, she found that communication could happen more fluidly.

That's the one that stands out a lot to me and then later when I was taking linguistics classes and transcribing language, I was like oh! This is exactly it –words don't exist really, like it's just sounds and meaning, and it was a cool realization for me at the time. (Bailey 2021).

Furthermore, Bailey was able to gain a deeper understanding of language as whole. While we are socialized to break things down by “word,” this break down is subjective and, as Bailey discovered, learning a language other than English became much easier. By breaking from the way we see words and the written system we use to communicate, Bailey found it easier to navigate oral communication in contextual situations.

The transition rite, when the participants are separated from their community and forced to take in language and cultural practices more often, is also when they become more self-aware and better understand their own cultures. The individual challenges they faced and social conflicts they had to navigate were not deterrents from returning; on the contrary, they seemed to incite further determination to work and live abroad. Moreover, as this self-awareness evoked more confidence, it also made them question their abilities as a speaker or potential educator. To live abroad was not a permeant option for these participants, rather they needed to return to find a way to integrate back into their communities, leading to the rite of incorporation.

III. Rites of incorporation – becoming an educator

Having undergone a transformative experience in language learning, the final stage is the rite of incorporation. In this step the individual returns with the changes having been integrated (van Gennep 1988). “What will you do with that?” This is a common question asked of the participants studying these languages. The plan wasn't necessarily to teach, however, many found this the best way to incorporate the change they had undergone by studying a language and living abroad. For each participant, education and coming into the classroom came at a different moment in their career, but

each person was surprised by how much they enjoyed it. For several participants, the default answer was to take on an education degree in order to allow them to continue their language studies. For others the education piece came later, as part of a master's degree or after they decided to make a career change and obtained a teaching license through less conventional methods. What remains remarkable is that, of the nine participants, none attended college knowing they would be a language teacher. In fact, none of them had declared a language as a major, but each had to take language courses as a requirement. Overall, motivations behind becoming a language educator seem related to a few key factors. First, that the language studied was more enjoyable than the initial majors they declared. Second, that becoming an educator offered an attractive lifestyle. Third, to ensure they wouldn't lose the language and to hold on to their experiences. The rite of incorporation embodies the transformation which has taken place, therefore these educators had to find the balance between experiencing change and coming back to their respective homes (van Gennep 1988).

i. Accidental incorporation

First, none of the participants were initially language majors. Several reported that taking a language was a necessity for general education requirements. Then they found themselves continuing their classes, because they enjoyed them. According to Nespor's (1987) study, the affect for the language leads to better learning outcomes for their students. "A less obvious arena in which affect is important is that of teachers' conceptions of subject matter. The values placed on course content by the teachers in the TBS study often influenced how they taught the content" (Nespor 1987, 319). Having taken the language, and wanting to learn the language, incorporating it became a positive accident. For example, while attending Midwest University, Kylie came to a point when she had to select a major. She describes going to see her advisor.

« Okay il faut choisir quelque chose si tu veux rester à l'université – n'importe quoi »...mon 'advisor m' a dit « tu as beaucoup de classes en français pourquoi déclarer le français comme spécialité? » Alors je dis toujours uh...c'était comme je jouais au flèches et umm...aveuglée *like blind folded like I hit the target in the middle but I guess I wasn't c'était pas mon plan de vie.* (Kylie 2021)

Translation: *“Okay you have to choose something if you want to stay at the university – it can be anything.” My adviser told me “you have a lot of French classes so why not declare French as a major?” So I always say that it was like I playing darts and um...blinded like blindfolded and like I hit the target in the middle but I guess I wasn’t, it wasn’t part of my life plan”*

When Kylie talks about teaching, she is content with her career choice and how her trajectory worked out. However, it wasn’t what she initially intended. This pattern of stumbling into the profession may reflect the unexpected changes that took place while studying the language. Similarly, Kendall started out studying German more out of fun, then as she progressed in her studies, she thought she would teach English.

I said “well I really want to teach English”, and they looked at my college transcript and said, “But you only took one English class in college, but you have a major in German?” and I was like, “Oh oh, yeah okay, I guess I’ll teach German,” so I just like fell into it kind of by default a little bit. (Kendall 2020)

Kendall goes on to say that she is happiest when teaching German and feels like she lucked out with her career. Juxtaposed to Kylie’s experience, Kendall also seems to have gone through a process wherein she was taking German classes and even majored in German, but still, becoming a German teacher wasn’t necessarily the next logical step.

Furthermore, the accidental career path seems to be connected to a rite of incorporation. Having lived these experiences, and these experiences changing their perspectives, meant finding a way to incorporate. For instance, Laura mentions her discovery of love for Spanish and Spain and then incidentally needed to “DO something with the language.” She “secretly always kind of wanted to be a teacher.” Having started out thinking she would be a lawyer, not enjoying her courses in pre-law, Spanish became her escape, and going abroad solidified that for her. Upon her return she wanted to make it her profession and teaching was the avenue to do so.

For Danielle as well, Spanish ended up being her “default” because it was her only choice in high school. What surprised her was when she started college, she ended up shifting her career path towards Spanish.

I took the second like the second year of the basic language program over the summer and one of the professors was like, “you’re great at this and I want you to take my lit class in the fall,” and at that point I was already sort of falling out of love—like I was not enjoying my English lit classes which was what I came in as right? As much as I thought that I would. (Danielle 2020)

For Danielle, the fact that her love of language was more interesting than her English classes led her to make a career out of Spanish linguistics. Moreover, the idea that “falling out of love” with one topic area and falling in love with another, highlights the underlying affinity the participants have for the subject area they end up teaching. In becoming an educator of a language, there seems to first be a prerequisite of falling in love with the content, community, and social practices of that language. This reflects the effects of the final stage in the rite of passage wherein the participant has incorporated the changes and transformations into intrinsic motivations (van Gennep 1988).

The characteristic of accidental profession as an element of the rite of incorporation is further present in Bailey’s testimony. Bailey was taking business courses and then found herself at the end of her degree, at which point she had a conversation with her advisor who told her she had also earned a degree in Spanish Languages and Literatures.

I was like, “oh ok.” I’ll take two degrees, that’s fine. So I graduated with the Spanish Languages and Literatures BA, I guess, too. (Bailey 2021)

Perhaps the most compelling thing about this is the unintentional discovery that earning a degree in Spanish was so automatic for Bailey that she hadn’t realized she’d been working towards it. These testimonies about “defaulting” or “stumbling” reflects a similar experience to “falling in love.” It may happen when one least expects with a subject matter that’s least expected. Additionally, having lived abroad and having experienced different lifestyles, another common reason cited for becoming a teacher was the fact that it offers a positive lifestyle as well as meaningful work. This rite of incorporation is more about finding a lifestyle that offers more similarities to the one they grew accustomed to. For instance, Bailey earned a degree in Spanish, she continued to work in business out of the Pacific Northwest until she decided to move back to home and get her Master’s in teaching and instruction. For her this move was because she was partly “too used to the seasonal job.” For her, the overall lifestyle of being a teacher was more attractive than pursuing a career in business.

ii. Humane incorporation

Finding ways to incorporate the transformations undergone during study abroad into the teaching profession included the fact that teaching offered a means to support a “humane existence.” In this rite of incorporation, the major influences stem from beliefs about the teaching profession and how it may or may not provide a meaningful vocation (Duff 2017). First, Chuck expressed that when it came time to find a profession, the idea of going back into education was comforting and offered a more “humane” existence. He expressed not wanting to be “cogs in a system.”

Education to me looked really good just in that there’s a fair amount of autonomy...and it’s a pretty humane you know compared—yeah it’s a pretty humane profession and uh you know, I always liked the people. I had really good educational experiences myself, and I always liked my teachers, and I always went back and visited them. So, you know it was kind of like, it was a really warm inviting environment to return to. (Chuck 2020)

Chuck made sure to point out that he didn’t want to be a cog in a system and would rather teach because it seemed like a way to make some small changes in learners’ lives.

Similar to majoring in the language, the choice to go into education was not necessarily on their radar. For both Sandra and Jackie, becoming a teacher at any point in time was the last thing they wanted to do. Sandra describes her time as a teacher with fondness, even though she explicitly tried not to teach: “I’d always said *I’d rather do anything*, I’d rather wait tables than be a nurse and a teacher...” But to Sandra’s surprise she “very much enjoyed teaching.” The same was the case for Jackie who had resisted following in her mother and grandmother’s path before finding that teaching ended up being the right place for her.

iii. Incorporation to “stay in touch”

In addition to accidentally discovering affect for language learning, the purpose for the final phase is to maintain the growth and capacity to learn language throughout a lifetime. The rite of incorporation is that of “staying in touch.” As Duff’s (2017) work on teacher identity demonstrates, the background experiences aren’t enough to determine their level of commitment or attachment to the profession. Rather it is “the teachers’ identification with aspects of their selves and histories, and the ways in which their

identities were interpreted, ascribed, or assumed by others, were also key” (Duff 2017, 171). When these participants reflected on their decision to become educators or professors or teachers of the language they studied, there was also an underlying desire expressed to “keep in touch” with the language and culture (Sandra 2020). There is an expressed desire to hold on to, to maintain, and to continue to work on the language they have already invested so much time in. When Marie decided to go into the teaching profession, it was not only for a shift in lifestyle, one that would allow her to have a more stable income, but also because she didn’t want to lose her French.

C’est vraiment un point clé. En arrivant, je me suis dit, si j’utilise pas le français, je vais le perdre. Ici. C’était un moment où je me suis dit un c’est hyper important même avec mon mari, on parle en français tout le temps ---j’ai une chance, j’ai de la chance pour avoir quelqu’un avec qui me ...c’est le ---mais en mathématiques ou n’importe quoi chaque fois on ---apprend---explique aux autres, on revise nous-mêmes. Et le français c’est la même chose. Uh j’adore expliquer, reviser les règles. C’est comme un jeu pour moi plus de mathématiques que d’autres choses. Et um..je pouvais pas ---est-ce que je pouvais enseigner quelque chose en anglais avec la même énergie? Je sais pas. Mais bon. Je préfère le français. (Marie 2020)

Translation: This is really a key point. Upon arriving, I said to myself, if I don’t use it, I will lose it. Here. This was the moment when I told myself it’s really important, even with my husband, we speak French all the time— I’m lucky, I have the opportunity to have someone with whom I...but in math or anything every time we learn—explain to others, we revise ourselves. And French, it’s the same thing. I love explaining it, reviewing the rules. It’s like a game for me, more so than math or other things. And um...I couldn’t--- couldn’t.... could I teach something else in English with the same energy? I don’t know. So, I prefer French.

The investment into maintaining the language in this situation becomes part of the impetus of teaching it, but then there is another element hidden in what Marie is explaining: if she loses the language, she may also lose all those early experiences she had learning it. Furthermore, Marie explains that much like learning math, she enjoys having to revise and rework her understanding of the language, and the best way to do this is to teach it. She also asks herself, “Would I be able to teach in English with the same energy?” For her the answer is no, because it’s the language itself that draws out her passion to share. This final detail further defines the rite of incorporation through teaching to proliferate the experiences they had, as well as to further refine their language

skills. The underlying motivation is share and provide mentorship to those who may want to follow in their path, as a means to remain attached to the early experiences.

Finally, considering the exposure to the language, the study abroad experiences, and the underlying motivations to teach the language, the overall theme that ties these educators together is the love of language. The connection these participants have felt with the language underlies the motivation of selecting a career in language teaching. Even as Sandra had to leave the profession, she found herself heavily involved in other elements of the local French community and writing a longtime friend of hers regularly. Jackie too spent time cultivating a pen pals relationship with a friend of hers overseas. This desire to “stay in touch,” as Sandra so eloquently puts it, is also what triggers this rite of incorporation. In the end, the motivations to become educators of a language may be due in part to having enjoyed being learners of the language. This is not an unusual component to wanting to teach. While they may not have enjoyed the classroom setting, ultimately the motivation to continue to grow in the language is connected to the reason they continue to teach it.

IV. Feelings of Inadequacy

Educator identities and trajectories are complex and diverse. For these nine educators, finding ways to develop and pursue their passion for language and turn that passion into a career is evident in their testimonies. However, as Duff (2017) explains, educators are often unsatisfied with their own performance and therefore often strive to do more and teach more effectively. This rite of passage, that goes from separation, transition, to incorporation, is a process of challenging oneself to address shortfalls or better understand the world. This process is a reflection of what can happen when one occupies a liminal space (van Gennep 1988; Javeau 1992). While listening to educators speak on their time abroad and their experiences with language, feelings of inadequacy were often expressed. Between the transition rite and the rite of incorporation, educators often reflected on what they felt they were missing as they became educators. Not enough time abroad, not enough time in different communities, not enough time learning the language *officially*. Each of these harkens back to expectations about both the benefits of the rite of separation and being abroad, as well as the initial socialization. As such, there

is a reflective piece in the way these educators speak which signifies that they are also fighting against unmet expectations as they incorporate into classroom teachers. These are a few of their reflections:

And I just had an amazing experience there and I actually only minored in French and um which I also was feeling a little sheepish about as a French teacher, but it is what it is. (Jackie, 2021)

Jackie's expressed insecurity about not being a French major despite the fact that she had lived abroad highlights a challenge many of these participants faced: feeling as though their experience would never be enough. During the transition rite, these participants experienced a different way of learning language, and therefore their perspectives on language teaching could be shifted. This key *episode* in their experiences may explain how they move from being taught in Deep Structure style to more a communicative approach (Burke 2011; Duff 2011).

In parallel, Kylie also expressed some regrets about the way she cultivated her language skills, including the lack of a long-term study abroad experience. This further highlights the belief that going abroad and living and working within a speech community leads to better language acquisition and proficiency.

En fait, quand j'étais au lycée j'ai fait un programme et on voyageait en France pendant trois semaines, mais une partie de voyage était...j'étais un sophmore, donc je parlais pas très bien français...mais eh, pendant une semaine, je suis restée avec un famille française alors, vraiment l'opportunité de vraiment parler, c'était probablement...c'était très important que je l'aie fait. Et quand j'étais à l'université de Midwest j'ai étudié à l'étranger mais c'était...ce n'était que trois semaines et demi, et c'était à Martinique alors nous avons quitté juste après le jour de l'action de grâce et on est retournés juste avant Noël et nous avons pris les courses à l'université Schoelcher um...et on a étudié avec un écrivaine, elle s'est appelée une écrivaine pas un écrivain, uh...mais oui alors c'était une expérience formidable. La chose que je crois, c'était l'opportunité d'être étudiant comme j'avais des amis qui habitaient à Lille et qui passaient un semestre et vraiment ils faisaient des connections avec des vrais français, ils étaient un peu plus Independent et pour nous, parce que c'était que trois semaines et demi y avait des choses réglées un peu plus alors, uh...oui l'opportunité de vraiment connecté avec un français, je crois que ça me manquait. Mais après uh...l'université de Rocky Mountains West, j'ai fait ma thèse de la littérature de Caraïbe alors, ça m'a beaucoup aidé là.

Translation: *Actually, when I was in high school, I did a program and we went to France for three weeks but a part of the trip was...I was a sophomore so I didn't speak French very well but for a*

week I stayed with a French family so it was really a good opportunity to speak. It was probably, it was very important that I did that. And when I was at the University of Midwest I did a study abroad but it was...it was only three and a half weeks and it was in Martinique. So, we left just after Thanksgiving day and came back just before Christmas and we took classes at Schoelcher University and we studied with une écrivaine, she called herself une écrivaine not un écrivain, uh...but yes so it was an astonishing experience. The thing I believe was it was an opportunity to be a student like I had friends who lived in Lille and they spent a semester and really they made connections with real French people, they were a little more independent than us because it was only three and a half weeks we were there and things were a little more regulated so...yes the opportunity to really connect with French, I think I missed out on. But after at the University of The Rocky Mountain West I did my thesis on Caribbean literature, so I think it helped me there.

Kylie openly identifies the importance of those early study abroad experiences, and how going to Martinique for several weeks still afforded her unparalleled experiences.

However, she does make a comment about other friends of hers who studied in Lille for a full semester and made “connections with real French people.” She is referring to the fact that it takes time to cultivate friends and connections with people from the host community. Much like Kendall found her language skills solidified as a nanny because she was too attached to her American peers, Kylie may also be expressing this element as missing from her overall experience. If the degree of separation informs the degree of transition, for Kylie, the lack of overall time abroad may have limited the level of transformation she experienced. On the other end of the spectrum, Jackie and Marie have extensive experiences abroad, but both express regret about not having an official degree in the language. Regardless, with a subject matter such as language, the real question is, does it ever feel like enough? Whether one has a degree or extensive experience abroad, there is always more to learn and master.

As educators move through their rites of passage, their overall perceptions of language acquisition and experience were opened to be redefined. Every educator reported accidentally falling in love with the language before discovering the teaching profession. Moving through the rite of separation to transition and finally the rite of incorporation, each participant separated themselves from the community they were socialized in and discovered new ways to see the world, then they were able to shift their thinking with regards to how language is learned. While their early experiences suggest they “didn’t learn anything,” they did report a positive feeling with regards to their educators. As such their initial curiosity may have been due in part to that initial positive

feeling towards the communities they eventually lived and studied in. Additionally, the experiences abroad seem to play a key factor in the next step of these participants becoming educators. All around, further research on the process of becoming an educator could shed light on the influence of studying abroad on shifting perspectives around language learning. First it was high school, then it was a desire to travel, then it was a desire to fine tune skills, and then ultimately each wanted to bring those skills to the classroom. How did the student become the teacher? Through their professionalization I will show how these changes in mindset about language education have manifested themselves in their perspectives on pedagogy, learners, and ultimately, teaching social practices.

Chapter 5: Professionalization

Once these participants elected to enter the teaching profession, they underwent various levels of professionalization. This is a key component to anyone who moves from amateur to professional. “Teachers themselves have their own aspirations and visions of who they are—or might become—as teachers and as members of their various communities” (Duff 2017, 174). Moving from learner to professional, teachers undergo various levels of professionalization. While they often begin with teacher training, they must continue their education to stay in the profession. While the goal of teacher training is often to shift the instructor towards the newest pedagogies as well as to implement changes based on educational research, the initial teacher trainings seems to fall short of this implementation (Busch 2010; Bangou 2011; Duff 2011; Pajares 1992). Cuban’s (1989) work on educational changes shows that part of change is not just showing the changes that need to be made but experiencing them. This is further supported by the socialization research and studies by Burke (2011), Busch (2010) and Bangou (2011). Busch’s (2010) study looked at the beliefs about language learning for pre-service teachers, followed by how their beliefs changed directly after a workshop, and ultimately what happened in their practice a few months after workshops. What she found was that most participants reverted to ineffective practices, even though they knew these practices weren’t going to result in better outcomes. Early socialization provides a powerful foundation for developing beliefs about how to teach and what to teach (Duff 2011; Pajares 1994).

However, Nespors (1987) and Cuban (1989) provide evidence that change is incremental, so while a workshop or single moment can impact what’s believed about teaching, there is a need for ongoing support to implement change. This type of process is similar to the concept of microrituel as presented by Javeau (1994). As a rite of passage, microrituel happens on a smaller incremental scale. The first phase is the *episode* or experience that changes what one thinks is possible. The integration phase is testing out a new method of teaching and finally incorporation. “Some researchers (Pennington, 1996; Angelova, 2005; Attardo & Brown, 2005; Bartels, 2005; Lo, 2005) have suggested that professional coursework which includes experiential and reflective activities seems to have a stronger effect on the development of belief systems than declarative knowledge

(theories and research) taught alone” (Busch 2010, 319). Busch (2010) highlights that the power of experience to ignite change is an important component, however, as her study demonstrated, experience isn’t enough. To better understand how change in mindset may require more elements, I will apply the framework of microrituel by Javeau (1994) to the testimonies of these nine participants. More specifically, I will present their perspectives on the profession as a whole and how it’s changed in their view. Then I will provide an analysis of microrituel in their professional experiences, followed by the importance of mentorship and community in those experiences. Finally, I will analyze their perspectives on pedagogy and curriculum in the language teaching profession.

I. Perspectives on the profession -*change is good*⁶

When learners become educators, they have to navigate the task of figuring out what teaching methods are effective for them and their learners. While the participants of this study were socialized in the language classroom, they identified these practices as not being ideal for learning a language. However, even if a study abroad experience changed how they conceptualized learning language, it does not mean they know how to teach it differently. The methods for professionalization are an essential component to moving from a change in mindset to a change in practice. “We teach how we are taught.” This conclusion is presented broadly in educational literature on language teaching and education, including works by Ishihara & Cohen (2010), Celce-Murcia (2007), and Bailey & Nunan (1996). As noted in chapter three, I anticipated that my participants would pull examples from their early years as language learners and provide a comparison to perspectives on their current practices. I anticipated that language education would look the “same” throughout its existence in this largely rural state in the Rocky Mountain west. Being a rural state with less exposure to other languages, this

⁶ Becoming a certified language teacher in the state of The Rocky Mountain west can require several roads. The first is to earn the teacher certification while studying the language to be taught, the second might be earning an undergraduate degree in the language and then a master’s degree in instruction and curriculum with a teaching certification. The final path is less conventional, in which an educator who has an advanced experience in the language and an advanced degree is able to get a temporary license which allows them to teach and earn their teaching credentials. This type of license is a one-time option. Regardless of the means to get to a teaching certificate, all educators must take continuing education or professional development in order to renew their license.

seemed to be a safe hypothesis. However, the testimonies proved to be more nuanced. Just as Cuban's (1984) work suggests, change in perspectives on the language profession and pedagogy is incremental. This section will present these participants' perspectives on the evolution of the language teaching profession in this Rocky Mountain Western state.

i. Reflections on change

The manner in which past practices are compared to current practices can suggest a lot about what is being valued in the profession. Considering that traditional methods of language teaching focuses on grammar out of context—for example, word lists to be memorized—a shift towards a communicative style remains in question (Celce-Murcia 2008; Byram 1992). However, both Chuck and Laura have been teaching over the past thirty years, and from their view, the profession has changed from when they started to when they finished. According to Chuck, who taught until 2016, current educators seem to be teaching language more effectively now than in his generation.

I don't think there's very many duds out there. These were like buddies of mine, but they seem to me like they were, they weren't getting there, *they weren't connecting*, and it seems like most folks these days are doing *a really good job*. (Chuck 2020)

As Chuck describes the past educators as “not getting there” or “connecting,” he is suggesting that today's educators are. When he says “they weren't connecting,” he suggests that they weren't getting the material through to the learners, thus the content of the course wasn't achieving this level of “actual” or oral proficiency. This would suggest that to be considered an effective educator, getting the material to be relatable is a necessity. Similarly, when describing professional development over the past 30 years, Laura also observes that there has been in a change in the profession.

We've moved in a really good direction as far as you know somethings are –with education—are kind of we get on one boat, and we get on another train and we get on...uh...I think we've kind of moved with methodology...has moved in a really good direction. (Laura 2021)

Her observation about different forms of transportation suggests that as professionals they have tried several different methods for getting there. Having been a learner around

the same time as Chuck and Liz, Marie confirms this same perspective. As she described her current practices with her early experiences as a high schooler, she exclaims in simple words that “les choses ont tellement changé! ⁷” All three of these participants took language courses in the 80s and would therefore be able to offer some insight into how much of a contrast there is from when they were learners to what the profession looks like now.

Similarly, those who went through the education system a couple decades later note that language education has evolved. When comparing her current methods to her high school courses, Danielle (2020) says, “I really have very few memories of what that was like, honestly, I think there were a lot more worksheets going on? I don’t think there’s a lot of similarities.” This is an unexpected result based upon the research by Burke (2011), whose study supports traditionally structural and memorization-based language learning, which she also calls teaching to “get through the material” (6). However, as Danielle describes her own methods of teaching, she puts this in an opposing position to her early years, further highlighting that, at least from her perspective, she has moved away from those methods of language instruction. This unanticipated result suggests that a deeper dive is necessary into what is considered best practice and how it compares to past practice. Therefore, addressing how these changes might have taken place during professionalization and after the study abroad experience, I will apply the theory of Javeau’s (1994) microrituel and Srinivas’s (2018) creative ritual to frame the process of experiential change in perspectives around language pedagogy and practice.

II. The role of the microrituel

If change is incremental, and beliefs are implicit, then observing changes in perspectives and behavior can be difficult to discern. The microrituel breaks change into three phrases of *episode*, *integration*, and *incorporation* and provides a framework to evaluate change on an incremental level. These three phases begin with the creative ritual, or the episode which allows for an opening or fracturing with the status quo

⁷ Translation: *Things have really changed a lot!*

(Javeau 1994; Srinivas 2018). The second phase is integration, or trial and error where educators can test out what works. As Ishihara & Cohen (2010) point out, how a method or new practice is incorporated into a classroom includes variables such as educator personality and experience (26). Finally, the incorporation is the final phase wherein a perspective has been altered and/or has been adopted. This microrituel process leads to new methods and practices changing perspectives on pedagogy incrementally, on a daily level (Javeau 1992). As Marie describes in her testimony, there is a back and forth amongst these phases that leads to improving one's lessons.

On c'est un cycle, on enseigne –on rêve –on formule les plans pour le lendemain, on donne le cours on réfléchit et on reformule et c'est comme un c'est un cycle assez impressionnant. (Marie 2020)

Translation: *It's a cycle, we teach, we dream, we make our plans for the next morning, we teach a class, we reflect, and we reformulate and it's a pretty impressive cycle.*"

Overall, this process is a non-linear cycle. These phases create a cycle where educators can experience new possibilities, test those possibilities in their own environment, consider the personalities of themselves as well as their students, and finally shape the tool to fit their own classroom.

i. Episode – experiencing possibility

In the first phase is the exposure to something that shifts one's expectations and understanding of what's possible, or as Javeau calls "*episode*" (1994, 64). Pulling from her own work as well as study on practicum journals, Busch (2010) found that novice teachers "describe how they default into methods and techniques that they themselves experienced rather than what they had been trained to do in the practicum classes that they were teaching" (319). She goes on to explain that pre-service teacher trainings in which novice teachers experience new techniques are more likely to impact the "erroneous" methods of teaching language than are lectures or textbook readings (319). For example, Laura describes a professional development workshop that influenced her teaching, not because she found the method particularly transformative, but that because

the training shifted her perspective about what could be possible to do with the language in a classroom setting.

It was probably an ALT um...training honestly...before TPRS was a THING. This woman who was teacher of the year in California came, and she taught exclusively—it was really TPRS she was doing but it wasn't labeled that then, and she wasn't part of that whole movement um...she was very...you had to do things IN—IN whatever language you were teaching, and she was set on that. And she also spoke Russian, so she showed us, and spoke to us in Russian for like an hour and told us little stories and had us do little activities. Whereas she was the only one in the room who spoke Russian. And I think that really that the time –and I was pretty young back then but—but I think at the time it really, I had never been taught a language, in Spanish. At sort of the University level it was in English till the 300 level, then they just threw you in and sink or swim at the 300 level. And that was when I first saw that you know you could alter how you spoke to students and get them to understand. I mean you really, it really was a possibility, I guess before that I didn't even see it as a possibility. (Laura 2020)

The style of workshops presented by ALT offers an opportunity for longer exposure to new methods in a more interactive fashion. In Laura's testimony, she expresses the power of an experience that changed what she thought to be possible (Duff 2011; Javeau 1994; Freeman 1996). There are several important components to consider in this initial reflection. First is that Laura hadn't been taught Spanish in Spanish until the advanced level, which means she didn't realize it was possible to do so at the introductory levels. The second element that is important to note is that she says, "I was pretty young," which highlights her level as a novice teacher. The third element is how she describes being able to visualize making a shift in her own pedagogy, "I first saw you, you know, you could alter how you spoke to students and get them to understand." Understanding what's possible is therefore a necessary step to making a shift in one's pedagogy and classroom practice. If originally socialized on how to teach language in a classroom setting, regardless of the study abroad experience, then upon the return to the classroom setting, an experience would still be necessary to shift how one teaches.

ii. Integration – trial and error in the classroom

The next phase moves into an evaluative process of integration into the classroom before reaching incorporation. In this phase, the educator tests the new practice in the classroom setting. As the components of teaching include a diverse array of influences,

this step would be essential to figure out what fits with the learners, with the personality factors of the educator, and with the past trainings the educator has experienced (Ishihara & Cohen 2010) Katz (1996) claims “a major factor contributing to this context is the teacher’s style, defined as the manner in which the teacher interprets his or her role within the context of the classroom, for the teacher occupies a pivotal role in creating the culture of the classroom” (58). Katz study goes on to discuss how the educators set the tone and classroom environment, cultivating their own style and interpretation of educational theory and practice.

Several educators from this study describe this process in their testimonies about professionalization and selecting components of methods and educational theory they can put into practice. For example, Chuck describes this as a pedagogical “pendulum.”

I guess my big thing was kind of watching the pendulum through my profession. And there was like crazy stuff going on, like uh—you know about TPRS – Total physical response story telling. Yeah, it was TPRS at the beginning and then it became TPRSS, and I had these friends, and they were like, this is the only thing you can do in your class, all the time, go. And I was like ohhhh nooo. I don’t know I chased the pendulum quite a bit. But I just ended up being, you know, eclectic and using the stuff that seemed to work best. And you know for me, laboratory versus real kids, because you know high school kids are crazy...you know they’re brains are elsewhere and uh...so uh you know, yeah to me it felt like, yeah like I needed...I needed to be pretty eclectic and pretty flexible. But I also, boy I just was never the teacher who wanted to reinvent the world-wheel all the time. I mean –I did have enough good buddies; I’d always go to my buddies and say, “what do you got that worked really well’ and you just kind of grab and use that. And so I wish I’d been able to do a better job than that. (Chuck 2020)

Chuck’s highlight of the students and how they take to ideas seems to be a key component to what gets integrated into his classroom and how he changes his methodologies. The consideration of the learner plays a key role in the microritual process as he assesses on a daily level what might work and what doesn’t. When talking about what he was like as a younger teacher, Chuck says, “I chased the pendulum quite a bit” but with time he seems to realize that being “eclectic” and “flexible” was what ultimately helped him get the results he wanted from his students. Similarly, Bailey describes working through the phases of various pedagogical methods. This highlights the importance of exposure to new ways of teaching, even if one doesn’t fully adopt a particular style. Bailey would say that it’s beneficial to experiment.

Kind of try out these different methods and see which one, one or ones fit with your personality too and who---who are you in the classroom and what strategies compliment that. (Bailey 2021)

Much like Chuck, Bailey highlights the middle phase of the microrituel, which tests different components of new methods and pedagogies in the classroom to find compatible techniques. By trying out new technics the educator may discover something they didn't realize was possible within the context of their classroom, and as such push their own goals and learning objectives to a new level. The phase of integration is therefore when the educator makes a new methodology their own.

iii. Incorporation- shifted understandings

The final phase of incorporation relies heavily on how the educator see their own goals and objectives in the classroom. The phase of incorporation is where the educator begins to identify a particular method or perspective as their own (Javeau 1992). As educators interpret the behavior of their learners and reflect on their own experiences, they can draw from the newest methodologies and integrate what is working into their perspective. While other educators he worked with seemed to have adopted a “one method” attitude, for Chuck, being adaptable was essential.

However, without the episode that puts into question beliefs about what's possible, educators may not go beyond what their intuition says about learner engagement. For example, when Laura speaks to something that inspired here teaching, she also mentions how she used to teach.

I'm not like a big TPRS teacher, but I think maybe looking at that philosophy of how, of really looking at how language is learned naturally and how um...I think that was really kind of a changing point with me as far as um...just maximizing the time I have with students. Um just get as much input⁸, taking a look at that um comprehensible input, as much input as possible and kind of seeing the results you know the more if the more Spanish you're speaking to students and the more their picking up and to just kind of see them repeat what I've said and my upper level students, and hearing them say some phrases where I don't really know where they got, but I'm really glad that they have them. So, I think that was kind of a shift for me when I...you know it's been 30 years, so

⁸Refers to “comprehensible input” not to be confused with the pedagogical method- this is defined as the ratio of known to unknown so that your learners can understand and at the same time build/add new language.

when I started it was pretty grammar based and vocabulary based, and they say you tend to teach the way you were taught and that's me. (Laura 2020)

Laura's testimony is evidence of the phase of incorporation into her daily practices. Her thoughts highlight the incremental changes she has accomplished in her class having previously been teaching how she had been taught, before professional development exposed her to new methods and shifting what was possible. Over time and with opportunities to try out new pedagogies, she was able to shift her thinking and her perspective on how language could be taught. Without the microrituel phases, Laura would still be teaching in the same manner as she was taught. In this way she broke from her initial socialization, but that process wasn't a singular moment but is instead an ongoing process comprised of several moments throughout her career that changed aspects of her teaching. For these educators, then, it's a constant back and forth between what your past experience was and what the new experiences have been that might inspire a shift in pedagogical methods or adopting a new pedagogy. The microrituel offers a means to evaluate daily rituals and events that might shift the new to the norm. Therefore, utilizing the microrituel, one can see that educator practices have been influenced and continue to change.

iv. Early socialization –microrituel is a dynamic process

The microrituel as an analytical framework offers a way to evaluate change in these educators perspectives, and how these changes relate to the research professionalization and factors that can shift early beliefs and exposure to language learning later on. There is also an element of dynamic process that is exemplified by how these educators reflect on how they want to teach as well as how they were taught. In Aguilar's (2007) discussion on professionalization, she highlights the power of the early experiences being internalized. Through this internalization, identifying beliefs becomes challenging and therefore shifting perspectives and practices are difficult.

We should not forget, though, that on growing up we are all subject to socialization, that is to say, the process of acquiring adult roles, internalizing the beliefs and values of a specific society or group. (61)

The early experiences learning the language remain a powerful influence on how educators view their craft. Both Laura and Bailey mention the influences of their past on their current methods of teaching, even though they studied the language at different times and had very different experiences as learners. This would support the power that early socialization in language learning might have on beliefs surrounding best practices in the language classroom (Duff 2017; Nespor 1987; Pajares 1992). Laura says, “You know they say you teach how you were taught, well that was me.” As Laura talks about the changes she’s made to her teaching, she also admits that she still pulls from her early experiences and at times teaches in the *traditional* manner. Bailey says something similar about her own experience.

And I think previously in school I was like, “no this is the right way and” ...and still thinking about how I learned language which was still fully by the textbook and memorizing verb conjugations and things like that ... I still find myself revering that method like “well that’s actually the real way or something” even though I know I—I didn’t ...I learned nothing—I learned *something* but I definitely did not understand Spanish until I was in college and had taken years and years of language classes so... (Bailey 2021)

What is so interesting about Bailey’s testimony is that her past experience with language learning was more than challenging for her. In Chapter 3, I highlight how Bailey didn’t have the best early experience learning Spanish and found that it made her believe that she wasn’t “good at it.” She was eventually exposed to other experiences that made her realize language could be learned and therefore taught differently than her early training. However, even though that methodology and pedagogical style wasn’t working for her, she still finds herself “revering” it. Therefore, working to integrate new practices in the classroom is a dynamic process, and not a singular moment. There is a constant re-negotiation with what was previously understood about best practices, therefore, new practices must fit with the old. Furthermore, the need for continuous support from other members of the community would be an essential component to feeling confident in the implementation and incorporation of new methods.

III. Mentorship and community

Implementing change and adopting new understandings of pedagogical practice can be both intimidating and daunting. Educators are regularly exposed to the newest and brightest technics within their field and there is a plethora of reasons one might be adopted or not (Ishihara & Cohen 2010). A couple key components to this process of professionalization include the mentors and community.

The mentors or agents of socialization typically include teachers, tutors, peers, relatives, or co-workers who have a desire to assist learners to become more proficient not only in normative target language forms but also in values, ideologies, identities, stances, affective states, and practices associated with the language and its users in particular communities of practice. (Duff 2011, 566)

To better strengthen the adoption of new understandings, another key component is the role of mentorship and community through the process. Inciting change into one's practice is also a risk, since one is trading a proven method for a new one. It is helpful to have community and guides to complete the process of integration. Mentors who inspire these educators to go a step further with their craft can provide support when they are having doubts about newer methodologies. In addition to the influences of professional development workshops, other influencers of change are the mentors that inspired these nine participants. These mentors are college professors, colleagues, their students, and most interestingly, each other.

i. Important influences

The role of mentorship in changing practices and supporting the *integration* phrase of the microrituel surfaced as a common component in these testimonies. Thus they support Duff's (2011; 2018) discussions on the relationship between mentorship and professional socialization. There are people that influence the changes that take place in the way these educators teach. When describing Tony Tyson's teaching style, Kendall describes how her mentorship helped her integrate social practice in a holistic way, to think more about what language students would need in order to perform the activity being required. That activity would relate back to an important German event – in this case a lesson on the Berlin Wall.

Like teaching culture was a huge thing in her class. You...really like integrating that, and getting kids up and moving and talking, um ...and doing less of the standard book approach, which I kind of did anyways because I was a new teacher and I just needed like that, I don't know, source to help me. But seeing her stuff...and then you know I developed a few lessons here and there and she'd be like oh she'd really hold on to it and be like this is a great lesson. I did this Berlin Wall lesson, my initial idea was "I'm going to have people write letters on the Berlin wall" and we'd make a wall and they'd put them up...and she'd be like "well that's a great lesson but you need to make sure it's in German, so they shouldn't be writing letters in English—what kind of German aspects are you going to bring in?" and then I'd like re-think it and bring in these aspects and she'd be like, "okay now this is a really great now what do you want kids to think about, or what comparisons are they gonna make?" She'd really like foster those paths. (Kendall 2021)

The mentor relationship Kendall describes offers a means to support the microritual process of developing one's teaching style. First, "seeing her stuff" allows Kendall to see what might be possible. Next she tries it herself. Then, instead of trying to determine whether or not it works, she has support that walks her through an evaluation process. Furthermore, the mentor has the ability not only to get Kendall to think about how to use the language in a cultural lesson but also how to scaffold the lesson and break it down into bite size pieces. Therefore, the mentor is cultivating a cognitive pathway of evaluation for Kendall to transfer to other lesson planning (Bailey & Nunan 1996). While Kendall would say she was open to developing her own material before working with Tony, it was her mentorship that led her to be the educator she is today.

Similarly, for Bailey, having a mentor in college shifted what she thought was possible in the language classroom and continues to influence how she teaches today.

I went on exchange to Fort Louis College my sophomore year and had a teacher there that was really inspiring... She was just really enthusiastic about um...about how she taught and I think that was when it kind of started clicking for me too. That I was like, "Oh, I can have a conversation," and I think it was probably one of the—as a teacher now I can look back and say like "oh that's probably when we started...when I started using the language more for actual things." (Bailey 2021)

For Bailey, this formative experience working with an educator who was so passionate continues to make her think about how she teaches and what she wants her students to get out of the class. As such, one of the important roles mentorship plays in the microritual

process for these educators to adopt new methodologies is also being able to see the process through the eyes of the students.

ii. The Association of Language Teachers (ALT) “I belong with these women”

In addition to individual mentorship, a strong community of support can be essential to an educator’s success. As novice educators take on their new role and go through the process of professionalization, they are also renegotiating their identity and ascertaining who they will be as an educator and mentor themselves (Duff 2017). Moreover, their “confidence and self-esteem may plummet as mismatches or tensions arise between their attributes and abilities and those expected of them, and they may leave the teaching profession as a result” (Duff 2017, 174). Therefore, their professionalization and the community that supports that professionalization can lead to an educator’s full integration into the profession or potentially lead them to leave. Within the semi-structured interviews I conducted, each educator brought up a state-wide organization that provides continuous professional development support as well as peer-to-peer relationships, ultimately providing these educators a place to connect as well as fine tune their skills.

The Association of Language Teachers, or ALT, was founded in 1954 to provide educators pedagogical, linguistic, and peer support. Membership is open to any educator, whether they teach kindergarten or at the college level. It is also open to students or those interested in supporting the mission of language education in the state. The organization hosts a Facebook group where members can share tips and tricks. In this group, members can seek support and guidance with challenges they face or ask for suggestions on resources they need to support their lessons. The purpose of the Association is to improve both the quality and extent of foreign language instruction in the public and private schools, colleges, and universities across this largely rural state in the Rocky Mountain west.

The organization has a board of officers and provides two annual workshops. The first is in the fall in conjunction with SFPE – State Federation of Public Employees—and is usually in the form of multiple presentations. The conference in the spring typically highlights one pedagogical method and is a day and half long. This conference is hosted

solely by ALT and is facilitated in a workshop style, with one key presenter. The presenter is selected in several ways. The first is through expressed member interest. Members can request that a skill or method highlight the spring conference. Additionally, if members or board officers see a strong presentation at another language conference, the presenter is approached about presenting for the association. Finally, the presenter might be someone well known on world language blogs or YouTube channels.

In Bailey's interview, ALT is brought up several times. While going to college, Bailey's professors encouraged her to go to the ALT conferences and be a part of language associations. At the time, membership was small but dedicated. Bailey describes this part of her life as "really interesting," as she was surrounded by older women had been teaching language for years. She also reflects on how much ALT's membership has grown over the years, and I can confirm that at the conference I attended, there were at least 60 attendees. During our interview, Bailey shared what that first conference experience was like for her.

But uh she encouraged Danielle, who was a colleague of mine, and you might know her from the Spanish department there, um so she and I were in the same class with Nora and Nora was like "oh you should go to the ALT conference, like always join your state organization no matter what." And we were like "oh we didn't even know about the state organization what is that." But they were having a conference. So, Danielle and I went and another gal too... we were just like the ONLY young people at this old teachers conf—like it was amazing we met all these matriarchs of the teaching community in the Rocky Mountain west. {laughs} and I think as I recall it was a really small conference. It was just in the conference room of a hotel and there were maybe 20 people there, maybe 15 or 20, and we were by far the youngest people but we had so much fun with these ladies, and we went out on the town and the ladies showed us where to go and we went out to the bars and stuff and it was hilarious and really fun. We were like...oh Nora was totally right we should belong with these...like we belong with these ladies. (Bailey 2021)

What is most poignant about Bailey's description is the idea that she "belongs with these women." Being that Bailey's account of her first ALT experience was several decades ago and having attended the ALT conference in 2019, the growth of the organization may demonstrate its ability to meet the needs of its members, and that aside from the professional development piece there is a need "to belong." Bailey goes on to talk about the role that ALT has played in her professional life, keeping her in the profession, and

providing her with the pedagogical skills she needed to teach Spanish. Ultimately, feeling a sense of belonging is also like saying you feel understood. One might see how this would be a rarity, as bilingualism and language proficiency are uncommon in the greater United States, let alone a largely rural state in the Rocky Mountain west. ALT will continue to play a key role in the professionalization and continued support these educators seek in their profession

iii. Community and creative ritual

The final element that influences change in pedagogy seems to come from the community of educators and consequently from each other. Community can play a key component to change both in terms of moving things forward and preventing change (Cuban 1984). Srinivas (2018) puts into question the notion of ritual as something that maintains the status quo and suggests instead that when a community gathers there is an opportunity for experience to shift what is perceived as possible. All of these educators have attended and participated in professional development workshops. ALT as an organization was cited by all educators as a current influence or as an important part of their early years as teachers. ALT offers a safe space where educators can try out new pedagogies and make requests for speakers. Whether it be a focus on culture, social justice, comprehensible input, or proficiency-based methods, the ALT board aims to provide structure and resources to Montana's language educators. When discussing the textbook Bailey uses for her classroom, she brought up a professional development event hosted by SFPE but organized by ALT.

Having scarce resources as language educators in a largely rural state would mean that maximizing a change in pedagogy would require a central influencer. In the case of ALT, they take into account what educators want to see and then pool resources to bring in that speaker. While not all educators were attending ALT conferences at the same level, Jackie spoke very positively of professional development and ALT in general:

But I think ALT is AMAZING. And it really helped **me** feel....Yeah those really just helped me feel connected right? Cause we're so...most of us teaching language in here are little islands on to themselves. Maybe Spanish teachers have each other, but— so I just really love that and Bailey she taught with me...she taught Spanish at the same

school as me. She's incredible. And she helped me get turned on to Adios too. (Jackie 2021)

Jackie's positive association with ALT goes beyond obtaining necessary professional development hours or just wanting to try out new pedagogies. For her, ALT becomes the bridge that gets her off "the island." She makes the comment that this is how she feels "connected" after feeling isolated as the only French educator. For her, sharing in her profession with others is an important part of what motivates her to continue.

Furthermore, ALT seems to offer specific support for educators like Bailey. "ALT is 100% the reason I am still teaching." Through her own professional development and dedication to the community, ALT seems to be what keeps Bailey coming back to the classroom. The community component and the need to stay connected may highlight the complexities that go along with teaching "real humans" and needing to see, explore, and evaluate what pedagogies might work for them with others. At least that seems to be the case for these educators.

Additionally, with certification standards and teacher training programs there are courses that many educators take. Due to the population of the state, many of these participants took the same course. This would then feed into the mindsets surrounding learning objectives and best practices (Ishihara & Cohen 2010). The one course all educators in this region have to take is a Foreign Language Education Methods course. Therefore, this course was cited several times by participants, some of whom had taken the course with the same instructor. At the time of interview, Danielle was teaching the course, a class both she and Bailey had taken together.

So the course that I teach like this methods class which is the only like information our students are getting before they are going out there to teach a foreign language um...is ...mostly set up by my friend who went to grad school with me...I made very few changes and like...and this book as well, this is I mean it's main focus is really um like communicative approaches to a post-methodological communicative approach to language teaching, which is really nice and I wonder yeah. How much of that is like...because I remember Nora also who was my teacher when I took this class with the SAME book, which is weird, that is like also sort of how she chose to frame the class, I remember. So, I wonder how much that has just trickled down right through uh these students and comprehensible input. (Danielle 2021).

When speaking with Danielle, I mentioned the Comprehensible Input (CI) movement I had witnessed at an ALT conference. CI as a broader concept had also come up during my interview with Kendall and Marie. I observed this pedagogy was becoming popular. What Danielle suggests here is that maybe the content of that methods course trickled down to the current professionals. Since the methods course is required of any language educator, many may have gone through this same course prior to teaching. Therefore a course like this may have implications for the community of language educators moving towards a more communicative approach.

Finally, a shift in pedagogical methods may need community support to explore what is possible, therefore working alongside others could be a key piece of the microrituel process that changes educator practices. In a sense, this is the *creative ritual* where educators gather as a community, suspend their own way of teaching, and engage in a new practice. The temporary moment to disengage with what's expected incites the next phases of microrituel that ultimately lead to changed practices (Srinivas 2018). Furthermore, making incremental changes in one's pedagogy is a progression of stages that allows one to see what's possible, try it out, and incorporate it into their own teaching style. This is not a one and done process, but something that lasts through the educator's life cycle.

IV. Pedagogy and curriculum

The role of community and promoting certain pedagogies is a key component to what language educators might be exposed to. Moving from perspectives on the profession and professional development, in this section, I will address the types of pedagogies the educators have discussed. According to Ishihara & Cohen (2010), the community an important influence in overall educator training. Having presented the dynamic process of change through microrituel and the important influence that inspires shifting understandings, I will present what has shifted within the perspectives of these educators. The established practices within an educational community can both impede and spur change in how educators perceive learning objectives. Having been informed by teaching practicums and professional development events, this section will address Laura's comment that the profession is "moving in a good direction."

i. Overview of popular pedagogies

Prior to the establishment of ACTFL and dedicated resources to language education, there was not much standardization taking place in language curriculum (Kramersch 2019). While there is technically no federally enforced standard curriculum for language learning, ACTFL's standards have been accepted for teacher certification in 20 states, and even more have adopted these standards as best practices within their school districts. While educators in this largely rural state in the Rocky Mountain west do not need to pass the language proficiency test provided by ACTFL, they have adopted the World Readiness Standards as a guide for language curriculums. However, according to the Office of Public Instruction's website, these standards were accepted in 1999, meaning they haven't revisited them since the updates of 2006 or 2015. Regardless, the educators I interviewed were versed in both ACTFL's work and professional development events hosted by ALT. In this section I will present a few of the newest pedagogies that seemed to be most influential in how these educators were changing their practice.

While educators discussed a plethora of pedagogies, the main pedagogies cited were proficiency-based pedagogies:⁹ Total Physical Response Story-Telling or Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) and Comprehensible Input (CI). There were two additional pedagogies mentioned by educators that integrated cultural context into proficiency concepts: the three Ps – Products, Practices, and Perspectives, as well as Thematic Unit-based Curriculum. All these methods aim to expose students to more contextualized language and ultimately have them produce it “naturally” or “intuitively.” While the former pedagogies require more spontaneity from the educator, the latter have a more structured mapping and development process.

ii. Let's talk: Communicative pedagogy

This first pedagogy, TPRS, hinges on narrative-based pedagogy wherein repetition and comprehensible input lead learners to acquire language “naturally” or

⁹ Proficiency-based pedagogies - The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines are a description of what individuals can do with language in terms of speaking, writing, listening, and reading in real-world situations in a spontaneous and non-rehearsed context.

intuitively (Lichtman 2019). Founded in the 90s, this pedagogy is discussed by the majority of participants. When asked about pedagogies, nearly every educator identified TPRS as an agent of change. Jackie recalls attending a professional development event that presented TPRS.

Uh... I feel like so much of it was me just figuring stuff out. Like, Blaine Ray, who's that I wanna hear about that, I wanna know what TPRS is. Cause I was already kind of doing some of that stuff and then I went to, it must have been an ALT workshop with Blaine Ray and he was kind of demonstrating TPRS stuff early on and it was really fun and I just started doing that. (Jackie 2021)

Jackie found this method to be fun, engaging, and influential in how she taught language. Moreover, several identified instructors as doing “TPRS before it was a thing.” Much like Sandra, who described teaching her class French using her experiences and telling stories about her time in France, or like Marie’s high school educator who liked to tell stories of walking along the Seine. As this method is designed to lead students from comprehension to production through the world of story—as opposed to grammatical formulas and memorization—it would seem to reflect a reaction to early criticisms of their own language courses. The supported way of teaching language in this style would be to lead students to learn and use language more naturally or intuitively. Therefore, the grammatical should be taught as a secondary component to vocabulary and usage.

Similarly, and more recently, the second main pedagogy that seems to have been born out of TPRS is Comprehensible Input (CI). For some, CI also would appear to be a kind of “re-branding” of TPRS. This pedagogy focuses on language exposure to lead to language proficiency: getting students to deduce meaning by providing them with cognates and the very basics of language. It should be noted that this method was not a method but a concept that should be practiced within any communicative pedagogy, the idea being that you use what they do understand to teach them something they don’t. I learned this as part of teaching “thematically,” but in the case of Tina Hardigon at ALT’s Spring 2019 event, it seemed to be a whole pedagogy on its own. Several participants cited Tina and Comprehensible Input when asked to speak about someone who has influenced their teaching.

Jackie: Um Comprehensible Input I mean I read the big CI book by um Ben Slavik I read that whole book and thought it was really good and a lot of it was just so much on me um who was the person at Rural Rocky City when we were there?

RS: Tina

Jackie: Oh yeah. Tina...I mean my god, she's amazing. So you know and I subscribe to all her stuff, she's been an influence (Jackie 2021).

There is no doubt that Tina's presentation left a mark. Even more, as Laura mentioned earlier, the style itself shifted what she thought was possible for learners to glean from Spanish in the classroom. Additionally, Bailey mentioned that ALT members had been asking for trainings in CI and now they are returning to TPRS and some proficiency-based sessions. This does suggest a level of popularity in these methods even beyond the participants of this study (Lichtman 2019).

However, having been to one of these trainings, I can say that the method of CI presented by Tina was not perceived by everyone as *possible*. During the conference of 2019, several educators sitting at the table expressed reservations about the methods Tina was presenting. Based upon Tina's presentation, every lesson would require the majority of materials to be produced by the educators. One person in particular expressed concern about applying such a method to the seven different levels of students they teach. For them, the possibility seemed far reaching, particularly due to time constraints. Another criticism of CI and TPRS-like methods came from Chuck, who noted that students coming from a TPRS-based class into his class didn't know what a verb conjugation was. This was problematic within his style of teaching, which suggests that for Chuck this pedagogical method doesn't achieve all the benchmarks he sets for his students. Furthermore, this puts into question whether the pendulum has swung too far in the communicative direction. Based on the research by Bartram (2010), Chaudron (1988), and Canale (2013), this balance between integrating grammar rules intuitively but also having enough knowledge based on those rules so as to produce language effectively is a common discussion.

The pedagogical challenge is to maintain a balance: mastering only vocabulary and stock phrases for speech acts without appropriate knowledge of and focus on grammar and pronunciation will result in fluent but inaccurate and therefore limited oral competence.

Mastering only grammar and phonology results in linguistically accurate but socially dysfunctional oral communication. Thus the systematic, formulaic, and interactional aspects of language must all be addressed in effective language instruction. (Celce-Murica 2007, 52)

Celce-Murcia (2007) the importance of finding balance when shifting between the traditional methods and communicative methods. I would push Celce-Murica's observation even further and ask what socio-linguistic components might be missed if learners don't know grammatical structures at all? Therefore, rather than being a standalone pedagogy, if this method can be integrated into other elements of language pedagogy, then it's capacity to improve language pedagogy and encourage more oral expression could be maximized.

Additionally, educators exposed to CI find themselves doubting and reflecting on whether they should be doing more of it. When discussing her lesson planning methods, Kendall shared her own concerns about not using the method enough.

This has been revolutionary for me this semester, and I have created all my units around, thematic units cause you know there's this big like CI movement. I should be doing CI but I just can't do CI very—and I don't think I don't do it. I mean I stay in the language, and I try to use understandable vocabulary and we definitely circulate, and you know like reuse words every day that we've been taking about but I just don't ...I'm not good at applying only one theory in my class. Just didn't work for me. Probably if I learned better how to do it, but I don't know. (Kendall 2021)

In this passage, Kendall offers a self-criticism of the fact that she should do more "CI." This highlights that the community values one type of CI in particular, the one witnessed at the ALT conference. However, based upon Kendall's description of how she teaches, she likely does incorporate comprehensible input into her lessons. is originally defined not as a pedagogy but as a technic used to ensure learners can glean as much context as possible. Furthermore, adopting pieces of pedagogies is a common practice amongst these participants. She is not alone in taking pieces of different pedagogies and making them her own, nor is she alone in needing more structure to the classroom than CI might promote. Any single method is bound to have shortcomings, therefore for Kendall to meet the objectives of her classroom, a combination is more advantageous. In parallel, Marie looks up to Tina, but says that even she takes a different route from Tina's.

Donc Tina, c'est vrai, elle dit que il faut pas exiger que chaque élève parle. Moi...j'ai des petites méthodes sympathiques. Tout le monde est toujours pressé de quitter la salle de classe. Donc utilise cette énergie, on peut pas sortir, vous allez rester dans la salle avec moi si vous faites votre phrase de sorti. Et um...dès le début le premier jour c'était aurevoir madame, ou même, des petites phrases. (Marie 2020)

Translation: So Tina, it's true, she says that you shouldn't make each student speak. I have little friendly methods. Everyone is always in a hurry to leave the classroom. So, using this energy, we can't leave, you will stay in the room with me until you give me the "exit statement." And um...from the first day it was aurevoir madame, or even just little sentences.

What these testimonies accentuate is that no single pedagogical style could fully represent best practices because every educator may have their own integration of that style. These changes again reflect the microrituel process of change. Marie has experienced Tina as an incredible educator and, having been exposed to her methods, found them to be possible within her own classroom. However, as she integrated them, her own experience has brought her to expect something different from learners than what Tina suggests as best practice.

Despite their limitations, TPRS and CI reflect a shift in best practices surrounding language education, at least for these educators. This style of teaching encourages more target language use in the classroom, which leads students to integrate the language more intuitively. Regardless of the pedagogical method, best practices reflect the desire to have students use language to be functional over being "correct in the grammar" of the language. While strategies for communication were widely discussed, specific methods for integrating culture were less common. This may reflect the common expression that educators wanted their learners to be able to use the language, so they tend to focus more on getting their learners to speak and use the language in familiar contexts. In this case, the most relevant shortcoming from their early education appears to be the largest focal point: breaking from the grammar and rote memorization methods and leaning into the integrated styles. Therefore, what do pedagogies offer educators in terms of social practice and perspectives? In the next section, I will address what pedagogies were mentioned in this regard.

iii. Pedagogy and teaching social practice

In addition to proficiency-based pedagogies, several educators described methods that aim to integrate grammar into social practice in the form of thematic units. Unlike discussions surrounding comprehensible input, the pedagogies that address social practice don't appear to be as well-known, and they were cited less often. These styles are promoted by several studies, including Burke's study on ritual and teacher training. She argues that "language should be taught in context with a focus on meaning as opposed to on disconnected grammatical structures" (Burke 2011, 7). The two main types mentioned here were Thematic Units and the three Ps – Products, Practices, and Perspectives. In these pedagogies social practice is at the center of the curriculum. The language being taught is a reflection of what will be necessary for the learner to function in the language in social settings.

First, Thematic Unit as described by Kendall are a means to integrate vocabulary, grammatical concepts, and cultural contexts to promote both language acquisition and cultural competency. She describes how her mentor taught her to design her lessons.

Like teaching culture was a huge thing in her class. You...really like integrating that, and getting kids up and moving and talking, um ...and doing less of the standard book approach, which I kind of did anyways because I was a new teacher and I just needed like that um...I don't know... source to help me. But seeing her stuff...and then you know I developed a few lessons here and there and she'd be like oh she'd really like hold on to it and be like this is a great lesson. Like I did this Berlin Wall lesson. Like my initial idea was like, "I'm going to have people write letters on the Berlin wall," and we'd make a wall and they'd put them..and she'd be like, "Well that's a great lesson but you need to make sure it's in German, so they shouldn't be writing letters in English—what kind of German aspects are you going to bring in?" and then I'd like re-think it and bring in these aspects and she'd be like, "Okay now this is a really great lesson, now what do you want kids to think about, or what comparisons are they gonna make?" (Kendall 2021)

As Kendall describes the way in which she not only frames her units but also how she learned to structure them, the base element that drives what language structures are taught and what kind of vocabulary is learned is based upon, in this case, an important historical experience: the Berlin Wall. In this process, Kendall is going beyond language for functional use, but is also encouraging students to think about the function of language within the context or perspective of a German during Germany's division. The Thematic

Unit is therefore different from the examples of TPRS and CI that were observed here because it is designed and scaffolded more intentionally around the social context. While Kendall was the only participant who mentioned Thematic Units specifically, when Danielle described how she teaches culture, the style resembles the Thematic Unit. This style imbeds the social practice and context in the language lesson, which leads to functional language use as well as a knowledge of diverse dialects.

So I think the more you can base your lessons or when you introduce new vocabulary set, or a grammar point or both on an authentic text the more you're sort of seamlessly integrating cultural aspects into your lesson without having to have these weird like pop-out days, where suddenly you're only speaking in English, and you're like, making cookies or something strange, and the students are like what are we doing here. So, for me, in a lower-level class, that's the easiest and best way to sort of fold culture in without having these strange, separated sort of units. I mean I would say, taking some sort of authentic material, a lot of time, YouTube videos, I really like to just find youtubers...like doing a cooking lesson or I mean it could be anything like doing like a shopping hall, if it's a clothing one, like anything. And using that as a basis helps you. And then in upper division classes it sort of just happens, that is sort of the focus. More often than not, our linguistic differences often stem from ...or necessitate an extralinguistic explanation, which is necessarily a sort of cultural lesson. (Danielle 2020)

Danielle is pulling her “functional context” from the target communities, and therefore trying to draw a connection between the learner, the language, the activity, and the context. However, Danielle’s description is not quite as systematic as Kendall’s, meaning she is likely not pulling directly from this pedagogical method. For Danielle, she is admittedly a linguist who works more often with advanced learners of Spanish and therefore her courses may not require the same level of scaffolding as would a lower-level language learner who is also learning from social contexts. Regardless, the Thematic Unit is one style of pedagogy that aims to integrate several components of language learning. First it utilizes a social context as the basis for language use. Then it provides scaffolding for learners to gain linguistic competence that will support the discussion surrounding the context. In summary, the social context is what drives what elements of language are needed for communication to happen.

The second pedagogy that brings in a framework for addressing social context is that of the “Three Ps.” During this study, I noted this concept twice. The first time was when I interviewed with Bailey. She described the process of addressing culture using

these aspects, as was presented at an ALT conference by Megan and Kara, the Creative Language Class¹⁰. The second time, I noted this concept was during an ALT presentation focused on Social Justice. While the first seemed to utilize the framework as a process of addressing the what, how, and why of social practices, the second seems to simplify the process by using the three Ps as labels for various social activities without necessarily addressing the values behind those activities. However, when Bailey described this method, she aims to address understanding the values, beliefs, and attitudes behind the social practice. Below is how Bailey described scaffolding her social practice discussion by using the three Ps ¹¹.

At the beginning of the year we do an intro-y unit sort of on culture and we look at products, practices, and perspectives... We try to break down certain elements of like products, practices, and perspectives like and I give examples of like, “the American flag is a product, the practice is like...” and I say, “What do we do when we see the American flag?” Or, “What are some things that we don’t do?” Like what do we do, and what do we—what do we not do with this thing. Um... And then the next step would be like when we do this what does it say about us or what do we hope it says about us? (Bailey 2021)

The way that Bailey has presented the three P’s is to integrate them leading to a deeper understand of perspectives, not only of the community being studied but also one’s own community, whereas the way they were presented in the professional development event was to tackle each item as individual pieces of the social. This supports the idea that an accepted or popular pedagogy does not necessarily represent one style of teaching. Each takes on its own interpretation and integration. The overall step that Bailey demonstrates in the way she presents social interaction is to incite from the learners what they think “it says about us.” This final step encourages reflection on the part of the learners. Unlike the description provided about the other methods, the way bailey implements the three Ps, she seeks confirmation from her learners. She aims to understand if the learners are changing the way they view social practices of other groups. Without this step it is unclear if learners are understanding the social contexts being put before them.

¹⁰ <https://www.creativelanguageclass.com/about-us/>

¹¹ <https://www.creativelanguageclass.com/proficiency/culture/> The definitions of products, practices, and perspectives were adapted from the ACTFL resources.

V. Professionalization is an ongoing process

Overall, the process of professionalization is ongoing, dynamic, and continuous. As educators begin their experiences as learners, they come to the profession with pre-established expectations and understandings of what teaching language might be (Duff 2011). While this would suggest that the majority of the group would claim that their own teaching styles were similar to how they were taught, their perceptions and expectations are presented in contrast to past methods of teaching. Cuban (1984) claims that change within educational practice can shift when change is implemented effectively. These educators demonstrate that as they learn elements of new pedagogies and they try out new ways of teaching the language, their perspectives on how to teach language shift. However, even when past pedagogies and teaching methods are considered out of date, these educators still find themselves questioning whether the new methods are better than the old ones.

Finally, before understanding practice, the educator's mindset and shifts in understanding of best practices are key components to igniting the process of change. Professionalization and how new methods are introduced and incorporated into an educator's perspective resembles a microritual wherein there are several key phases: episode, integration, and incorporation. Similar to the rites of passage experienced during study abroad, these phases frame the process of shifting perspectives around how language should be taught. The first step is to change what an individual thinks as possible, followed by testing out new techniques, and finally, to incorporate and embody those ideals into one's practice (Javeau 1994). The microritual process provides opportunities for change through experience, mentorship, and community. However, even those who had negative experiences learning languages at a young age expressed difficulty in breaking from those methods. This further highlights the *Deep Structure* of past language teaching techniques (Burke 2011). The early socialization influences how educators work by being ingrained in beliefs and perspectives on teaching. Therefore, change can take place, but within the frame of a microritual it is a dynamic process of re-negotiation. The incorporation of new pedagogies that slowly change the old is therefore an incremental process, evidenced by the perspectives of these nine participants.

Chapter 6 : Perspectives on Resources

In addition to the pedagogies and curriculums educators follow, they also make use of the textbooks and instructional materials support the curriculum. The textbook acts as a guide, an educator's day-to-day support for moving through a curriculum, and provides both "an ends and a means" to instruction (Posner 2003, 6). According to Posner (2003), texts and materials have evolved over time to include workbooks, handouts, complimentary materials, videos, and in the contemporary classroom, multi-media materials. Technological advancements mean there is a larger array of accessible materials from a variety of media platforms which leads educators to expand the communities that can be represented in the classroom (Rahim & Manan 2013). With the plethora of available materials, the textbook has shifted from being the sole material outside of the educator's knowledge and is now complimented by a variety of multi-media materials (Rahim & Manan 2013; Reagan & Osborn 2019). According to Nieto (2012), moving away from textbooks is one way to combat the fact that many textbooks tell a story that gives learners "one way of seeing the world" and omit unpopular perspectives from less powerful groups (56). Therefore, the reliance on one textbook or one set of resources as the main guide for any classroom has fallen out of favor for many educators.

I. The importance of curricular support

The accessibility of resources through the internet and other multi-media platforms means educators no longer have to settle for only one resource (Nieto 2012; Rahim & Manana 2013). Educators can now post their resources online and get paid to share them through platforms such as *Teachers Pay Teachers*¹² or blogs such as *The Creative Language Class*. The language educator now has access to a variety of resources to support their pedagogical methods. Aguilar (2007) points out that educators try to "create as many opportunities as possible for their students to understand and experience other cultures by means of the textbook, videos, films, press articles, inviting native-speaking guests or even promoting exchange programmes" (Aguilar 2007, 68). With

¹² (<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/>)

access to the internet and the growth of language education in this largely rural Rocky Mountain state, the State's Association for Language Teachers and ACTFL have constant updates and resources available to teachers. Finally, for language educators, access to *authentic materials* or materials that originate from the target communities provides a new baseline to expose learners to a variety of dialects and places. While textbooks can be both a burden and a benefit to learning outcomes, this chapter will present the perspectives of these nine educators surrounding textbook use and its role in the language classroom. By examining four different themes surrounding textbooks, this chapter will provide insight into the role of technology and internet in the language classroom, perceptions surrounding best practices with regards to textbooks, the potential benefits of utilizing a textbook, and finally the role the educator plays in navigating the vast array of resources. Ultimately, the role of the textbook will depend largely on how the educator perceives its use and, similar to the previous chapter, how the educator views their learners.

i. Moving away from textbooks

To begin, these educators noticed the shifts in technology from their early days of learning a language to today, leading to a change in the role of the textbook in their classrooms. Several commented on the benefits of having these resources to support their learner's journey in the classroom. In particular, they highlighted the fact that having other resources to provide input in a variety of native accents would be a benefit they didn't have access to when they were in secondary school. For instance, Marie confirms,

La façon dont on enseigne le français a changé depuis mes jours au lycée. Ç'a complètement changé. Et um...donc pendant les années 80, c'était plus des livres, des *workbooks* maintenant on a l'internet qui change tout ! On peut montrer les vidéos. On a même plus besoin de *textbook*. (Marie 2020)

Translation: *The way that we teach French has changed since my days in high school. It has completely changed. And umm....so during the 80s it was more books, workbooks and now...the internet changes everything. We can show videos, we don't even need the textbook.*

Compared to what Marie used in high school, she finds that the textbook itself isn't a necessity to obtaining materials for her learners. This is further reflected in the research

by Reagan & Osborn (2019) and Rahim & Manana (2013). There is no doubt that technology has provided a new means to teach language, and in particular access materials from the target language communities rather than fabricated materials from a textbook.

This shift is also observed by Chuck's testimony. He discusses the impacts of improved technology and how the ease of use led to more opportunities to pull materials that exemplified everyday life in Mexico.

Then once yeah, 2010 came, then it was anything I could throw up on the screen, I could do it in a heartbeat. I just remember loving these videos because of my time in Mexico. But it would be some guy on the back of a moped with a camera, cruising through just some standard Mexican city. And it was just so slice of life. (Chuck 2020)

Prior to 2010, Chuck explained that using multi-media resources such as videos or projections was a cumbersome process. These changes in technology allowed him to compliment the textbook with sources he found that reflected what he would consider an authentic experience. This substantiates Aguilar's (2007) observation that educators utilize a diverse array of multi-media resources to expose their learners to speech communities. As such, the changes in technology reflect an ability to bring experiences to their learners in real time, whereas a textbook can be limiting in the amount of time and breadth of speech communities it presents (Nieto 2012). In Chuck's case, he could pull a video that reflected his time in Mexico and that might be a compliment to the lesson he pulled from the text. Regardless, the multi-media capabilities of the modern language classroom offer an ability to purposefully diversify not only the materials used but also the speech communities represented. In this way, technology has changed what can be presented to learners in the language classroom.

ii. Observation of a shifting role of textbooks

As changes in language education and developments in technology have advanced what educators have access to, textbook use is less favorably viewed (Aguilar 2007; Reagan & Osborne 2019; Nieto 2012). In other words, too much emphasis or adherence to the textbook is considered a deficit, in that it doesn't provide an array of representations of communities, nor will it be adaptable enough to speak to different

varieties of learners (Nieto 2012). From the interviews conducted, this perspective is observed among several testimonies. Movement towards designing one's own curriculum and sequencing is a theme that came up several times through the interviews of these educators, as well as the observations performed at the ALT conferences. This trend is observed in the testimonies of three participants, the first Jackie, the second Kendall, and the third Chuck. As a retired educator, Jackie expressed that she was always kind of an "unconventional" educator in the sense that she never or rarely used a textbook. In contrast, Kendall, who started teaching later than Jackie, mentioned that when she started teaching, she "didn't use a textbook anyway." This suggests that from Jackie's time to Kendall's time as a teacher, the textbook started to fall out of favor. Teaching without a textbook may have previously been *unconventional* or not standard practice, but based on Kendall's testimony, there is an underlying assumption and/or observation that being a new teacher meant not using a textbook—therefore, textbook use as standard practice was in flux. Additionally, Chuck's testimony confirms this trend when he observes that many of his Spanish teaching colleagues were moving away from the textbook and wanting "to do their own thing." This highlights that textbook use as standard practice started to be less frequent over the past 20 years.

Furthermore, during current professional development events, presenters frequently promote making one's own materials. After observing three professional development workshops through ALT, all three presenters and their styles of teaching, encouraged sequencing and developing one's own materials. Based upon the field notes taken in April 2019, April 2020, and October 2020, each presenter had a different way of creating support materials for their learners. The first, in April 2019, encouraged educators to make materials as they go throughout the day, relying heavily on interaction in the classroom, and conversational dialogue to create the vocabulary, grammar, and sequencing of instruction. In April of 2020, the educator provided scaffolding and ways to design one's own lessons using a set framework. Finally, in October of 2020, the presenter encouraged both finding authentic materials, articles, videos, songs, and then basing one's lessons on those materials. These professional development events, presenting create your own sequencing and curriculum as a model, reflects the changing

attitudes about textbooks. In particular, the need to be adaptable and flexible to meet the needs of the learners (Nieto 2012).

iii. The downfalls of the textbook

As these educators described the overall goals of not using a textbook or moving away from the textbook, they also highlight the fact that there are downfalls to sticking with a textbook. Textbooks frame community, history, and social practice in a way that excludes painful or less favorable truths (Nieto 2012). Furthermore, they can perpetuate stereotypes and neglect to represent linguistic and ethnic diversity (Aguilar 2007). If a textbook perpetuates the semiotic contextual usage ideologies, then the communities of practice being represented will reflect the dominant varieties of the language being taught. This could perpetuate the underlying belief or value that the dominant standards and therefore the dominant communities have more value to learn. Considering that the textbook can perpetuate language acquisition ideology and semiotic and contextual usage ideology, ensuring that learners are exposed to a diversity of materials is the first step in ensuring they make gains in changing attitudes and beliefs (Riley 2011; Aguilar 2007). Resources that educators can find online, that can be updated regularly, and are used by the target communities themselves would therefore be more desirable.

Moving away from a fixed textbook, even when it came with online materials, would provide educators more fluidity and flexibility in the material they can teach. The benefits are access to the newest and freshest information (Nieto 2013). Another benefit of utilizing authentic resources is that educators could adapt the material to be more relevant or related to the interests of their learners. Since part of language goals are to transform something unfamiliar to something familiar, and the best way to do this is by starting with material that's more familiar to the learner, then it stands to reason that having more flexibility with materials would allow educators to adjust what they use in a classroom based on the interests and backgrounds of their students (Aguilar 2007; Reagan & Osborne 2019). For instance, if outdoor activities are an important part of the learner's day-to-day life, then one could make a unit around communities that share that passion. Then the educator would also be less limited by resource availability and could

potentially select materials that would be more representative of the diversity of speech communities. For instance, when Jackie moved to Mountain Senior High School, they had “Discovering French” in the classroom, and it was fairly outdated and thus would not represent changes within the communities of study nor would it represent the changes in standards as recommended by ACTFL.

Additionally, ALT’s presentation of bi-annual professional development means educators can experience the newest pedagogical methods and resources. Of the three professional development workshops I attended, the three educators did not use a textbook, opting instead to create their own material for the classroom. Even for educators who use textbooks, there is a range of underlying emotions. Still for those who use a textbook there is an expressed range from matter-of-fact to almost apologetic. This suggests that within the new methodologies in language education, one of the practices that might be considered superior is to develop one’s own curriculum. The professional development workshops I attended supported this notion, in which the presenters created their own materials for their students, citing that it was a great way to keep students “engaged.”

II. Textbooks as a support and resource

While the perception surrounding textbooks seems to be negative, overall the critiques of utilizing textbooks can also be applied to utilizing authentic materials (Aguilar 2007; Neito 2004). First, while textbooks can be criticized for perpetuating ideological bias, selecting, and sequencing one’s own curriculum can come with the same limitations. Additionally, there is the limitation of time; making one’s own materials might work if the educator has one or two prep periods, but if they are the only language teacher in the school and have a multitude of levels, this becomes an impossible endeavor. Next, there is the question of sequencing. If one is creating their own curriculum, but they are not the only educator in their program, they would need to collaborate with colleagues to ensure the curriculum flows from one level to the next. Creating one’s own materials and curriculum can mean navigating a plethora of resources and possibilities on top of creating the documents and activities they might need to support student success. Finally, considering the “digital divide,” as Reagan & Osborne

(2019) highlight, means that there is unequal access to bandwidth for learners and educators across the United States. The textbook therefore can be a resource for educators and learners with limited time and varied digital access, and potentially provide more structure.

i. Dangers of perpetuating bias when selecting authentic materials

While the trend in perspectives surrounding textbooks in these interviews seemed to reflect a move away from the textbook, overall the best practice, as cited in the literature, falls somewhere in between. Since any material presented to learners can come with a bias or ideology, whether it be a textbook or an article or film, the key factor to providing accurate representations is related to the educator and the learner (Nieto 2013; Aguilar 2007; Reagan & Osbonre 2019). “The textbook in itself can represent many things ranging from the, in our opinion, most harmful ones: authority or ideology, to others more beneficial as, for instance, a map or a resource. The book is just an object, although often a very useful one, that has to be skillfully used by both the teacher and the students.” (Aguilar 2007, 72) Similar to pedagogical styles and teaching methods, the ability to select materials that will encourage learners to connect, engage, and sequence the learning appropriately falls on the shoulders of the educator. In this way one can better serve their learners, and in some cases do a better job of self-care. Considering the testimonies in this study, the reflections on how and when to use a textbook becomes a question of accuracy, representation, and ultimately how best to engage the learner.

First, while the observed best practice according to these participants is to make one’s own materials, the main concern with materials used in the classroom is more related to the educator’s awareness of ideology and bias (Nieto 2012). Whether one uses a textbook or not, bias and ideology can be perpetuated in both scenarios. It is up to the educator then to have knowledge of these potential pitfalls and to navigate the texts. One way to counter one-sided or simplistic views is by providing multiple sources with differing perspectives around the same topic (Nieto 2012). Aguilar (2007) further supports this standpoint:

Once the textbook has been challenged and the shortcomings, as well as the advantages, have been spotted, it is the teacher's turn to act as a mediator: parts of the book can be adapted, new material can be supplemented, the account of a personal experience can be presented, and ethnocentric approaches or images can in fact be turned around and used as a pretext for intercultural activities. (Aguilar 2007, 72)

To this end, whether the educator is developing their own materials or sequencing, or they are utilizing a strict sequence from a textbook, the educator is the agent of change. If the educator is able to navigate materials that will both relate to their learners and provide diverse representation, then there is an opportunity to ensure languages and their respective communities can be more broadly represented. In this case, whether the educator is utilizing a textbook is not the important question, but how the educator is using it, is.

ii. Textbooks offer broad support

For learner and educator alike, the textbook can be a resource to follow the sequencing of lessons. As Posner (2003) suggests, the textbook can be a guide to know where one was, where one is, and where one is going. The benefits of textbooks include being a resource for sequencing as well as offering structure for the learners. While perceptions about best practices seem to be heading toward a textbook-less future, based upon the testimonies of these educators, using a textbook offered more support. First, Chuck comments on his own textbook use in comparison to other colleagues.

Yeah, and probably one thing I saw my buddies moving away from though was the textbook. They really wanted to do their own thing. And I definitely got that but I had a hard time. And the fact that you know they're going on to the next level or they're just trying to pull stuff together and if I can do a listening activity out of the book and I can do a conversation activity and I'm using vocab and you know all that's pulling it together, plus we're doing a reading. I guess I just like that broad support. (Chuck 2020)

Chuck alludes to the fact that while his buddies were all moving away from the textbook, and he could see value in that, for himself it didn't make much sense. He felt that being able to provide his students with the material from the textbook meant guaranteeing that he was providing them activities they'd had lessons for. This would mean more resources for the learners to work from as well. They would have references to vocabulary pages as

they worked through homework activities or exercises. Connecting structures and vocabulary would all be included in a textbook (Aguilar 2007).

Similarly, Laura also followed a textbook, and while she discussed using supporting materials, for her the importance of the textbook is the connective tissues between readings, oral comprehension activities, and speaking activities. The textbook provides students a particular scaffolding so the educator doesn't have to ask, "Did I give them the right vocabulary for this reading?" When asked about her textbook use, Laura states, "I know a lot of teachers don't, but it just really gives me an anchor...we don't use it a lot." Similar to Chuck, Laura perceives that a lot of educators don't use the textbook, according to her interview, she utilizes the textbook less with more advanced levels, but still she uses the book as a way to keep things flowing in a logical manner. While she has a perception about this practice, overall the literature on textbooks supports the usage of textbooks as long as the educator can be a discerning agent in selecting additional support materials (Neito 2004).

Those who report not using a textbook run into difficulties selecting materials and keeping their lesson sequencing on track. Kylie, who is a big support of developing one's own sequencing and materials, observed that while she likes to pull new materials from current events or new videos she discovers, at times she loses track of her sequencing and has to bring herself back to her learning outcomes and objectives. This highlights how moving away from a textbook can lead to getting away from sequencing and structure (Posner 2003). The paradox of choice creates a barrier to effectively achieve learning outcomes. Therefore, having a textbook as a guide can provide benefits to keeping an educator on track.

iii. Self-care and time management

Additionally, the benefit of a textbook further eliminates the paradox of choice when having to navigate authentic materials versus sequencing of that material. The textbook allows for a way to steer away from the extra time it takes. Bailey, who teaches several levels of Spanish, explains that while she would like to make her own materials, doing so takes extra time.

I just –it takes me *soooo* long and I don't know...I just don't know how other teachers do it, some teachers are like, oh yea, I put together this unit and I'm like how do you do that? Someday I hope to be able to do that. (Bailey 2021)

Bailey admits that while making her own materials for class is the best way, the time it takes her isn't a viable option. Even Jackie, who didn't use a textbook for the majority of her years teaching, admitted during the interview that it's time-consuming, and she questioned whether using a textbook would be better for burnout prevention. She explained that if she were to give advice to a younger teacher would recommend examining that balance between being an effective teacher and self-care. Near the end of her teaching, like Bailey, she adopted the *Adios* textbook produced by the *Creative Language Class* blog creators.

So, I have made up everything I have ever done. And it has just taken a tremendous amount of time. {laughs} But I um... You know I had resources like, if I wanted to do poetry, I had plenty of good poetry books or if I wanted to do a novel –you know I had some [traditional textbooks] at Rocky Mountain High School. There had been some teachers, like that one that I'm describing that were very good although very very grammar oriented. Very traditional. But there were some good resources, but then I just made-up stuff that I thought kids would be interested in. Yeah, and then this last year we did get *Adios* because I thought it was cool and it um...and the principal was open to us spending some money, it was \$750 which she didn't think was very much. Um. For something like a textbook and it's super theme-based. (Jackie 2021)

As Jackie is describing this textbook, she goes on to talk about its adaptability, first in that it is based online, second that the subscription is inexpensive—especially since it gives the school access to several languages—and third in that it pulls from authentic resources. Moreover, Jackie is highlighting that even without a textbook, she always had “anchors.” Such anchors would provide her a starting point, and then she would try to adapt make the resources more relevant for her learners. While the best practice seems to be making one's own materials, overall, there is an expressed need to have a progression or map to follow.

III. The educator as resource navigator

As the educator navigates resources and determines what elements to incorporate, they take into account the experience of the learner as well as the kinds of resources they

plan to bring in. The essential component of textbook use is then how are these educators using it and whether they are reflecting on its use. For example, within the testimonies of these educators, there is a reflexivity about which materials are relevant in representing communities. Danielle discusses how the textbook plays a role in her classes, and how she navigates the shortfalls of a textbook by incorporating activities and authentic resources.

So it depends, usually in those classes I would use the listening exercises from the book, things like that but I would make up my own activities and find my own materials for the culture days. They're always the page about the Amazon or whatever, so I would say, I really heavily follow a textbook in terms of the progression, the layout, but the activities are mostly things I come up with myself (Danielle 2020).

Since Danielle utilizes the textbook as a tool for progression but not necessarily for the content being presented, she is more able to diversify the language and activities surrounding social practice than if she were to stick strictly to the textbook.

The literature supports a broader use of textbooks and materials to provide learners a diverse language learning experience. For instance, during my interview with Marie, she discussed how her department maps out their units together both to follow the logic of the text and also to incorporate more authentic materials.

We took bubble sheets that...suit un peu la logique de notre livre. So...um... comme la psychothérapie, ou la médecine, on pratique notre métier les profs...on pratique, chaque année on réfléchit, on fait mieux et --donc j'ai quand même un chemin à suivre. Et um...mais maintenant avec le---à tout moment l'école peut être fermé à cause de COVID. Donc j'enseigne un peu différent maintenant, j'ai des cours maintenant de deux heures. (Marie 2020)

Translation: We took bubble sheets that kind of follow the same logic as our book. So...um...as a psychiatrist, or a doctor, we practice our profession. Educators, we practice, each year we reflect, we do our best and I still have a path to follow. And um...but now with... at any moment school could be closed because of COVID. So, I teach a little differently now and I have classes that last two hours.

Marie highlights the fact that each year she and her colleagues take the time to practice and reflect on what can be better and what can change. Rather than using a textbook as her guide, she has a myriad of posters and visuals to support daily conversation and to provide students a reference material for fluid in-class conversations. Additionally, as mentioned by Danielle and Chuck, the textbook sequencing becomes less and less

important as the learners become more advanced. This suggests the textbook is not only a resource for the educator, but also for the learner.

Even Kendall who designs her own curriculum has found methods to ensure she maintains a structure and leads learners through the material in a way that accomplishes the learning objectives for each unit. During our interview, Kendall presented an in-depth process on how she organizes her units based upon a recent text she discovered. She recalls having designed and executed most of the process, but that the resource gave her the exact framework within which she could design her lessons. As Kendall walked me through her process, each step seems to highlight a different component of best practices, including using language for functionality, can-do statements, and finally how to encourage students to reflect on these elements.

You come up with your question and you kinda, come up with your unit goals using you know Bloom's taxonomy and here it has the interpretative, presentational, and interpersonal so there's your three modes that you try to like fill those in. And then it has the can-do statements, so that's really nice. So, this semester I was like –I mean I'd been doing can-do statements, but I haven't been presenting them to students. So actually last semester I presented the can-do statements, put into D2L¹³ and then I had students reflect at the end of the unit and write in English a reflection like "what can you do now" and look at the goals and tell me what you can do. Really key. (Kendall 2021)

According to Kendall, explicitly including the learner in understanding what they should be able to do and what they can do as a pre- and post-unit process brings them closer to achieving the goals. Furthermore, the text provides her with a structured way of presenting and evaluating the functions that the class should be acquiring.

And then at the very bottom here it has the boxes for the functions, like what functions are they going to learn to do all this stuff. And what um...structures and patterns, I like the addition of patterns because that's like just teaching speech that comes...that's reoccurring.

Additionally, the framework encourages the use of "reoccurring" structures or patterns. This is similar to TPRS, in that it maximizes the patterns in language use to support learner acquisition of communicative elements.

¹³ This is a reference to the LMS utilized by her school.

What structures are they going to learn in this unit, and need to know, understand, and then of course vocabulary. So that's really cool that these are like the last building blocks, so you do...that was kind of missing. I was doing a lot of this stuff but I was missing this bottom part, you know what functions, what should they be able to use language to do. Even though it's always in my brain and I think I do it, but I never specify it.

For Kendall, utilizing this framework both supported her practice and took it to the next level. This exemplifies the fact that even if she is *doing* all of the steps or moving students through a curriculum, a framework still provides a way to double check herself. She can ensure that the learners get all of the information they need and the resources provides a defined process for designing curriculum more explicit.

Overall, the use of textbooks, multi-media resources, and authentic materials is largely a matter of the educator's expertise. How and when these resources are used is more essential than if they are being used. While textbooks can offer a broad guide to sequencing and interrelated materials, supporting educator development in navigating resources is one way to ensure that ideology and authority aren't being perpetuated in resources presented to learners (Neito 2013; Reagan & Osborne 2019). Similar to navigating and identifying relevant pedagogies, educators navigate which materials are relevant for their classrooms (Aguilar 2007). As educators fine-tune their craft and figure out which materials and styles work best for them, whether one is using the textbook or not, one area of training that would be beneficial to further support educators in selecting materials is a training on prescriptive bias and language ideology towards a particular speech community.

As a textbook or an individual might favor a particular dialect in the classroom setting, there is a danger of transmitting a perspective about what community's dialect is the superior or the "correct" dialect. If making one's own lessons and materials is becoming the new norm, and part of this understanding is that textbooks don't accurately represent target language communities, then educators would also do well to train in various language ideologies so they can be active participants in the reversal of language ideologies. As the goal of a language educator seems to be to broaden worldview through exposure to differing social practices, one way to do this is to ensure that the resources being presented are not perpetuating the homogeneity of speech communities and

dominant cultural values. While the textbook is the anchor, the educator is the navigator whose expertise facilitates and supports the learner.

Chapter 7: Perspectives on Learners

The relationship between educators and learners is a longstanding component of any classroom dynamic. How the educator views their own role as well as the role of the learner is an important factor in how the curriculum and pedagogical styles are effectuated (Katz 1994; Schiro 2013). Additionally, socialization in the classroom, or how the educator viewed their own time as a learner, tends to be reflected later in the way educators teach. In her study, Busch (2010) found that “novice teachers describe how they default into methods and techniques that they themselves experienced rather than what they had been trained to do in the practicum classes that they were teaching.” (Busch 2010, 319). This means the educators are unlikely to see their learners as different from their own experiences. Ishihara & Cohen (2011) confirm this. In the language classroom, then, one would anticipate that the learners who are the “language people” would also be those who take to the components of grammar and writing the language, as was the case in past classroom (Celce-Murcia 2007).

Furthermore, curriculum ideologies as proposed by Schiro (2013) in *Curriculum Theory: Conflicting Visions and Enduring Concerns* provides a means to better frame how these perspectives manifest. Schiro (2013) highlights four key types: Scholar Academic, Learner-Centered, Social Efficiency, and Social Reconstruction (Schiro 2013). “Each of the four visions of curriculum embodies distinct beliefs about the type of knowledge that should be taught in schools, the inherent nature of children, what school learning consists of, how teachers should instruct children, and how children should be assessed (Schiro 2013, 2). The two key curriculum ideologies that manifest in the perspectives of these educators are Scholar Academic and Learner-Centered. The Scholar Academic Ideology is the underlying belief that the learner should obtain a certain knowledge and content based upon a long-standing tradition (Schiro 2013). Regardless of the learner, the knowledge passed down is discipline-related and should therefore be viewed as necessary to obtain in order to be part of that discipline. In contrast, the Learner-Centered Ideology is the belief that the curriculum should be made in conjunction with the learner’s interests. By following this framework, this section will look at the testimonies of these educators through their perspectives on who language

learners can be, what is and isn't possible for those learners, and finally what the goals are for their learners. Ultimately, this section will evaluate how these educators view language learners, and therefore the process of learning a language, to see if these language educators perpetuate or potentially deviate from the way they were socialized in the language classroom.

I. Who are language learners

To begin, how language educators view language learners is an essential component to understanding the decisions made in terms of curriculum and pedagogy. As perspectives on overall goals and methods have evolved, the mindset around who a language learner can be is tied to these changes. Whereas past methodologies focused on grammar out of context and cultural days separate from the language experience, past learners who would have been the successful language learner would have been the grammar lovers (Celce-Murica 2007). As these language educators would have been socialized to think of the language learner as a grammar lover, I anticipated that I would see educators speaking about learners in this manner. However, as the shift towards communicative pedagogical styles have replaced the older, "traditional" styles, so too has the type of learner in the classroom shifted to be more diverse. Much like the Learner-Centered Ideology suggests, these educators express repeatedly the importance of understanding learner motivations and interests as a key component to their classroom.

i. Shifts in defining the language learner

Based upon the testimony of these educators spanning from the 70s to today, there is a shift in understanding about who the learner in a language classroom can be. In the earlier days, the students who are in language classes who go on to study language may seem to be the "grammar lovers." These are the students who enjoy finding and studying patterns in language and find comfort in the more "mathematical" aspects of the language (Duff 2011). As language requirements at the secondary level is designated by the desire to attend college more so than to earn a high school diploma, it may be that students who take language in high school are doing so because they plan to go to college. According to Mme Sandra, the students at Rocky Senior High School and Highland High School

during the 70s were only these types of students. She describes what she liked about those students and teaching “foreign language.”

The thing that I really kind of snobbishly liked, was that the youngsters who take a foreign language are mostly college bound, that’s what they want to do in life, expect to do. And so, you don’t have the challenge that you have with children whose families have never gone to college, who don’t think college is what they are interested in.
(Sandra 2020)

Another interpretation is that the college-bound students are motivated to learn and study a language because they have college as an end goal and are therefore “studious.” This brings up many factors about ideologies that may be transmitted through language education. This mindset reflects the Semiotic and Contextual Usage Ideology (SCUI), as well as the Scholar Academic Ideology. First, for the SCUI, if a language is presented in a relatively homogenous manner, then it may not be reaching the diverse experiences of the learners. As Riley (2011) explains, “SCUIs affect the socialization of linguistic structures that reflect the prevailing power structures in that society” (496). In the case of this course, the content of the course would be mostly accessible to one particular type of learner: the scholarly one. As such we can gather that the language that would be taught would be the “scholarly” or “proper” French, supporting the power dynamics at play by devaluing other varieties which might otherwise be relatable to learners not continuing to college. This suggests a mindset about language learning, that the disconnect between the learner and the content is a reflection of the learner. However, it’s also possible that the disconnect is due to the fact that the content may not be relatable.

The underlying the concept of Scholar Academic ideology suggests that the language learner should be overcoming benching marks within a set hierarchy of curriculum and knowledge (Shiro 2013). As such, the education that may be “college bound” in this instance communicates to the learners that what’s important to know is what the educator knows. This also begins shaping what is considered a “language person;” to be a good language student also means to be a “language person.” The homogenous nature of the class, paired with the content of the French course, would therefore have perpetuated a mindset about what a successful learner should look like.

In contrast, Laura describes the difference between her own experience as a learner with the desired experience of her current learners.

See and I was the grammar lover. I mean...yeah. I studied this and probably did well at it because I loved it. But I know we need to remember that our kids---I'm not the---I'm the exception not the rule. The kids don't want that. The kids want to be able to say, "I've got something I can use and say" from my class. (Laura 2020)

Based on Liz's description here, the learner in the language classroom is no longer the "grammar lover" or just the "scholarly learner," but instead someone who needs for the subject matter itself to become more relevant than "it will get me into college." Based on these testimonies, how the learner is viewed by the educator as well as the role of the learner's motivations is evolving. Rather than having learners motivated by getting into college, the motivation becomes about making the material relevant to them and their experiences. This reflects a shift towards the Learner-Centered Ideology (Shiro 2013). If the learner's identity has shifted along with how the educator views their role in the classroom, then what it means to be a student has also evolved (Duff 2011).

ii. Types of learners

Furthermore, there is still a type of categorization of learners taking place with regards to how these educators work and classify them. This means there is a recognition that different types of students will be in the classroom. Moreover, the learners may have different capacities, and being more mindful of this reflects a shift towards a more learner-centered environment and therefore a need for a larger variety of pedagogical methods. Marie defines two types of learners in her class. She says,

Je vois les deux types de *learners*. Les gamins qui adorent les mathématiques etc...ils vont adorer comment ça fonctionne la conjugaison. Il y a d'autres qui sont là qui écoutent et um... par exemple, je répète tous les jours, aujourd'hui c'est lundi la date etc... j'ai des collègues qui disent « oh Marie c'est gonflant c'est toujours la même chose, c'est toujours la même heure » etc. Mais un gamin un jour, quand j'ai dit okay on va écrire 10 minutes il a écrit son histoire en commençant par la date. Il a retenu ça, a *baseball player* qui um...faisait jamais ses devoirs etc... (Marie 2020)

Translation: *I see two types of learners. The kids that love math etc they will love how conjugations functions. There are others that are there that listen. For example, every day I repeat 'today is Monday,' the date etc. I have colleagues who tell me "Marie, it's redundant, it's always the same time etc." But one day a student, when I said, "Okay we're going to write for 10 minutes" and he wrote his story by starting with the date. He had retained that, a baseball player that never did his homework.*

Marie is highlighting the perspective that different students or learners may come to a language class with different talents or goals and therefore the way they will interact with the material may reflect this. For those that love the grammatical structures, learning verb conjugations and the structural patterns in language will be motivating for them. Similar to the Learner-Centered Ideology, Marie is taking into account the innate motivations of her learners to drive how she conducts her courses. As such, she sees herself not as the container of knowledge, but a facilitator for her learner. Therefore, she provides the perspective that there is room for more than grammar lovers within the language classroom.

II. What are the expectations

A shift in who the learners can be also means a shift in the expectations for those learners. As these participants describe the expectations and outcomes for their learners, they reflect that they consider the diverse backgrounds of the learners, what is and isn't possible with regards to external factors in learning a language, and ultimately what level the learners are likely to go to. Furthermore, as these educators provide varied expectations about the outcomes for their learners, this further reflects a shift that's taking place in who the learner can be, and that language can have a variety of *raison d'être* in their educational careers.

i. Varied learning outcomes

First, the shift in learning outcomes and goals further highlights that how educators measure their learners' performance is based upon a dynamic understanding of how proficiency is obtained. As Duff (2011) suggests, "factors that influence such proficiency" might be "the age at which they begin to study or learn the language, the duration, intensity, and effectiveness of instruction or socialization, and their motivation and opportunities to use it" (566).

So, it's like six hours a day, all summer, mostly like football players who *have to get* it taken care of and they're fried, I mean it sucks for everybody. So, walking away the one thing I want them to be able to do is talk and I don't necessarily care if they're using the *El*, or the *nosotros* or the *vosotros* even in the right places, but they can string a sentence with some meaning together. (Danielle 2021)

As Danielle describes her expectations for those football players, she is taking into account not only the material, but also the environment of her learners that may impact how far they can get in the language. Instead of having the learners meet unreasonable expectations, she chooses to make the material more flexible and be reflective of the goals of learners. She also demonstrates a recognition that there are constraints beyond their control, including the timeframe of the class. Several other participants also describe a more nuanced goal for different types of learners in their classroom. Kylie describes her own evolution as an educator from trying to get everyone to the “80% correct,” to seeing her classroom as a team sport, where each student might have a different talent.

Je crois que pour moi, la différence entre quand j’ai commencé enseigner je pensais tous les choses d’éducation que 80% comprends, et si 80% ne comprends pas il faut refaire et uh...c’était une classe et je me vois plus maintenant comme entraîneur, plus comme *coach* je dis toujours à mes élèves je suis ton *French coach*, parce que tu tu dois tu commences à laisser les tennis okay voilà tu continues de travailler sur ça. Ok toi, tu prépares pour les choses en Olympiques ok, je fais des exercices un peu différents pour toi. Et pour moi quand je pense à ma classe comme une équipe de français et tout le monde et uh...et il y a une place pour tout le monde dans ma classe. Ça m’a beaucoup aidé de ne pas stressée sur les notes et pour le...pour la performance du groupe mais eh la performance de chaque élève. (Kylie 2021)

Translation: “*I think for me, the difference between when I started to teach is I thought that all educational things had to be 80% understood and if it wasn’t 80% than one had to redo and it was one class. And now I see myself more as a coach, more like a coach. I say to my students all the time, “I’m your French coach, because you...you begin with tying your shoes and okay voilà you continue to work on that. Okay you, you are training for the Olympics ok, I will make your exercises a little different.” And for me when I think of my class as a French team and everyone, there is a place for everyone in my class. This helped me a lot to stress less about grades and for the group’s performance but individual student’s performance.*

For her, the idea is that like a team, each player might have a different goal and a different role and her job as the coach is to support them regardless. In essence, what is deemed successful language acquisition may vary depending on the role and goals of the students as well as for the teacher. There seems to be a level of acceptance that some might go on and study abroad and gain a high level of proficiency, while others might be

exposed to a new world and new things – but not necessarily go on to proficiency. Her metaphorical parallel to having an athlete training for the Olympics juxtaposed to a student who may continue to study the language in college or go on to study abroad evokes a sense that much like a sport or activity, language learning can be beneficial for all, but not everyone needs to get to the level of a professional athlete to get those benefits.

ii. What is and isn't possible

While research is explicit about the factors that impact proficiency, and therefore how educators should shape their expectations, there are also studies that suggest educators are not always as aware of what is and isn't possible. In a study on pre-service educator beliefs, Busch (2010) found that a large portion of her participants didn't realize they were expecting too much of their learners. Many of their expectations originated from time in their language courses as learners, demonstrating that they had been socialized to believe that when they themselves didn't achieve certain learning outcomes, it was due more to their ability rather than the unachievable outcome.

One interesting finding was that pre-course beliefs were formulated by their experience in high school foreign language classes. Some teachers had assumed that proficiency was expected in a short amount of time because they had experienced one hour a day of study over one to four years and were tested on what they knew. Some felt that they did not achieve proficiency in the allotted time because they were just poor language learners. (Busch 2010, 327).

While this may have been the case for the participants in Busch's study, the experiences of these participants demonstrates that their own understanding of what proficiency is and how to achieve it is highlighted in how they view success for their learners. For example, the fact that not everyone will go abroad also determines some of the decision Kendall makes for her learners. For the students who might study abroad there are certain things that are worth teaching in the classroom, and for others, going abroad is where the learning should take place.

Well, if they get overseas they'll like stumble across these things and they'll make mistakes. And somebody will correct them. You know? And that's actually how you remember best, when you make an embarrassing mistake...usually it involved me calling somebody formal when they shouldn't be formal, and then you just get laughed at a little

bit like “why are you call me formal? I’m the same age as you.” Lesson learned. (Kendall 2021)

As Kendall describes the experiences of her learners, she is addressing the fact that there will always be some limitations to studying in the classroom setting. For a learner to really engage with the language, she suggests there will be some lessons learned by living in the target community. Furthermore, similar to the factors presented by Danielle, classroom settings, time of day, and time of year can all impact the way a class is engaged (Bailey & Nunan 1996). These factors are outside of the educator’s hands, as well as the learners. For example, Chuck discusses how the outcomes he expects from his learners may vary depending on the level of interest of the learner, but also the nature of learning means there will be days that are not so great.

Just trying to find some way to get inside their level of interest. I think that was the hardest part was realizing that you always had your spark plugs that are really gonna drive the class, and hopefully they’re gonna spark enough other kids. But you know it’s gonna be hard to have everybody plugged in and excited all the time.” (Chuck 2020).

The recognition that there are different learners, different environments, and different reasons to study a language, all highlight the fact that these participants do not follow the expected socialization as presented in Duff (2011) or by Celce-Murcia (2007).

Additionally, that the Learner-Centered Ideology is taking precedent over a Scholarly Academic one, where in the learners, innate motivations and preferences are being taken into consideration when designing and cultivating course material (Katz 1996).

Therefore, their overall mindset about what these learners need from the course has shifted since the 70s.

III. What are the goals

*I want you to be open minded to other people, I want you to travel if you can, I want you to love languages. And so. That’s what I hope they got out of my class.
~Jackie in a message to her students*

While educators may try to be flexible and create goals for different learners, they also expressed having overall goals for students walking out of their classrooms. When I asked what they wanted their students to get out of their class, educators responded with

what they would aim for any learners to gain from taking their courses. Regardless of the language, or level, there were some common objectives that all participants quoted, the main one being cultivating a love of language. The goals for learning language aren't about language acquisition as much as they are about encouraging learners to try a language different from their native tongue. In this section I will present some of the barriers these educators face and how their goals for their learners reflect a microrituel process to overcoming those barriers.

i. Barriers to learning languages

Considering the main elements educators want their learners to get out of the course, first I will present the barriers to learning language. Then I will explain the process these educators utilize to cultivate a love of language in their learners. Getting learners to try out the language would also require a level of affect for the language. In Bartram's (2010) work, he discusses how learners often express distaste for the target language use in the classroom. This is further supported by Kramsch (2019) and Macedo (2019) who address the unpopularity of learning languages other than English in the United States. Therefore, getting learners to use the language might also require the cultivation of affect for the language which would fold into a thirst or hunger to continue to learn. Jackie describes what she hopes the language can provide her students:

Absolutely a love of language. That was always my goal. I just wanted them to love it and learn more and travel and see that language is just a vehicle for understanding the world better. (Jackie 2021)

If language is the vehicle for understanding the world better, then it makes sense that the first step would be to cultivate a love and understanding of how languages work. Much like the norms and values of a community, a language can govern thought and be taken for granted without a deeper understanding of it (Hymes 1971; Riley 2011; Philips 2004). If the learners are already opposed to trying, then the educator must first overcome this barrier.

The first barriers presented in the testimonies of these educators is about the lack of experience with other communities. Based upon the testimonies of several participants,

this is essential, as their learners aren't always aware that other communities speak something other than English.

But Rocky Mountain was uh...very eye opening for me, because many, many of my students had barely been out of this state, had not been on a plane really truly were surprised that people spoke other languages like really weren't sure that if you go to France, people really speak French. (Jackie 2021).

Bridging the gap between the known and the unknown, to cultivate any sort of worldview beyond what an individual knows, the first step has to be to recognize that other languages are spoken, that English is not the only way to communicate. For Jackie she noticed a considerable difference when teaching students at Rocky Mountain High School, as many have not had the opportunity to go abroad or even travel out of state. For her the classroom becomes a kind of portal where she might expose students to other places and break down beliefs about languages other than English. Similarly, Laura speaks to this element of language education in her classroom.

And I guess going back to your first question is, you just do want 'em I mean I'm back in this state in the Rocky Mountain West where I love and I don't want to be anywhere else at this point in my life but I just...I do want them to have kind of a little hunger to see what else is beyond our beautiful mountains. So yeah. And it is. You wish that they could hear it. It's awesome when they have jobs at McDonalds or something and they come back in, they're like "there were people that spoke Spanish!" Um and you know... for them that's a rarity. You know if they were in other parts of the country... it's just ...they get it. But here it's a rarity: like "oh it really is real." (Laura 2020)

Much like Jackie's observation, Laura recognizes that for some students seeing Spanish as something relevant doesn't seem plausible. For Laura, she knows that these learners need some exposure to concepts they won't otherwise encounter outside of the classroom. Therefore, in cultivating curiosity by using the language as the vehicle, Laura hopes to inspire her learners to travel and go beyond what's familiar to them and experience the language in a real-life setting. This relates back to experiencing something as possible. Much like educators changing the ways they practice their craft and experiencing new pedagogies as being the most effective way to change their own practices, learners who haven't been exposed to languages other than English or have an awareness of English dialects need an initial *episode* to believe it (Javeau 1994). In the case of the classroom, this may happen more slowly and incrementally than going

abroad. In order to cultivate a love of language, having an awareness and curiosity about other communities would lead to being more open to learning about other lifeways.

ii. Start with them

Now that the barriers to learning another language have been identified, to continue the process of cultivating a love of language, starting with the learner is the next step. As Shiro (2013) reports, “it is the job of the educators to carefully create those contexts, environments, or units of work which will stimulate growth in people as they construct meaning” (5). As the participants in this study presented their goals for their learners, many of them suggested that “starting with them” was essential to moving to the next level of buy-in. For example, Laura explains,

I really try and start with them. What makes us, us? We’re Farmingtown, what makes us, us? What are the things that are just shouldn’t be taken away or we just couldn’t live without? You know what are our traditions? And so I really hope that it gets them to reflect on who they are and then um...go from there, and you know just identify with other people because of that. So, I think that’s important too: is being able to recognize that in themselves, and even just what it is. (Laura 2020)

By starting with the learners, Laura can better assess where she can go next. Working with learners who don’t necessarily know that other communities speak different languages or dialects means the educator must first determine their understanding of language before they can start teaching them.

iii. Getting them to talk

The next element of cultivating a love of language is to get students to *use it*. Thinking of this process as a microritual, after understanding barriers, and understanding who their learners are, educators then embark on getting the learners to talk. Kendall describes her motivations for getting learners to be comfortable speaking because it may be one way to change how they related to others. She reflects on what she wants her students to say to another German teacher while hanging out on the ski lift.

I mean first of all you think of all the people you meet and they’re like “oh yeah I took German in high school and I can say one thing ‘I’m bier bita’ that’s usually what I get. I’m like “yeah...ouff.” So I kinda think I want my students,...like what do I want

students to think when they're sitting on the chair lift with somebody who's a German teacher two years in the future. I really want them to be able to have a conversation in German. Like I don't want them to focus on being wrong cause that's what I...what hindered me the most, this is referring back to that question you asked awhile ago. Like the thing that hinders my language the most is the fear of saying something wrong and I don't want my students to do that. I want their thoughts out, right or wrong and know that somebody's gonna understand them. (Kendall 2021)

Kendall's description of her desires for her students are very similar to Marie's in that her base line is to have them being unafraid to talk or to try to use the language. Moreover, she highlights that she wants them to be able to have a conversation with someone later on or retain their language skills enough to use them later in life. Returning to previously cited testimonies about "not learning much" in their language classrooms, Kendall's goal reflects a desire to have learners walk away with the skills to use the language: to talk. Moreover, Kendall's testimony about American language education being ineffective or not long-lasting is supported by the research by Bartram (2010) and Macedo (2019) and Kramersch (2019). If the typical response to someone who's a language teacher is, "I can say one thing," then the reputation of having taken another language would seem to be underwhelming, at least with regards to language acquisition. In other words, to walk away from a class, and for the learner not to be able to use more language is falling short of current language acquisition goals. According to these educations, using the language is the key first step in the process of gaining learner interest and cultivating a love of language.

Similarly, Marie describes getting her learners take risks in the language. As students learn to use the language, it breaks down the barriers of a language other than English as being "foreign." When asked what Marie wanted her learners to get out of her class, she answered:

Et uh...donc le...vraiment pour moi, le plus important *c'est de parler*. Même si on parle d'il fait beau ou il neige um...le si--et lire le...donc parler et de lire... Le minimum c'est d'échanger quelques mots sympathiques, de lire le presse, uh...*les perspectives des Français* sur la France et les États-Unis et um...non moi c'est plus de parler de communiquer si je peux. (Marie 2020)

Translation: *And uh...so...really for me, the most important thing is to talk. Even if we're saying "it's beautiful out," or, "it's snowing," and to read--so to talk and to read... the*

minimum is just to exchange a couple nice words, to read the papers and uh...the French perspectives on France and on the United States and um....no for me, it's mostly to talk and to communicate if I can.

For Marie the baseline of communication is getting the learners to speak the language, followed by reading and listening to perspectives in French by giving them authentic resources. Moreover, when she describes what spoken language might be acceptable, she says, “even if it’s – the weather is fine,” or, “it’s snowing,” while quotidian, she’s highlighting that it’s not about the complexity of the subject matter nor the complexity of the sentences, just that students try. She wants her learners to express something in the language and that’s enough.

The underlying element or assumption here is that to achieve some level of cultural competency where learners can understand another culture, there is first the need to convince students that a language is worthwhile, interesting, even engaging to learn (Bartram 2010; Macedo 2019). By teaching students’ simple speech and encouraging them to talk, they hope they are cultivating a love of language and in some respects trying to make “foreign language” less foreign. As students then grow a positive association with languages other than English, they will be more open to learning about the people that speak that language. Therefore, these participants see the language as the baseline to cultivate curiosity and shift how learners see their world.

iv. It's not just about language

*I think the biggest thing I want them to develop is an interest and a curiosity and um...yeah just an awareness, and a curiosity to know more about their world
~ Laura 2020*

Finally, these educators want to see their learners go beyond what they know and confirm that they are utilizing language to get there. Aguilar (2007) suggests that “it is necessary to introduce elements of the learner’s own culture, as well as other cultures, so that by means of contrast and comparison an openness of mind and reflection on the relativity of their acquired values can be fostered in the learners” (Aguilar 2007, 73). For example, Sandra suggests that even if students don’t go abroad, one can gain something from language study.

And I had some other students, who I knew went on to following French, in many ways, after they got out. But I don't think that's the only important thing you get for studying a foreign language. I think you get a broader view of the world. (Sandra 2020)

The underlying assumption here is that this broadening of the worldview through language learning is an automatic process.

In parallel, Kylie W. sees the process of cultivating this love of language or ability to understand how languages work will lead their learners to obtaining a kind of “pluralité de perspectives.”

Numéro un c'est qu'ils apprennent un peu de langue et comment les langues marchent, et comment apprendre les langues alors s'ils veulent continuer avec des autres langues à l'université ils savent bien comment pratiquer le vocabulaire, utiliser les ressources, google translate et beaucoup de ressources et il faut bien naviguer ça. Uh...oui il faut savoir qu'est-ce que 'c'est un un sujet, verbe, adjectif et tout ça mais aussi comment la langue c'est une réflexion d'une culture et comment la culture peut être aussi une réflexion de langue. Et vraiment plus que ça...je dis aussi ...je veux les préparer d'étudier les langues...je veux les ...les donner une pluralité de perspectives. (Kylie 2021)

Translation: *Number one, it's that they learn a little about language and how languages work et how to learn languages. So, if they want to continue with other languages at University, they know pretty well how to practice vocabulary, use resources like Google translate and lots of other resources, they need to navigate all that. Uh...yes... it's necessary to know what's a subject, verb, adjective and all that but also how the language is a reflection of a culture and how the culture can also be a reflection of a language. Et really more than that, I also say I want to prepare them to study languages. I want them...I want to give them a “plurality of perspectives.”.*

Kylie describes three goals she has for her learners. The first is developing an understanding of how languages work and how to learn them. For her, this goal allows students to transfer competencies to language in college, even if it's not French. Then she moves from there to saying the lessons that can be learned from language and social practice are how they reflect each other, and how this ultimately gives you a broader perspective, or an ability to see multiple perspectives. Much like the other participants, she sees the skill development as the means through which one starts to understand the

relationship between language and culture. Moreover, Kendall describes how small talk may lead her learners to have conversations that ultimately lead to learning from others.

We want them to understand that especially in our political situation like there's not just one way of doing things and actually if you listen to other people and talk to other people and interact with other people, you'll like learn new ways and that's important. Yeah so I guess that's like the cultural aspect. That there are different ways of doing things and cultural twists on things that may be difficult for us, maybe we should learn from others. (Kendall 2021)

While at first it would seem that everyday talk is overly simple and pragmatic, the idea here is to shift what her students think and see as possible. To learn another language at an older age can create an environment of hesitancy and self-consciousness that doesn't really exist when we are children (Bartram 2010; Chaudron 1988). Therefore, step one really is to make the language seem accessible, applicable to one's own life. The ACTFL proficiency standards and research on learning another language support this, in that research shows learners are more likely to be curious about another language if you start with what's most familiar. Therefore, beginning with what's familiar may cultivate a love of language learning first, and second, it may provide the foundation to see other cultural practices with a self-awareness lens.

Furthermore, by cultivating this love of language, there is potential to cultivate openness to other communities. This idea is reflected in the way that Bailey articulates the goals she has for her students that go beyond language proficiency.

But overall, beyond the language goals and the like having a positive association which may tie into this but I think like mainly I want the students to... uh...um to be—to be learning about another culture and to be able to see that like everything...like everything that they're learning about is like 100% normal for somebody else... this is normal for somebody else. And that concept of being able to think about you know...not say...that's not weird it's just different. And that's and to get rid of like the "they" do this we do this. And just humans are doing this, these humans are doing this and those humans do that. (Bailey 2021)

As she describes this, she connects to a goal she described earlier in the interview, that of a "positive association with the language." What Bailey is highlighting is that she's using the language as a vehicle to reverse language ideology: a positive association with the

language could lead to a positive association with speakers of that language and therefore cultivate a more open-minded learner.

I always tell them to think like an anthropologist and alright, we're going to be an anthropologist and looking down on what's going on here, with these high school students and try to look at their own behaviors and things as an outsider so that then they can do the same thing with other...like when we're talking about Puerto Rico...so that we can kind suspend our own judgement and just be observers. In order that we are you know...non-judgmental humans and we're working towards recognizing our own privilege, seeing that other people do things differently and there's no...and that doesn't mean wrong. (Bailey 2021)

Bailey is encouraging and training her students to look at themselves before they look at others. She says part of shifting beliefs about behaviors and attitudes towards others is also to "suspend our own judgement." This would indicate that cultivating a love of language, perhaps through small talk where the content might be more familiar, but the language not, starts this process. This means creating an opportunity to be open to seeing one's own way of life as abnormal in the eyes of someone else and therefore seeing someone else's life as normal.

IV. Reflections of their own journey

The tendency of educators to make decisions based upon the interests and limitations of their learners suggests a shift towards a more Learner-Centered Ideology and a potential pathway to changing the LAI. However, there are residual elements of past socialization within the testimonies of these participants that suggests the shift in expectations or types of learners isn't completely changed. Chuck describes it well when he says,

I was always looking out for that low achiever and thinking oh man, that's tough. This person doesn't get language. (Chuck 2020)

By focusing on learners who may not be as interested or motivated by the language of study, Chuck demonstrates that the content should be applicable to the learner. However, there is still evidence that a particular type of learner is more motivated by the content. These participants made reference to the learners as sparkplugs, the Olympic athletes, or mathematicians, or grammar nerds. Based upon the metaphorical reference to strength or

energy, these kinds of students represent those who take to learning the target language. However, the idea that some learners might not “get language” is an interesting one. This idea provokes further questions on what this could mean. Are the stronger students more talented in language learning? Or is it just the way the language is being presented? What does this look like in the classroom? Are they the students that speak up in the classroom? Or are they the ones who write efficiently in the target language? Without more concrete observational material it’s difficult to define what a “spark plug” or “a student who gets language” actually looks like. Without further evidence of what’s going on in the classroom, however, the concept of SCUI could still be transmitted. One language to one culture, and which variety of the language is presented most often, also transmits the dialect that’s worthy of study. Regardless, there does seem to be a shifting in how educators are viewing their learners in the language classroom which could ultimately suggest a shift in the LAI and the Scholar Academic Ideology towards a more Learner-Centered one. Educators therefore present the material in different, varied ways, with varied expectations to reflect the variety of learner abilities and motivations. Finally, these educators seem to be moving towards a more “adaptable” and “flexible” model that is Student-Centered and therefore dynamic in delivery and assessment.

Still, the educators’ focus on goals, outcomes, and expectations is different from the socialized Scholar-Academic mindset, which suggests there has been an evolution of some sort. Furthermore, the process and goals they have outlined for their own learners reflects, to a certain degree, the rites of passage they themselves experienced as learners. Their varied level of expertise also reflects how expertise can be negotiated (Duff 2011). In summary, looking back at how these participants described their own experiences as language learners, many of their goals reflect a similar process they went through. First, the need to expose students to language other than English and to cultivate a positive association with the language. Next, that this would lead to curiosity about the world beyond “our beautiful mountains” and ultimately lead to a broader worldview. For these educators, language was the vehicle that led them to discover more about the world around them, and that’s what they aim to provide their learners. As their learners may not have much exposure to languages other than English, they first set out to make a language less foreign by focusing on daily communication, small talk, and oral

expression rather than grammatical correctness. Next, they try to keep it fun and “engaging” to cultivate a love of language and make the language accessible to any learner. Finally, they aim to provide learners opportunities to see a new normal by encouraging learners to see that their normal is someone else’s strange. The process described by these educators resembles the microrituel process used to shift teaching practices. First the learners are exposed to what’s possible, then are encouraged to try it out, and finally to be open to integrating new mindsets into their own perspectives. Ultimately, language educators use the familiar to cultivate affect in the language, making the prospect of learning about other communities and lifeways a possibility.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

In this chapter, I will conclude this study by summarizing key findings from the testimonies of these nine educators, as well as their perspectives on their learners, resources, and professionalization. Furthermore, I will address the unexpected findings in relation to the research goals and questions by discussing their value and contribution to the broader community. In particular, I will address how these understandings of educator backgrounds can be further applied to other areas of educational research and broader discussions on language ideologies. I will also review the limitations of the study and propose opportunities for future research. Finally, I will conclude with key understandings from the study.

I. Summary of key findings and observations

Over the past several decades, American language education has seen an overhaul in how it's conceptualized and structured. The American Council of Foreign Language Teachers provided a foundation of guidelines and standards for language education, including curricular guidance, proficiency standards, and resources for language educators across the country. At the base of these standards, Dell Hymes' concept of communicative competence was a driving force that led to a new focus on language as content instead of language as structure in the classroom. However, the question of whether these new guidelines and standards are being implemented remains underexplored. The process of socialization and the perpetuation of language ideologies is one explanation for the lack of changes. As the process of socialization embeds beliefs, attitudes, and values at a young age, they become difficult to identify and therefore challenging to change (Duff 2011). The educational literature largely reports that such changes are unlikely without more experiential training. The means to effectively implement new pedagogies and teaching methods can include community support, mentorship, and peer-to-peer collaboration (Cuban 1984; Duff 2017; Busch 2010).

i. Research aims

There seemed to be a gap in knowledge regarding the roles of educator backgrounds in the process of changing perspectives. In this study, I highlighted the process of transformation from learner to educator for nine educators in a largely rural state in the Rocky Mountain west. Regardless of the how one becomes an educator; the educational profession is a unique place where change and stability create conflicting identities (Duff 2017; Neito 2012). These identities are further compounded when one considers the uniqueness of a language educator in a country that undervalues and minimizes languages other than English (Macedo 2019; Kramsch 2019). Furthermore, language ideologies such as the language acquisition ideology and the semiotic and contextual usage ideologies are embedded in the manners by which language is both taught and transmitted (Riley 2011). The process of socialization can unknowingly perpetuate and promote language ideologies at the same time as educators are aiming to broaden the perspectives of their learners. From their interviews, I aimed to better understand the role of socialization in perpetuating beliefs and ideologies about learning and teaching languages as well as how creative ritual, microritual, and rites of passage frame the implementation of changes in perspectives and understandings.

ii. Key findings

In this study, I aimed to address this research question: If goals of language education include broadening perspectives and cultivating a more open mindset, but language ideologies and socialization do the contrary, then what contextual factors, if any, can contribute to the shifting of beliefs in language educators to ensure these ideologies aren't being perpetuated through current educator perspectives? Beginning with the concepts of communicative competence and moving to intercultural competence, the educational literature supported a move to more integrated styles of language teaching wherein language would be taught within its social context. However, literature on teaching practice suggested that contextual factors for change seemed unlikely. Considering socialization can embed beliefs about teaching, identifying those beliefs would be necessary (Burke 2011; Pajares 1994; Duff 2011; Ishihara & Cohen 2010;

Zuengler & Cole 2004), . In this study, I found that the testimonies of these nine educators demonstrated perspectives about language education have shifted away from the largely criticized *Deep Structure* methodologies (Burke 2011).

The qualitative research methods I used included semi-structured interviews followed by narrative and thematic analysis. These methods provided insight into educator's lives from their years as learners during early socialization to their experiences abroad. By providing open-ended interview questions, I also found overlap in their professionalization and in their similar learning objectives in the classroom. This overlap suggested that, while each educator had a unique pathway to the profession, all educators had important elements in common. First, the discovery of and infatuation with the target language. Second, the curiosity and desire to study abroad and experience different communities of social practice. Third, the need for mentorship and community when trying to implement new and improved teaching methods. Finally, the desire to cultivate a love of language and therefore other communities of social practice in their learners.

Furthermore, educator reflections on early socialization were different than I'd come to anticipate based on theories of socialization and research educator practice. These educators expressed that their early years were not effective for learning how to "use" the language, so they sought out new ways of teaching. However, the positive association they aim to provide their learners is also present in these reflections on their own early experiences.

The initial factors present in educator reflections have to do with their early socialization followed by their experiences abroad. While abroad, they experienced rites of passage from separation, integration, and incorporation. During this time, the period of separation and experience in a different social community allowed for a different usage and understanding of language practice. This opened the opportunity for integration into a new social community. Upon their return, these participants felt pulled to incorporate this transformation by choosing to become educators and by seeking different methods of teaching language than the methods they had experienced at a young age.

Their perspectives on learners and textbooks demonstrated that for eight of the nine educators, a Learner-Centered Ideology had replaced the more Scholar-Academic mindset. This meant the content chosen for the course, the sequencing of the course, and

the overall curriculum would hold the learner in mind, as opposed to the educator passing along pre-approved content from subject-matter experts. This is further supported by a move away from the textbook as the primary resource for the course. The textbook instead became the guide for sequencing and vocabulary, but the educator was the determiner of relevant material for the learner.

Finally, I found that an essential component of changing educator perspectives on language teaching practice is community and mentorship. In early socialization, the mentorship role is a central guideline for the novice speaker or learner to follow (Duff 2011). It is logical then that for the implementation of change, the role of community and mentor would also need to be considered (Ishihara & Cohen 2010). For the language educators of this study, from a largely rural state in the Rocky Mountain west, the presence of community support and educator unification is a clear influence in how these educators have been professionalized.

II. Broader implications

The broader implications of this study include a range of possibilities with regards to implementation in educational contexts, as well as indigenous language revitalization contexts, and the wider community surrounding attitudes towards language learning. The role of mentorship and community in driving or preventing change should be considered when seeking to shift educator understandings. By providing more qualitative research from the perspective of the educator, I have provided more context for the discussions surrounding the teaching profession. The singular notion that shows educators teach how they were taught, is worth re-evaluating. Additionally, I demonstrated that qualitative research can more accurately provide information for gaps in current research on changes in educational contexts. I found that my nine participants were both willing to change practices and regularly sought out new methods of teaching. This highlights the fact that regardless of whether practices are changing, they are open to change. As mentorship and experience play an essential role in early socialization, the same is true as a novice teacher enters the profession and moves through the process of professionalization. Thus, the community of educators becomes a powerful place for change.

ii. Community beyond the language classroom

By ensuring these educators are understood and supported, there are broader impacts for the community beyond the classroom and outside of the profession. While English is largely spoken in the Rocky Mountain western state of this study, there are opportunities to better understand linguistic diversity both within varieties of English as well as indigenous languages. As Riley (2011) highlights, “dominant language ideologies frequently lead to the demise of minority languages as well as the denigration of their speakers” (499). As indigenous languages and the diversity of varieties are at risk, the language classroom can become a vehicle for to broaden understandings of languages and how they work. By broadening understandings about linguistic diversity and cultivating curiosity about languages other than English, or minority varieties of English, the wider community could become more receptive to a large array of languages.

iii. Potential applications

This study provides insight into three potential applications for practitioners. First, to maximize the state Association of Language Teachers to continue cultivation and support community. The community offered by ALT was cited by all educators of this study as a central part of their professionalization and of shifting their understandings about language education. This is further supported by the educational literature and changing pedagogies and mindsets (Duff 2011; Burke 2011). Therefore, I would recommend building from the state organization, ALT, to cultivate more of these types of daily interactions through peer-to-peer mentoring and regional chapters. Particularly, with the increased comfort level of Zoom, a “Critical-Friends”¹⁴ group could be utilized in which educators could set goals and seek council from their peers on how best to achieve those goals. Next, they could establish peer-to-peer observation times and visit each other’s classrooms to offer feedback on the articulated teaching goals. As this study has demonstrated, shifting educator perspectives takes place incrementally, and the key to these changes being incorporated is the mentorship and support from community

¹⁴ <https://nsrfharmony.org/faq-items/cfgvsplc/>

(Ishihara & Cohen 2010; Duff 2011). By offering a means to do more daily, incremental exposure to new methods and critical feedback, educators are more likely to implement changes in their teaching practice.

The second practical application of the research could also be applied beyond the language classroom, by implementing more collaborative opportunities across disciplines. By encouraging peer-to-peer mentorship within an educational institution there would be two potential benefits. First, that language educators would become more incorporated into the educational community as opposed to being on the outskirts (Duff 2017). Secondly, this study demonstrated that change happens incrementally and through a microritual process. This takes place through experiential learning and professionalization, because experiencing new methods of teaching provides opportunities for changing understandings of what's possible in the language classroom. Next the educator is more likely to integrate and incorporate these new techniques into the classroom. Therefore, peer-to-peer mentorship could be a way to continue to cultivate daily support for implementing changes in classroom teaching, regardless of the discipline (Busch 2010; Duff 2017). As education reform happens incrementally and on a quotidian basis, offering more opportunities for educators to interact regularly, share goals, and experience different methods of instruction would cultivate a consistent source of community to support change.

The final practical application for this research is building more resources for educators to pull from that offer structure and easy access, much like the *Creative Language Class* blog has done. As educators continue to seek out more materials to support the lessons they are facilitating, a more sequenced approach to integrating authentic materials would assist with time constraints as well as ensuring that many communities are represented in the classroom.

III. Limitations – understanding practice

With any study, limitations are important to identify as they provide a frame for what the research can and cannot claim. While this study found that educator perspectives on how language should be taught and learned differed from reflections on their early socialization, more research is necessary to know if these changes are widely adopted in

the region, if those changes are present in the broader profession across the country, and if those changes are also taking place in teaching practice. However, these limitations provide a launching point for further research and dialogue. There are several key limitations to this study that should be taken into consideration. These include the time frame that I conducted the study, which led to insufficient participant observation, how I recruited the participants, and finally my personal bias and background regarding language teaching.

i. Limited participant observations

First, this study was conducted during a global pandemic, which made it difficult to gather sufficient participant observation for analysis. Moreover, with educators having to reinvent how they were teaching, finding willing participants was also time consuming. Building from this study to include participant observation, would provide verification and triangulation to determine the degree to which the changes expressed by these educators is happening in practice. Due to the restrictions prior to available vaccines, getting into the classroom was not a possibility. This limited my ability to comment on how the change in perspectives manifests in their change in practice.

ii. Participant demographics

Due to social distancing and not being able to go into schools regularly, I was unable to meet prospective participants organically. Therefore, the majority of my participants came through my connections with ALT or the educators I worked with. There were several educators I reached out to who did not respond. While this could be due to the extra burden of the pandemic classroom, it could also be that those who volunteered to speak with me are of a personality type more open to change and perspectives than other educators. This means that the educators who were willing to speak with me may have done so because they are the kind of people who would seek out new experiences and therefore be more open to the “wonder” of change, as Srinivas might say. In other words, those who have undergone and been open to change, at least in perspectives and attitudes about language education, may also have been those who were

open enough to speak with me. It would be beneficial to meet and interview those who have not had this opportunity, or who do teach but maybe haven't been in an immersion experience.

iii. Personal bias

Another key limitation to the study has been navigating my own personal bias about language teaching. Having taught myself, I came into this project with strong opinions about “best practices” in the language classroom. At first I found this to be a barrier to accurate observations of interviews, professional development events, and classroom visits. I was a target language -only type of teacher, who taught in the thematic unit style. As I attended professional development events and listened to educators describe their methods for communicative language-based learning, I found it difficult to set aside the teacher's voice. To mitigate some of my own bias, I utilized Peshkin's (1988), “The Search for Subjectivity—One's Own,” which helped me classify the competing voices in my field notes as coming from that of the educator versus that of the researcher. Even still, I found myself more easily falling into the perspective of the educators and forgetting to zoom outwards and utilize the lens of research to analyze these educators' testimonies. By utilizing Peshkin's framework, I was able to keep reflect on the different voices and perspectives that I bring to this study.

iv. Recommendations for future research

Despite the overall limitations to this study, the testimonies and findings provide a launching point for further research to assess changes and socialization in educator perspectives and practice. To ascertain the level to which educators have shifted their actual classroom practice from *Deep Structure* and the grammar-centric styles, comprehensive participant observations of the classrooms would be essential. Additionally, while educators have their views on learners, learner interviews and surveys may offer more complete information as to how learners experience language education. While these educators aim to be flexible and engaging for their learners, to understand if they are achieving this goal, a learner's perspective would be necessary. Finally, to better assess the influences of community, mentorship, and microritual on

educator practices, a study that utilizes focus groups and participant observation would be advantageous. A focus group discussion, post-professional development event, could pull thoughts from a wide variety of educators. These educators could be a mix of those who participate in professional development events regularly and those who prefer not to. This would provide more in-depth understandings as to how professional development is received. This, coupled with participant observation, would also allow for a more in-depth analysis on how and what elements of a particular method, pedagogy, curriculum, or resource is officially incorporated into an educator's classroom.

IV. Final Conclusions:

In conclusion, the contextual factors that influence educator perspectives around language education include experiences abroad, experiences in professionalization, and experiences with their learners. Past methods of language teaching have been criticized for their oversimplification of language. This oversimplification can create unintended consequences for minority varieties of language and in turn the communities associated with them. Should these language ideologies be perpetuated and passed on through socialization, then language educators may be perpetuating a mindset they are trying to alter. Through the framework of microrituel and rites of passage, I found that for these educators, their perspectives on how to teach language has been shifted. However, whether these educators practice the transmission of communicative competence, and therefore have made strides in integrating social contexts in language learning, cannot be determined by analyzing educator perspectives alone. Additionally, understanding the way languages are being represented in the classroom, would provide key insights into how language acquisition ideologies and semiotic and contextual usage ideologies are being perpetuated. Within the realm of educational research on language teaching practices, these nine educators provide evidence that more qualitative studies are needed. It would be important to deduce if the change in perspectives about language education reaches beyond the given region, and if so, how those evolutions can be further incorporate broader linguistic understandings of language ideologies.

Overall, language educators live between what is known and what learners have yet to discover. As American society does not promote language education as a central focus within educational objectives, these educators are in the minority. The nine educators of this study fell in love with language as learners and continued to the teaching profession in order to remain connected. Now they strive to alter the mindsets of those who have not yet experienced much of the world. The perspectives they provide on how they teach versus how they were taught and the impact of the community provided by the Association for Language Teachers supports the notion that change in perspectives is a dynamic process. Educator identities are complex. They are comprised of a unique combination of early socializations, rites of passage, microrituels, and communities. To better understand the means by which one can implement changes, better understanding and visibility on these backgrounds is necessary. Furthermore, the means to implement new pedagogies and understandings will be equally complex.

The central finding of this study is that while a change in educator perspectives seemed unlikely, I found educators who were teaching differently from their experience as a learner. Moreover, in order to understand if changes in practice are possible, first there must first be a change in attitudes and perspectives about how to teach. The contextual factors that related to shifting perspectives included a study abroad experience, community, and professionalization. The community component played a key role in their ability to experience new methods of teaching and therefore begin a microrituel process to evolving their own practices. By falling in love with language, these nine educators found themselves drawn to an unexpected profession. From discovering their love of language, to making a career out of their passion, these educators demonstrate it's possible to teach differently than one was taught.

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Primary Resources

- Bailey (active Spanish teacher) in interview with the author, February 2021.
- Sandra (retired French teacher) in interview with the author, September 2020.
- Kylie (active French teacher) in interview with the author, December 2020.
- Jackie (retired French and English teacher) in interview with the author, April 2021.
- Chuck (retired Spanish teacher) in interview with the author, August 2020.
- Marie (active French teacher) in interview with the author, October 2020.
- Kendall (active German teacher) in interview with the author, February 2021.
- Laura (active Spanish teacher) in interview with the author, November 2020.
- Danielle (active Spanish and Linguistics teacher) in interview with the author, December 2020.

APPENDIX 1:
Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Script: I'm here to talk with you today about your life's experience with the language that you teach and how you came to be a teacher. Can you start by telling me a little about how you came to learn the language that you teach? Who made the largest impact on your language training?

Themes:

Historical understandings

How did it come to pass that you learned this language? {– *to understand their relationship with the material they teach* } Did you pick it? How did it come to pass that you taught the language?? Have you been abroad/lived abroad? For how long? How many times? Can you tell me about your first experience?

Language and culture

What is language to you? What does it mean to learn another language? {*To get the discussion on language going*} What is culture to you? How does it come to play in your classroom?

Assessment and student engagement

Overall, what is your main goal in the classroom? For the students? For yourself? {*To look for values in the way students are assessed*}
Can you describe some of your assessments? Formative and Summative? What do you rank most highly on each? {*To look more formally at assessment*}

Daily planning

How much time do you spend planning each week? What does that look like for you? Has it always been like that? What was it like when you first started out?

Background:

How long have you been teaching? How many different jobs have you had? Did you take any breaks? What is your favorite textbook thus far? What other materials do you use for your classroom?

When you consider the ACTFL – World-Readiness standards, what do you think of them professionally? What about the concept of intercultural communicative competence?

APPENDIX 2:
Glossary of Terms

ACTFL	American Council for Teachers of Foreign Languages
ALT	The Association of Language Teachers
Beliefs	Attitudes and values imbued in action. Views held about the nature of language education. (Pajares 1994; Busch 2010)
Communicative Competence (CC)	Based upon Dell Hymes' (1971) work, communication and social practice are intertwined within the communicative. He breaks this into four main parameters to measure communicative competence. These include <i>knowledge</i> , <i>ability for use</i> , <i>appropriate use</i> , and <i>performance</i> .
Creative Ritual	To fracture with what is typical, normative, or expected. Srivinas (2018) proposes a shift from previous anthropological studies on ritual that focus on the process as a means to maintain stability. The opposite of this idea of “stability” is to “fracture” with what’s typical. That perhaps the pursuit of “wonder” is actually the point of ritual “rather than” a return to solidity of structure. Engagement in wonder in order to reframe one’s understanding of reality.
Curriculum	The mapping of content, activities, and sequencing of material to accomplish learning objectives. This is both the “ends and the means” (Posner 2003).
Deep Structure	Defined by Burke (2011) as being embedded in the school schedule, the curriculum, and pedagogical delivery of material. In particular, she defines deep structure in language learning by the five components 1) Use of translation 2) Grammar practice 3) Non-contextual explicit grammar teaching 4) Culture abbreviated 5) English use Explicit grammar teaching versus implicit – explicit is where the structures are the object of study, implicit is where learners engage in language use for function first and gain understanding of grammatical structures second.
Intercultural communicative competence (ICC)	The ability to see and manage the relationships between oneself and one’s own social beliefs, behaviors and meanings, as expressed in another language, and those of their interlocutors, expressed in the same language or a combination of languages –or even a combination of languages –which may be the interlocutors’ native language, or not (Byram 1997, 12). Aguilar (2007)
Language Acquisition Ideology (LAI)-	Which forms of language are acquired and by whom: In the case of language acquisition ideology, the expert in the room may be

	considered the educator or the native speaker. These ideologies tend to perpetuate age and gender hierarchies. (Riley 2011)
Language Ideologies	The unconscious beliefs and values about a community transferred and embedded in the socialization process in language use. (Kroskrity 2004; Philips 2004)
Microrituel	Based in the foundations of van Gennep’s rites of passage, the microrituel is transformation that takes place on a small scale but can still reflect social practice or community (Javeau 1994).
Pedagogy	The methods of teaching and style that compliments the curriculum (Schiro 2012).
Prestige Standard	or variety of language spoken by a dominant community – this variety of language is often viewed as being “worthy of study” because of the power dynamics associated with knowing how to communicate with that particular group. “Dominant language ideologies frequently lead to the demise of minority languages as well as the denigration of their speakers” (Riley 2011, 499).
Professionalization	Process of professional socialization, where a member moves from a novice role to an expert role within particular community context (Duff 2017).
Rites of passage:	Stages of transformation, these allow for one member to move into a new role or identity (van Gennep 1988).
Scaffolding	Providing a tool or model to support learners obtaining new information or knowledge. (Posner 2004)
Semiotic and Contextual Usage Ideology (SCUI)	These ideologies are “power infused” and “power enforcing.” They lead to a value system that perpetuates beliefs about minority varieties as being less desirable and less valued than those of the dominate community. How language is used in different contexts communicates a value system to the learner of that language. Ex. The correction of the “tu” used in a formal setting – when the Burkinabé tend to use “tu” for most settings. This creates a clash of understandings for the learner where the prestige standard is put on a higher level than kept at the same with all varieties. (Riley 2011)
Sequencing	The order in which materials and content is provided to learners (Posner 2004)
Social practice	Basis for social interaction that determines what is an is not normative within a particular group or community.
Socialization	Process by which novice speakers enter a community and gain "communicative competence, membership, and legitimacy in teh group" It is the process by which values, attitudes, and beliefs are

	passed to novice members of a community through social practices and interactions. (Duff 2011; Zuengler & Cole 2004)
Speech community/Communities of practice	More than sharing a language, a speech community share identity, knowledge, and social practice within a communicative system (Morgan 2007)
Textbook	A resource used to support sequencing of materials within curriculum (Posner 2004; Neito 2013)
Worldview	The definition of worldview originates from an interpreted meaning as presented in the educational literature as well as by the participants of this study. When referring to worldview – I am utilizing this word in terms of broadening perspectives surrounding social practice and community. The cognitive function of language in understanding or seeing the world, in this case worldview is addressing social practice and community.