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**Children as Experts, Adults as Learners: A Case Study
on Haitian Creole**

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To the one who always puts a smile on my face. Kai (*Cosita*).

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People are always tellers of tales.
They live surrounded by their stories and
The stories of others; they see everything
That happens to them through those stories
And they try to live their lives as
If they were recounting them.

(paraphrasing of Jean Paul Sartre's *Words*, 1964, by Webster & Mertova, 2007)

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the Haitian Creole acquisition process of six adults that were taught by children in Haiti while doing voluntary work in schools. The theoretical foundations upon which this is based are mainly taken from the fields of sociolinguistics (Ball, 2010; Lavob, 1972; Warddhaugh & Fuller, 2015), creolistics (Bakker & Daval-Markussen, 2013), second language acquisition (Doughty, C. J. and M. H. Long, 2003; Jiang, Green, Henley and Masten, 2009; Odlin, 2005; Ortega, 2013), socioconstructivist approach to education (Kasper & Omor, 2010; Kozulin, A. B. Gindis, V. S. Ageyev, & S. M. Miller, 2003), and language and culture (Kasper & Omor, 2010; Ortega, 2013) among other. It followed a qualitative case study approach (Brown & Rogers, 2002; Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln 2005; Richards, 2003) based on narrative analysis (Clandinin, 2007; Zacharias, 2016; Webster & Mertova, 2007). Two data collection instruments were used: focus groups and narratives. The main findings suggest that in regards to language learning, participants enjoyed learning from children and made connection between formal and informal instruction. They found interaction and culture to be paramount in their language acquisition process. Another important finding is that participants perceived culture as key to their language learning and acculturation processes. Similarly, participants reported using other mediating tools (Norris & Jones, 2005) in trying to communicate in their communities. Finally, after this experience, participants reconsidered their views about education in general and saw the need to implement socioconstructivist approaches to education such as teaching adapted to their contexts and the practice of inclusion strategies in all instructional activities.

Children as Experts, Adults as Learners: A Case Study on Haitian Creole

Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Introduction

Various authors have investigated the second language acquisition process of children through narratives of teachers in schools. For Example, J. Clandinin, J. Huber, M. Huber, M. S. Murphy, A. Orr, M. Pearce, and Pam Steeves (2006) involved teachers, children, parents and administrators in narrative inquiry when researching immigrant children's from different nationalities learning processes in Canada. As they state, their purpose when conducting these studies was "to understand more about experience, teachers' and children's knowledge, and how we might study experience and knowledge using a narrative inquiry research methodology". These experiences included English language learning through several years. To my knowledge, the second language learning process of adults taught by children in immersion circumstances has not yet been investigated.

1.1 Purpose of the study

This study aims to analyze the experiences of six adults who needed to learn Haitian Creole (HC) and were taught to communicate by children in a Haitian community. The participants of this study were volunteer educators from different fields who belonged to a charity program called 'futbol más' (soccer plus) led by a Non-governmental Organization (NGO). These educators aimed to teach several social skills such as team work, care for the environment and respect to family and friends to children aged between six and 12 through soccer. Participants arrived in Haiti at different times between 2014 and 2020 and needed to learn Haitian Creole in order to communicate with children. In this investigation, educators' personal perceptions towards children as language experts and useful socio-cultural experiences when learning the language are explored.

According to Siegel (2010),

Pidgins and creoles are new varieties of language that emerge when people speaking different languages come into contact with each other. The study of these ‘contact languages’ falls mainly under the heading of sociolinguistics, but also intersects with many other subdisciplines, such as contact linguistics and applied linguistics (p. 237).

Most sociolinguists (e.g. Fasold, 1990; Nichols, 1996, cited in Siegel, 2010) agree on the fact that Creole languages have their origins in pidgin languages when these become the native language of a new generation of children and develop their own grammar, phonology and semantics. Creole languages are the result of a mixture of a more powerful language (the lexifier) and a less powerful one (‘substrate’ language). Although there are Creoles around the world, HC is the result of contact between West African languages spoken by slaves working in the plantations and English, Spanish and French as the language of the powerful.

HC is a language in its own right, with its own grammar, phonology and semantics. Sociolinguists place its genesis between 1680 and 1740 (Lefebvre, 1998, as cited by Spears, 2014). The strongest influence of HC is French, since it played a major role in its formation beginning in the later part of the seventeenth century. HC is nowadays spoken by over 9 million people. This language is also referred to as Haitian, Haitian French Creole or simply Creole, as its speakers call it. Haiti occupies the Western third part of the Caribbean island of Hispaniola; while the rest of the island is occupied by the Dominican Republic. It is important to stress that despite the fact that all Haitians speak HC and very few speak French, HC has been stigmatized and neglected in education (ibid.).

Language is considered the most important cultural element in a given community (Bonenfant, 2011). According to Valdman, (1977), HC “is the repository of folk culture and the outsider who does not know Creole, will be denied entry to many aspects of Haitian’s culture. Thus, in Haiti full participation in the total life of the community requires knowledge of the vernacular...” (p. 61). Participants in this study worked with under-privileged children; hence the need to learn HC.

1.2. Methods used

This study is based on a combination of qualitative research approaches. First, it is considered a case study since this is an in-depth, detailed investigation of a bounded system (Richards, 2003). This system consists of a unit constituted by participants who shared a common purpose, and is bounded by time and/or space. The sampling in this case is considered *purposeful* and served the aim of the researcher. The data gathered consisted of two focus groups narratives written by participants with instructions that suited the research questions of this study

Second, some principles of a grounded theory (GT) approach are adopted in order to discover certain emergent common categories in the data collected. This, in order “to specify in detail how the process of coding and analysis can be managed” (ibid., p. 275) and provide more in-depth analysis to the case under study.

Finally, the principles of narrative analysis (NA) (Clandinin, 2007; Zacharias, 2016; Webster & Mertova, 2007) were taken into consideration. In this approach, people describe their stories and experiences. According to NA, in the field of second language learning (SLL), learners “actively engage in constructing the terms and conditions of their own learning” (based on Lantolf and Pavlenko as cited by Zacharias, ibid., p. 102) and then describe their learning experiences to the researcher. Narratives can be written, spoken or visual. In this particular case, the first two forms were obtained online and then systematically analyzed.

In order to have a research focus, this investigation addresses the following research questions:

1. How do participants perceive the role of the children in learning Haitian Creole?
2. What aspects of the socio-cultural context do participants report as being influential in the process of learning Haitian Creole?
3. What other sources of knowledge did participants use in learning Haitian Creole?
4. How did the Haitian experience change participants' conception of education?

1.3 Context of the study

Although this research did not take place in any physical environment, participants narrated their stories and experiences when learning HC in Port au Prince, the capital of Haiti. Participants worked for a non-governmental organization (NGO) called ‘América Solidaria’, which joined forces with another NGO for the program ‘fútbol más’ (soccer plus) between 2014-2020. Six participants (two males and four females) took part in this study. They are from different nationalities and are native speakers of various varieties of Spanish. They did not have any knowledge of HC prior to their arrival in Haiti. Participants were in their late twenties and early thirties when participating in this project.

1.4 Rationale

Even though there are plenty of authors that address Creole languages in general (e.g. Fasold, 1990; Nichols, 1996) from a sociolinguistic perspective, there is little research that investigates Haitian Creole (Spears, 2014; Valdman, 1971). These studies focus mainly on the history or grammar of the language (See chapter 2). Therefore, there is a need for socio-cultural studies that offer recent data on acquisition experiences from learners of HC. This study sheds some light into the perceptions and experiences of first-hand learners immersed in a special context, where the main teachers were children.

Haitian Creole and its sociocultural impact has been mainly studied as a case of diglossia. This study will offer valuable data about the connection between sociolinguistics and Haitian Creole, the teaching/learning acquisition of HC by foreign adults, and will identify opportunities for further research.

1.5 Chapter Conclusion

Having presented the general topic and a discussion of the problem that this investigation addresses, the work will move forward in the following manner. Chapter 2 presents a critical review of the literature that is relevant to this study. It is meant to provide a theoretical base on which the study is built. Chapter 3 presents the methodological process that the study followed in order to select, gather, and analyze data. It also provides a

description of the context, participants, instruments used in the study as well as the way data was analyzed. In Chapter 4, the results of the study are presented and discussed. Relevant results are highlighted in order to provide the reader with examples that warrant the findings obtained. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the implications that this research had on its particular context, the limitations of this study as well as directions for further research.

Chapter 2: Literature review.

2. Introduction

This chapter discusses the theoretical foundations upon which this study is based. First, we look at the principles of second language acquisition (SLA). In particular, the socio-cultural framework is reviewed along with teaching and learning a second language. Second, some elements of sociolinguistics and creolistics will be discussed. We will look at the creation of Creole languages and more specifically at Haitian Creole. Third, some historical data about the linguistic imperialism in Haiti will be presented.

2.1. Second language acquisition (SLA)

This field refers to the systematic study of how learners acquire a second or third or fourth language and so on under different circumstances such as in classrooms, immersion school programs and in the target language society. Scholars (Atkinson, 2011; Ortega, 2013) review the developments of this area from cognitive approaches that had to do with the brain and the mind, to socio-constructivist approaches that view second language acquisition as an interactive, social process.

The SLA theory that is more relevant to this study is the sociocultural approach (SCT). According to Lantolf (2011), this SLA theory is based on Vygotsky's psychological theory of human consciousness. This theory was not specifically developed for SLA, but it offers a lot in relations to how individuals acquire a second language. He also maintains that the majority of studies using SCT have focused on adults SLA.

The main principles of SCT is that human actions are *mediated* by pshychological tools such as language, signs and symbols. "Mediation is the creation and use of artificial auxiliary means (tools] of acting—physically, socially, and mentally" (ibid., p. 25). Lantolf maintains explains that children appropriate cultural artifacts by socializing primarily with their caregivers. By cultural artifacts he means whatever symbolic or material objects that provide meaningful information about one's culture. In today's world, a cultural artifact may be a TV screen or a cellphone, the idea of love or a kiss. Lantolf (ibid) explains that

Vygotsky (1978) discovered that during socialization caregivers usually behave toward children as if they were able to carry out cultural activities, including those involving language, which they could not actually carry out by themselves. An especially important socialization activity for preschool children is play, which allows them to behave beyond their chronological age. Accordingly, “play contains all developmental tendencies in a condensed form and is itself a major source of development”...(p. 29).

As we shall see in the findings of this investigation, many of them are permeated by sociocultural theory.

2.1.1 From the Critical Period Hypothesis to acculturation and language learning

Second Language Acquisition scholars that support a neurolinguistic approach to SLA believe that in order to thoroughly master a second language, the individual must learn it before s/he reaches puberty. Thus, there is a critical period after which one cannot learn a second language at a native speaker level. The critical period hypothesis (CPH) posed by Lenneberg in 1967 (as cited in Jiang, Green, Henley and Masten, 2009, p. 481) proposed that learners who begin to learn a second language in a naturalistic environment after puberty compared with children, are usually limited by age-related maturational factors due to lateralization effects in the brain and the loss of neuroplasticity.

De Keyser (2000, as mentioned by Odlin, 2005, p. 255), maintains that the critical period hypothesis should be understood as the age between early childhood and puberty where an individual loses the ability to learn a language by implicit mechanisms only. Similarly, Skehan, (1998, p. 234, *ibid.*) situates the end of the critical period at the separation between linguistic processing and general cognition. The above suggests, that in general, children learn a second language better than adults. The reason for this is that certain elements in language are harder to learn explicitly in a classroom than implicitly in a naturalistic setting (see also Jiang et al. *ibid.*).

Studies which have compared children with adult language learning (Birdsong, 1999; Harley and Wang, 1997; Marinova-Todd, Marshall, and Snow, 2000 as cited by Odlin, *ibid.*) have shown that whereas children learn better; adults learn faster. The reason for this is because many elements of the language are difficult to learn explicitly in the

classroom by adults who use their capacities for explicit learning by taking short cuts. As a result, if children are given ample time in a naturalistic environment, they will master the L2.

There are, however, other studies which have shown contrary results to the critical period hypothesis. For example, Muñoz (2001, as cited by Odlin, *ibid.*) demonstrated that after “the same number of EFL classroom hours in Barcelona, older learners (starting at age 11) performed better on a variety of tests than younger learners (starting at age 8)” (*ibid.*, p. 255). As early as 1973, the GUME Project led by Von Elek and Oskarsson, demonstrated that with an implicit teaching method, children learned more than adults; whereas with an explicit teaching method, adults learned more than children. In this case, it is shown that learning depends on the instructional method, and not on age. Perhaps full-scale immersion is necessary for children “to capitalize on their implicit learning skills, and formal rule teaching is necessary for adolescents and adults to draw on their explicit learning skills” (*ibid.*, p. 255)

Jian et al. (2009) maintain that despite the strong position of CPH followers, that claim that it is impossible for late learners to attain an L2 native-like proficiency, there are studies that demonstrate the opposite (e.g. Birdsong & Molis 2001; Bongaerts 1999; Loup et al. 1994). These studies have demonstrated that the sociocultural environment plays a significant positive influence on individual difference variables involved in L2 learning.

As such, results suggest that age constraints on L2 learning could be lessened by post-pubertal variables, such as L1 (Bialystok and Miller 1999), continued education (Hakuta, Bialystok, and Wiley 2003), the amount of L2 used (Flege 1999; Flege, Frieda, and Nozawa 1997), length of residence in the host country (Bialystok 1997) and gender (Flege, Munro, and MacKay 1995) (p. 482).

In studies about L2 acquisition by immigrants, Berry (1980, 1995 as cited by Jian et al., *ibid.*) maintains that the process of contact between cultures, the dynamic psychosocial changes and the interaction between the attitudes and characteristics of immigrants and the responses to the receiving society are crucial elements in successful L2 learning. The above suggests that individuals have choices in how far they are willing to advance in their acculturation process, including learning the language of the host society. Social and affective factors may be major variables in L2 acquisition. “Therefore

the essence of successful L2 acquisition is to identify with, and get involved in, the target culture socially and affectively (ibid.).

2.2 Sociolinguistics

The field of sociolinguistics is a relatively new field within linguistics. It appeared in the 50s when Currie discussed the relationship between language and social status (as cited by Ball, 2010). Other researchers such as Fischer (1958) maintained that linguistic variants were socially conditioned. However, in the mid 60s the field flourished with the work of Labov on linguistic variations in Martha's Vineyard and in New York. He refined sociolinguistic methods, techniques, and analysis. By the end of the 70s, sociolinguistics turned from the micro-level that studied social and linguistic variables to the macro-level that included research into bilingualism, multilingualism, code-switching, diglossia, language and power, language and gender and language planning, among other (ibid.). This last field has given rise to studies of linguistic extinction and revitalization. In general, then, it can be said that sociolinguistics studies the relation between language and society (ibid.). Sociolinguistics is

the study of ideas about how societal norms are intertwined with our language use...language, society, and sociolinguistic research findings all be viewed in their social contexts, interpreted, and redefined (Wardhaugh & Fuller, 2015, p. 2).

It is important to point out that the idea of society must be understood as a group of people drawn together for a certain purpose or purposes. People can group together for social, religious, political, familial, vocational or other reasons. Grouped people have no limits in number to membership. Groups may be temporary or permanent and their members may change their purposes to stay (or not) in a group. "A group also may be more than its members, for individuals may come and go; it may be linked to an enduring social category, region, or many types of associated entities" (ibid. p. 63). Sociolinguistics researchers do not look for generalizations among groups, but they try to discover patterns in data which link the social with language use without ignoring variations within groups and their social practices.

2.2.1. Diglossia

Diglossia is the term used by sociolinguistics to describe a situation within a group in which there are two distinct linguistic codes for different communicative functions. In this case, one linguistic code is employed in one set of circumstances and the other in an entirely different set. As early as 1959, Ferguson defined diglossia as

...a stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standards), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature, either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which is learned by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation (cited by Wardhaugh. & Fuller, 2015, p. 91).

Sociolinguists maintain that the main characteristics of the diglossic phenomenon are that there is a 'high' variety (H) of language and a 'low' variety (L). Such is the situation in Haiti (*ibid.*, p. 91), where the high variety is French and the low variety is Haitian Creole.

2.2.2. Creolistics and Creole languages

The field of creolistics has influenced and been influenced by historical linguistics, geography, sociology, anthropology and computational linguistics among other (Bakker & Daval-Markussen, 2013). Documentation on grammar creole languages began in the 1700s with the Dutch-based creole of the Virgin Islands. "Research on creoles as a subdiscipline of scientific linguistics goes back to the late nineteenth century, when scholars like Lucien Adam, [...], and Leite de Vasconcelos had developed an interest in language contact and studied the circumstances under which creole languages emerged and developed" (*ibid.*, p. 142).

Creolists believe that creole languages were the result of pidgin, simplified languages in contact that were created for simple communication, often for trade. Later on, they developed into more systematic languages for other functions and wider

communication and became mother tongues. The limited lexicon and structures of pidgins were expanded, thus becoming creoles with full communicative functionality. The process of a pidgin language turning into a creole language is called creolization (ibid., 143).

Often, creoles arose in adverse circumstances of colonialism, expansionism, and plantation economies. Others were created in religious missions contexts. Geographically speaking, most creole languages are spoken in areas of colonization fairly close to the equator. The basic lexicon of a creole language is typically derived from a dialect of a European language. This language is called the lexifier or superstrate. The grammar of a creole language, however, often deviates from that of its lexifier (ibid., 144).

In the past, pidgin and creole languages were considered as “freakish exceptions that were irrelevant to any theory of ‘normal’ language” (Holm, 2014, p. 3). However, Labov’s (1972) work on African American Vernacular English laid the foundation for modern sociolinguistics, which has shed new light on language change as being socially motivated. Labov (ibid.) demonstrated that what psychologists and educators called the *deficit theory* after their work with ghetto children did not mean that these children were ‘verbally deprived’ or ‘lazy’; it simply meant that their language had not been studied in detail within a social perspective.

In fact, black children in the urban ghettos receive a great deal of verbal stimulation, hear more well-formed sentences than middle-class children, and participate fully in a highly verbal culture. They have the same basic vocabulary, possess the same capacity for conceptual learning, and use the same logic as anyone else who learns to speak and understand English (p. 4).

Pidgin and creole languages have gained importance in historical linguistics, which shows the genesis of contact induced languages. The combination of historical linguistics and sociolinguistics offers rich information for understanding creole languages (Holm, p. 3). One important fact to consider is that these languages were not traditionally written and their speakers had to learn literacy in a foreign or quasi-foreign language, often the lexical source language. However, literacy practices were taught in the child’s mother tongue, which has caused enormous educational problems, especially in the Caribbean area (Ibid. p. 4).

2.2.3. Linguistic imperialism

When analyzing language from an imperialistic perspective, we are talking about ideologies. Usually, linguistic imperialism refers to a European conceptualization of linguistic issues full of stereotypes and Eurocentric myths. Colonial cultural mythology devalues the dominated group while exalting the dominant culture (Phillipson, 1998, p. 38). The term linguistic imperialism is used as a theory that in general helps us to understand exploitation. Today's world is full of inequalities in relation to gender, race, class, nationality, income and language (pp. 46-47).

According to Galtung (as cited by Phillipson, *ibid.*)

Imperialism theory posits six mutually interlocking types of imperialism: economic, political, military, communicative, cultural and social...Imperialism 'is a type of relationship whereby one society can dominate another...It is propelled by four mechanisms, the most essential of which is exploitation, the others being penetration, fragmentation, and marginalization. Exploitation involves asymmetric interaction between two parties that exchange good on unequal terms (*ibid.* p. 52).

Bonenfant (2011), maintains that the Haitian language was developed by slaves from West Africa working in the plantation. Research shows that Haitian Creole lexicon has been influenced by Western African languages (especially Ewe), Spanish, French and English to a lesser extent, since the island was colonized by France, England and Spain. The same author maintains that the Haitian language developed as pidgin, lingua franca (used to communicate among different groups who speak different languages) to finally become a creole language.

St-Fort (2000, as cited by Bonenfant, 2011, p. 28) argues that when the French empire took control of the slave trade, in the middle of the eighteenth century (around 1750), the need to communicate between slaves and masters gave rise to a new language. This new language forms part of the French-based creole group, whose lexicon is mainly French. However, its syntax, semantics and phonology is completely different. It can be said, therefore, that Haitian Creole developed during the French

colonization of Saint-Domingue, more specifically at the plantation phase of occupation.

2.2.4. Haitian Creole

This creole language is also known as Haitian or Haitian French Creole. Sociolinguists call it Haitian, whereas its speakers call it Creole (kreyòl in Haitian). Haitian Creole is spoken in Haiti by over 9 million people. HaAcciti occupies the western third part of the Caribbean island of Hispaniola (as shown on the map below). The rest of the island is occupied by the Dominican Republic (Spears, 2014, p. 180).



Figure 1. Map of the Caribbean [<http://www.paradise-islands.org/caribbean-map.htm>]

According to Lefebvre (1998, p. 57, as cited by Spears, 2014, p. 180), we can trace the genesis of Haitian Creole between 1680 and 1740. Although the Haitian population speaks Haitian, and very few speak French, as other creole languages, it has been stigmatized, but as we discussed before, Haitian is a language in its own right with its own grammatical rules (ibid.), different from French and not mutually intelligible. Haitian grammar developed independently, but its lexicon is strongly related to French because

this was the main language that played a significant role in its formation in the later seventeenth through early eighteenth century as mentioned before.

Haitian is the creole language spoken by the largest population in the Western Hemisphere. Even though, French has always been the official language in Haiti, it is spoken by approximately 5% of the population. Haiti is a clear example of ‘diglossia’. The phenomenon of diglossia “occurs in a society where a high (H) language, largely used in formal and government domains (those normally requiring literacy), coexists with a low (L) language of the masses” (Spears, 2014, p. 182).

Since the country has traditionally been diglossic, with two languages used at different levels, people who do not speak French have been relegated as second-class citizens. The Ghanaian sociolinguist (as cited by Phillipson, *ibid.*) maintains that linguistic imperialism is a phenomenon where

The minds and lives of the speakers of a language are dominated by another language to the point that they believe that they can and should use only that foreign language when it comes to transactions dealing with the more advanced aspects of life such as education, philosophy, literature, governments, administration of justice...(p. 56)

Currently, however, “diglossia is weakening, with Haitian coming to be used in contexts formerly reserved for French, especially in education (Spears and Joseph 2010). Its use in Haitian schools has been established” (Spears, 2014, p. 182).

2.3 Language and Culture

It has long been established that language and culture play a significant role in education. “Fundamentally, language and culture play two complementary roles in educational processes. As all human activities are linguistically and culturally mediated, language and culture enable and organize teaching and learning” (Kasper & Omor, 2010, p. 455).

Duranti’s (1997, as cited by *ibid.*) reviews several conceptions of culture from a linguistic anthropology perspective that are relevant to this study. The first one is related to the nature vs. culture debate. Culture here is seen as the integrity and interrelation of acquisition and socialization of language as competence and as social practice. In other words, individuals acquire a language by socializing with others in diverse social practices.

The second conception of culture reviewed by Duranti (*ibid.*) is the one of culture as a system of mediation. According to this conception, culture comprises a set of symbolic and physical objects (tools) that mediate between individuals and their milieu to construct culture. Among these mediating tools, language is a critical means of symbolic mediation (Vygotsky, 1978, cited in *ibid.*) which translate social practices into mediating activity.

Another important conception of culture reviewed by Duranti is the post-structuralist one that sees culture as a system of evolving, dynamic practices instead of the conception of culture as unitary, stable and ahistorical. This post-structuralist theory pays special importance to the role of language and action in concrete social circumstances. “Central to Bourdieu’s theory of practice (1977) is the notion of habitus, a bundle of socially sanctioned, historically developed, internalized dispositions for institutionalized, routinized socio-discursive practices (*ibid.*, p. 458).

Finally, Duranti’s reviewed conception of culture as a system of participation plays an important role in this study. This conception places language-mediated actions between the local and the global world as central to participation within which there should be cognitive, symbolic and material shared resources without which participation may be inequitable.

The general idea that culture “is commonly understood as particular to a given social group and as shared within that group” (*ibid.*, p. 459) may be misleading. “Claims to external (intergroup) distinctiveness and internal (intragroup) homogeneity can serve as powerful ideological tools to implement political agendas” (*ibid.*). This idea has negatively influenced the world from the 19th. century in Europe to today’s restrictions on immigration and equal social and political rights for residents of different backgrounds in the world. Thus, the conceptualization of culture as homogeneous in some research traditions of some social sciences is difficult to sustain empirically. Ochs (1996, p. 425) points out that

Culture is not only tied to the local and unique, it is also a property of our humanity and as such expected to assume some culturally universal characteristics across communities, codes and users. (. . .) there are certain commonalties across the world’s language communities and communities of practice in the linguistic means to constitute certain situational meanings. (*ibid.*).

At any rate, as mentioned by Warddhaugh & Fuller, (2015), in this context we

follow the classic culture definition by Goodenough (1957, p. 167 as cited in *ibid.*) whereby “a society’s culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members and to do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves” (*ibid.*, page 10) .

From the above, it can be concluded that the place where culture and language meet is in participants’ engagement in discursively mediated social practices as will be demonstrated in this study.

Such knowledge is socially acquired: the necessary behaviors are learned and do not come from any kind of genetic endowment. Culture, therefore, is the ‘knowhow’ that a person must possess to get through the task of daily living; for language use, this is similar to the concept of communicative competence we introduced above. The key issue addressed here is the nature of the relationship between a specific language and the culture in which it is used.

2.4 Qualitative research

In the field of education, there is usually a dichotomy between two broad categories of research: quantitative and qualitative. To put it simply, the former type of research involves numbers, statistics and experiments; whereas the latter does not. However, this does not mean that qualitative research may not use numbers or that quantitative research may not use qualitative data. (Brown & Rodgers, 2002, p. 15). Some scholars (e.g. Creswell, 2009) consider the combination of the above methods as a mixed-method approach. In the end, as Richards (2003) notes, “one of the essential characteristics of research,..., is that it is purposeful. The researcher sets out deliberately to discover something about the world with the intention of eventually making claims on the basis of the evidence gathered (p. 3). This study will use a qualitative research paradigm.

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) define qualitative research as

A situated activity that locates the observer [researcher] in the world. It consists of a series of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs,

recordings and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms the meaning people bring to them (pp. 3-4).

Qualitative research implies an emphasis on the qualities of entities and or processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency. Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. Such researchers emphasize the value-laden nature of inquiry. They seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning. In contrast, quantitative studies emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes. Proponents of such studies claim that their work is done from within a value-free framework (Denzin & Lincoln, *ibid.*, p. 10).

Both qualitative and quantitative researchers are concerned with capturing the individual's point of view, reactions to some phenomena in the world or experiences. However, qualitative investigators believe they can get closer to the actor's perspective through detailed, in-depth interviewing and observation. "They argue that quantitative researchers are seldom able to capture their subjects' perspective because they have to rely on more remote, inferential, empirical methods and materials." On the other hand, often, quantitative researchers regard the empirical material produced by interpretive methods as unreliable, impressionistic and not objective (*ibid.*, p. 12).

Creswell (2009) perceives qualitative research as a means for exploring and understanding the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.

The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant's setting, data analysis inductively building from particular to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data (*ibid.*, p. 4)

Qualitative research employs a variety of empirical materials such as life stories, narratives, interviews, observation, focus groups, introspection, cultural artifacts,

photographs, and field notes among other. (See Brown & Rodgers, 2002; Clandinin, 2007; Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Richards, 2003).

2.4.1 Case study

Case studies have a long tradition in the social sciences. “As a form of research, case study is defined by interest in an individual *case*, not by the methods of inquiry used” (Stake, 2005, p. 443). Case study research comprises an intensive, rigorous and exhaustive study of the background, current status, and environmental interactions of a particular social unit or bounded system. This unit may be an individual, a group, an institution, or community or a set of units such as institutions or programs (Brown & Rodgers, 2002; Richards, 2003),

In case studies, unlike experiments, there is little or no control over how the form or content of the data will appear. In this sense, there is *chance* involved in what we will find and what the relevance of the findings might be (Brown & Rodgers, *ibid.* p. 47). Therefore, they are part of exploratory, qualitative research.

The name ‘case study’ is emphasized by qualitative researchers because it draws attention to the question of *what* specially can be learned about the single case. Stake (*ibid.*) maintains that

For a research community, case study optimizes understanding by pursuing scholarly research questions. It gains credibility by thoroughly triangulating the description and interpretations, not just in a single step, but continuously throughout the period of study. For a qualitative research community, case study concentrates on experiential knowledge of the case and close attention on the influence of its social, political, and other contexts. For almost all audience, optimizing understanding of the case requires meticulous attention to its activities. A case study is both the process of inquiry about the case and the product of that inquiry (pp.443-4).

Most qualitative researchers (Brown & Rodgers, 2001, Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, Richards, 2003; Stake 2005) recognize three types of case study: intrinsic, instrumental, and multiple case study. The first type of study is undertaken when the researcher wishes

to have a deep understanding of a particular case/phenomenon. It may not represent other cases or illustrate a particular problem, but in all its particularities and ordinariness, the case itself is of interest.

“The researcher at least temporarily subordinates other curiosities so that **the stories** [my emphasis] of those ‘living the case’ be teased out. The purpose is not to come to understand an abstract construct or generic phenomenon...” (Stake, *ibid.*, p. 445).

An instrumental case study, on the other hand, is undertaken because the particular case may provide some insight into a specific known issue, or to redraw a generalization. “The case is of secondary interest, it plays a supportive role, and it facilitates our understanding of something else. The case is still looked at in depth, contexts scrutinized and its ordinary activities detailed, but all because this helps us pursue the external interest” (*ibid.*, p. 445).

Multiple case study entails the investigation of a number of cases which may be studied in association with other researchers in order to investigate a phenomenon, population, or general condition. Multiple case study is instrumental, but extended to several cases. As Stake notes,

individual cases in the collection may or may not be known in advance to manifest some common characteristic. They may be similar or dissimilar with redundancy and variety each important. They are chosen because it is believed that understanding them will lead to better understanding, and perhaps better theorizing about a still larger collection of cases. (*ibid.*, 445-6).

In this particular research project, it can be said that an intrinsic case study will be undertaken. The specific phenomenon the researcher wishes to understand, that is, the acquisition of HC by adults taught by children, is of great interest to the investigator and will be studied in detail.

2.4.2 Narrative analysis (NA)

Narrative research has now been used by various disciplines and professions and is no longer exclusive in literary investigation (Riessman, 2001 as cited in Zacharias, 2016).

In the field of second language teaching and learning, the use of narrative research has only flourished in the 1990s. The acceptance of narrative research as legitimate data can be traced back to the paradigm shift from

positivistic quantitative research methodology toward naturalistic qualitative methodology (ibid. p. 110).

As pointed out by Zacharias (ibid.), with this shift of research paradigm, learners and teachers were given a voice and an opportunity for researchers to focus on “the people who actually teach and learn languages and how the activities of teaching and learning languages fit into their lives” (Barkhuizen, Benson, and Chik, 2014, p. 11, cited by ibid., p. 111). According to Lantolf and Pavlenko (2001, cited in ibid.) narrative approaches to research allowed researchers to treat language learners and teachers as human beings who provide data using their own words, and not as objects of study.

Narratives are stories told, written or shown by the individuals researchers wish to study. Sometimes, these narratives are reconstructed by researchers from interviews and/or field notes. Narrative researchers believe that ‘the story’ is “the fundamental unit that accounts for human experience” (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2000, p. 4). The analytical methods, approaches and strategies used in narrative research may vary (Lieblich, Mashiach-Tuval, & Zilber, 1998 as cited by Pinnegar & Daynes, ibid.). Some researchers use sociolinguistic analytic tools to analyze field notes or interviews and put them together to construct a narrative such as learning within a culture. Others follow a literary analytic approach and use terms such as plotline, characterization, theme and role to analyze experiences or phenomena. Researchers may use measurement strategies, code narratives, translate the codes into numbers and even use statistical analysis to show the results of various experiences. By paying attention to the analytical methods used to understand stories lived and told in NA, this is placed under the umbrella of qualitative research methodology. NA always has ‘the experience’ of participants as a starting point (ibid.). According to Barkhuizen and Wette (2008, as cited by Zacharias, 2016 and to Smith (2001, ibid.) narrative research focuses on people’s stories, the way these were told, the linguistic devices used by the writers/tellers that represent their stories, and how these people and researchers construe meaning from these texts. More importantly, however, is to identify patterns emerging from those stories.

This study will use narratives as both the method and the phenomenon under study. “In essence, narrative inquiry involves the reconstruction of a person’s experience in relationship both to the other and to a social milieu” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000 as cited by Pinnegar & Daynes, ibid., p. 5). In this particular case, participants will narrate

their experiences in relationship to children and HC learning (the other) and Haiti as the social milieu.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3. Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology used in this study. First, it will place this investigation into its corresponding research method. Secondly, it will discuss the instruments used to collect data. Thirdly, context and participants will be described. Finally, a conclusion will be provided.

3.1 Methods

As mentioned in chapter 2, this study follows a qualitative research orientation (See Brown & Rodgers, 2001; Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Richards, 2003) whereby the researcher is interested in investigating in depth certain cultures, communities, individuals, and histories among other by means of observation, interviews, and texts in the more general sense. Qualitative researchers use a variety of methods when investigating their subject matters such as ethnography, discourse analysis, grounded theory, phenomenology, action research, narrative inquiry and case study among other to view and interpret ‘the world’.

This study utilizes a combination of methods to reach its objective. It is considered a case study because it analyzes the HC acquisition process of a group of adults who lived for a certain amount of time in Haiti and interacted with Haitian children aged between 8 and 12 years. This study is interested in its participants’ quality of experiences and lived stories. While being considered a case study, this investigation uses a combination of methods, such as narrative inquiry and grounded theory as a means of categorization (See Brown & Rodgers, 2001; Clandinin, 2007; Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Richards, 2003).

3.2 Context

The participants’ shared context was in the capital of Haiti, Port au Prince between the years of 2016 and 2020. They were all recruited as volunteers by the ‘América Solidaria’

NGO. The purpose of this NGO is to promote and defend children's and adolescents' rights by working collaboratively with marginal communities on the American continent, mainly in countries such as Mexico, Chile, Colombia and Haiti.

This NGO respects intercultural issues and works in different countries in Latin America. Also, it is an international non-political and non-religious NGO. Upon arrival in Haiti, volunteers are assigned to different schools and take part in everyday activities with children and teachers.

In this particular case, this NGO worked in conjunction with another NGO called 'Fútbol más' (Soccer plus), where intellectual skills such as intercultural values, and manual skills such as painting, singing, dancing, cooking, braiding are combined with soccer games.

Both NGOs intend to empower children and adolescents by forstering social and intercultural values in various countries.

3.3 Participants

Six participants volunteered to take part in this study: six males and four females. They were from different countries in Latin America and were native speakers of different varieties of Spanish. Participants were between the ages of 26 and 31 at the time of the data collection process and came from educated backgrounds in the social sciences. They communicated in Spanish at first, and when they were fluent in the new language, they started communicating in Creole among themselves and shared housing facilities. It is worth noting that they all left Haiti when the COVID 19 pandemic started, as they were urged by their consulates to leave the island. Because of ethical considerations, they were assigned with nicknames as follows:

- 1. Addie** is a 26 year old Chilean female. She worked in Haiti for three years. She lived and worked in Santiago before joining the NGO program.
- 2. Rebeca** is a 27 year old Colombian female. She worked in Haiti for three years.
- 3. Tito** is a 29 years old Chilean male. He worked in Haiti for four years. He has an educational background in psychology.

4. **Ayiti** is a 27 year old Colombian female. She worked in Haiti for one year. She has an educational background in child pedagogy.
5. **Fernando** is a 31 year old Mexican male. He worked in Haiti for three years. He has an educational background in psychology.
6. **Maggie** is a 28 year old Chilean female. She worked for one year in Haiti. She has an educational background in psychology.

3.4 Instruments

Following a qualitative orientation, this study used online group interviews (focus groups) and narratives in order to triangulate the data. A focus group is usually a face-to-face group interview, or a collective conversation led by the researcher with the objective to obtain information for a specific study. Thus, participants in focus groups share similarities and are selected by the researcher who facilitates the discussion by asking questions and making sure all members contribute something about the topic under research.

As Camberelis and Dimitriadis (2005) point out, “focus groups offer unique insights into the possibilities of or for critical inquiry as deliberative, dialogic and democratic practice that is always already engaged in and with real world problems” (p. 887). Focus groups have been used in politics, education and qualitative research. As the same scholars maintain,

Among other things, the use of focus groups has allowed scholars to move away from the dyad of clinical interview and to explore group characteristics and dynamics as relevant constitutive forces in the construction of meaning and the practice of social life. Focus groups have also allowed researchers to explore the nature and effects of ongoing social discourse in ways that are not possible through individual interviews or observations (p. 902).

Focus groups then, constitute a practical data collection method in the sense that, as in semi-structured interviews, they allow the researcher to expand, elaborate, prompt and clarify participants’ answers at the moment of speaking. At the same time,

participants may feel more comfortable when discussing issues in groups rather than individually, especially since they share something in common.

In this study, two focus groups were conducted online because participants lived in different countries. During the first focus group, the researcher first introduced herself and created a relaxing atmosphere by sharing some personal information. The objective of this focus group was for participants to reunite virtually and somehow to catch up after months of COVID confinement in their home countries thousands of kilometers away from each other. This allowed the researcher to get acquainted with participants. She introduced and explained the research topic and obtained participants' consent to participate in this study. The focus groups were conducted in Spanish which was all participants' mother tongue. This is a short extract from the first focus group after the researcher had introduced herself and wanted participants to feel comfortable talking to each other as well as to the researcher.

S	Entonces, yo quisiera que abriéramos esta sesión, primeramente quisiera darles unos minutos para que ustedes con toda la confianza con todo el cariño, pues se platiquen se saluden, lo pueden hacer en español en creole...
E	So, I'd like for us to start this session, first I'd like to give you a few minutes so you can in confidence and with love, to talk, to greet each other, you can do it in Spanish or Creole ...

The second focus group aimed at eliciting specific information about participants' concrete experiences about their language learning process guided by children. The researcher posed specific questions (See appendix A). During this group interview, the researcher was able to prompt, paraphrase and explore deeper on the data. (See Richards, 2003)

The researcher wrapped up the second focus group by paraphrasing and summarizing the information gathered. She thanked participants for their willingness to share their experiences and reflections. She also asked participants to write a narrative about their experiences and gave some guidelines.

The second data collection instrument, which is the main analytical instrument, was six narratives, written in Spanish, where participants were asked to write a one page narrative (Appendix B) answering the following guiding questions:

1. What were the reasons you decided to go to Haiti to work with children? This question is meant to obtain information to answer research questions 1, 2, and 3)

2. Can you describe any situation(s) of cultural shock related with the language that you experienced when arriving in Haiti?

This question intended to obtain information to answer research question 3.

3. In what way(s) do you think that the Haitian sociocultural context influenced your learning of Creole?

This question intended to obtain information to answer research question 2.

4. How would you describe the experience of learning a new language having children as the main teaching source?

This question intended to get information to answer research question 1.

5. Would you consider this learning experience changed your ideas about education or teaching ways? Please describe.

This question intended to obtain information to answer questions 1, 2 and 3.

The researcher clarified in the instructions that these questions served as a guides to write the narratives (See Zacharias, 2016). She also explained that narratives are texts that tell a story and recommended writing naturally and freely. Mistry (1993) points out that narratives include “All types of discourse in which event structured material is shared with readers or listeners, including fictional stories, personal narratives, accounts and recounts of events (real or imagined)” (p.208, as cited in Zacharias, 2016, p. 104).

Webster and Mertova (2007) maintain that

Narrative inquiry is set in human stories. It provides the researchers with a rich framework through which they can investigate the ways humans experience the world depicted through their stories. According to Bell (2002), narrative inquiry rests on the assumption that we as human beings make sense of random experience by the imposition of story structures on them (p. 3).

These scholars also suggest that narratives are subjective reconstructions of the selected parts of life researched, as perceived by participants.

3.5 Data collection process

Since the researcher is acquainted with two of the participants, she asked for the rest of participants' contacts and sent out an invitation via E-mail to all of them to participate in the first focus group. She also introduced herself and her research topic and asked for their collaboration. Participants answered back agreeing to take part in the project and a day and time was set for the focus group to take place via Zoom. After the first focus group, the researcher watched it and transcribed the most relevant parts. As mentioned previously, this first session served as a reunion of participants and as 'warm up'.

During the second focus groups, participants were asked by the researcher if they would be willing to write a narrative about their experiences learning HC and they all agreed. The researcher asked a few questions to activate participants' schemata and to prepare them for their narratives which were the main objects of analysis in this investigation. After viewing the videotaped focus group, the researcher transcribed the most relevant parts. The researcher then prepared the instructions (see above) according to her objectives and set a deadline for participants to write their narratives in Spanish. She received the six narratives for analysis in a timely manner.

3.6 Data analysis

The first step in analyzing narratives was to read them carefully and to make notes about possible emergent categories and that were connected to the research questions. After this step was completed, color coding was used to identify those categories in all narratives and notes were made on the text to identify patterns (See Warddhaugh & Fuller, 2015; Zacharias, 2016 in Ch. 2). Yellow was used for issues connected to language learning and HC taught by children. Blue was used for issues linked with the sociocultural context. Purple was used for other resources participants used to communicate with the children they worked with. Green was used for issues connected to education in general. This, in order to identify the main categories which would answer the research questions posed at the beginning of this study. At this point, data was not yet translated into English.

The following extracts illustrate step 1 of the data analysis process

Table 1. Example of analysis of narratives – Step 1

<p>Mas allá de mi motivación o repetición continua, logre aprender el idioma por la interacción, jugando en los recreos con los niños y niñas, muchos de ellos hacían apuntes y me los llevaban, me explicaban lo que iba a aprender, y ante cualquier error no dudaban en corregirte sin vergüenza alguna, los niños y niñas tenían un afán porque aprendieras el idioma, ya que así podrían hablar de forma más fluida y poder preguntar todas las dudas que se les pasaban por su cabeza, y así poder hablar de todo y nada al mismo tiempo. El compartir en comunidad también me ayudo demasiado, salía a jugar con mis vecinos en las tardes, ellos me explicaban como jugar, hasta hacían mímicas, pero de que se hacían entender lo hacían.</p> <p>Cada palabra nueva que podía aprender era un gran logro y los niños y niñas te lo hacían notar, ellos son los mejores maestros, no tienen prejuicios sobre la enseñanza, no te llenan la cabeza con teoría, simplemente te invitan a su mundo, a conocerlo y explorarlo junto a ellos y durante ese viaje de exploración sin darte cuenta has aprendido un montón, la comunicación no es solo oral, podemos expresarnos con nuestro cuerpo de mil formas distintas y hacernos entender, y a través de esa relación entre lo corporal y el disfrute logras aprender más que en un curso intensivo de idiomas.</p> <p>Con esta experiencia comprobé que la enseñanza y el aprendizaje debe ser un disfrute, lo viví en carne propia, dejando a un lado lo formal para pasar a la relación con el otro y mas con los pequeños, convertirte en uno de ellos, dejarlos sentir a ellos como los dueños del conocimiento, que se llenan de orgullo al decir yo le estoy enseñando a ella hablar mi idioma,</p>

The next step, was to collate the data into a chart within the main categories highlighted in the colors mentioned above. Also, notes were added. The following is an example of step 2 of the data analysis. In the first column, participants are identified by number.

Table 2. Data analysis – coding – Step 2

P	Language learning	Sociocultural context	Other communicative resources	Education in general
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1	<p>Comprendí a fuego que el lenguaje es un reflejo de nuestra realidad y que los haitianos no están conectados con esos conceptos.</p> <p>Aprender el idioma a partir de los niños es muy interesante porque al estar en contacto con ellos no solo aprendes el idioma, sino que, al mismo tiempo, la realidad desde su punto de vista... niño es más espontáneo</p>	<p>Con retrospectiva, considero que el contexto socio-cultural fue clave para aprender creole</p> <p>Link of language and culture (quote Tanenn?)</p> <p>Culture shock</p>	<p>Creo que lo que más rescato es la posibilidad de comunicarse con ellos mediante gestos, expresiones y movimientos.</p>	<p>que la educación debe responder a contextos, a necesidades y a cosmovisiones.</p> <p>Quizás nuestras propuestas, en principio, resultaban ser una “doctrina colonizadora” para los profesores y eso generaba rechazo. ...aprendimos que nadie mejor que los docentes conocen lo que sus estudiantes necesitan.</p> <p>Link to linguistic imperialism</p>
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The third, and final step after general categories were found, was to identify sub-categories within general categories (Appendix C) and to find commonalities/patterns among participants’ narratives (See Clandinin, 2007; Clandinin, J. Huber, M. Huber, M. S.Murphy, A. Orr, M. Pearce, & P. Steeves (2006); Zacharias, 2016 in chapter 2). For this reason, important phrases were highlighted to add to the findings. The following

figure (2) represents the data analysis process from the original texts, to the deconstruction/categorization and interpretation/findings.

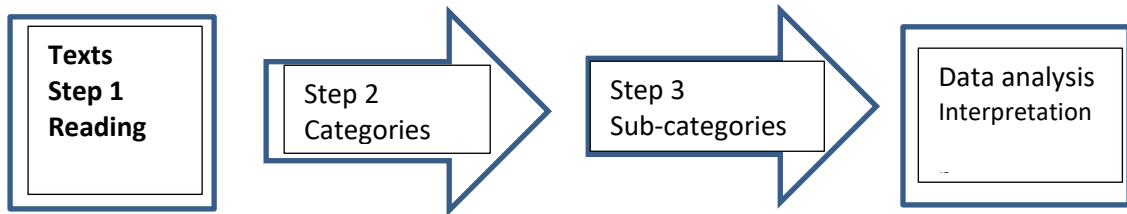


Figure 2. Data analysis representation

After discussing in detail the methodology followed in this study, the following chapter will present the findings according to the collected data.

Chapter 4: Findings and discussion

4. Introduction

In this chapter, findings from the data collected in this study will be presented and discussed. The results obtained will be warranted with selected and relevant extracts from participants' narratives. These extracts are presented first in Spanish (S), followed by their corresponding translation into English (E). The most relevant expressions are stressed in bold. At this point, it is important to bear in mind the research questions posed in the introductory chapter of this investigation. These are as follows:

1. How do participants perceive the role of the children in learning Haitian Creole?
2. What aspects of the socio-cultural context do participants report as being influential in the process of learning Haitian Creole?
3. What other sources of knowledge did participants use in learning Haitian Creole?
4. How does the Haitian experience change participant's conception of education?

During the first step of the data analysis, narratives indicated that they had been written by educated professionals who were familiar with educational systems and some handled the jargon related to pedagogy, e.g. Addie expressed in her narrative

S	...que la educación debe responder a contextos, a necesidades y a cosmovisiones. Quizás nuestras propuestas, en principio, resultaban ser una “doctrina colonizadora” para los profesores y eso generaba rechazo...
E	...that education must respond to particular contexts, needs and interpretations of the world [my stress]. Perhaps our proposals, at the beginning, resulted in a “ colonizing doctrine ” [my stress] for teachers and that generated rejection.

These words highly resonate Paulo Freire's work of *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (1970, 2000), especially chapter 2, where he talks about education as an instrument of oppression as opposed to education as an instrument for liberation. Narratives also

indicated that these volunteers were highly invested (Darvin & Norton, 2015) in HC learning as an instrument for communication.

As a result of the guiding questions in the narratives (See ch. 3 above and Appendix A below), the following categories and sub-categories emerged:

4.1 Language teaching/learning

This is the first and largest category that emerged from the data. All participants narrated their language learning experience and how they were taught by children. Several sub-categories emerged within this category such as the following:

4.1.1 Language as a mirror of reality

Participant Addie writes

S	Aprender el idioma a partir de los niños es muy interesante porque al estar en contacto con ellos no solo aprendes el idioma, sino que, al mismo tiempo, la realidad desde su punto de vista
E	Learning the language from children is very interesting because being in contact with them, you learn not only the language, but at the same time, how children perceive their reality.

Karen also adds

S	Desaprender, repensar y re-significar el sentido y el significado de muchas cosas, de formas de trabajar, de construir, de entender las prioridades e incluso de comprender como el lenguaje no solo enuncia sino que también construye la realidad...
E	Unlearn, rethink and re-signify the meaning and sense of many things, of ways of working, building, understanding priorities and even understanding how language does not only communicate, but that it also construes reality ...

The above were categorized under the heading of **language as a mirror of reality**. Although since ancient times, philosophers have considered that language indeed reflects how human beings perceive their reality, the Austrian philosopher and linguist Wittgenstein (as cited by Allot, 2003), came up with a picture theory of language. In this theory, he maintained that “language mirrored reality, mirrored the world” (ibid.). Thus, we can say that we choose our intonation, lexicon, phrases and discourse in order to communicate how we see the world. Accordingly, our language, and perceptions change over time and circumstances such as age, schooling, experiencing the world, socioeconomic class and political ideology among other.

4.1.2 Language and interaction - Language and context

Interaction has been seen by second language acquisition research as essential in second language acquisition (Doughty, C. J. and M. H. Long, 2003). Ortega points out that

Much of our knowledge about how people learn additional languages was forged during the 1980s and 1990s under a cognitive-interactionist perspective on L2 learning. Cognitive-interactionism is associated with the work in developmental psychology by Jean Piaget (e.g. 1974) and refers to the position that multiple internal (cognitive) and external (environmental) factors reciprocally interact (hence the word ‘interactionist’) and together affect the observed processes and outcomes of a phenomenon – in this case, additional language learning (p. 55).

It seems that participants considered the interaction they had in Haiti, especially with children as crucial for the learning of HC. Participant Tito writes

S	Este contexto me sirvió mucho para aprender el idioma tanto desde la participación de actividades , como también en la interacción permanente con las estudiantes, docentes y otras personas que forman la dinámica escolar. ..
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E	...this context helped me a lot to learn the language, both by participating in activities , as well as by constantly interacting with students, teachers and other people in the school dynamics...
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Ayiti adds the ludic nature of her interaction with children

S	...la paciencia tan asombrosa que tenían; pero durante este proceso ratifique que una de las mejores estrategias para poder aprender un idioma es estar inmerso en el contexto y el juego,.. logré aprender el idioma por la interacción, jugando en los recreos con los niños y niñas, ...
E	...the amazing patience they [children] had; but during this process I confirmed that one of the best strategies to learn a language is being immersed in the context and the games ...I succeeded in learning the language because of the the interaction we had, playing during school breaks with boys and girls.

Rebeca sees interaction as conducive to shared knowledge, and indicates de tolerance of errors on the part of children when teaching her HC. She writes

S	...Además es muy interesante generar esos procesos de aprendizaje compartido , las relaciones humanas se presentan de manera diferente, mucho más armónica y constructiva. Puedes equivocarte, puedes hacer bromas, hay un interés genuino en que aprendas el idioma, entonces es un ambiente propicio para aprender. ...
E	...Moreover, it is very interesting to generate those shared learning processes , human relations are manifested in a different way, much more harmonic and constructive. You can make mistakes, joke, there's a genuine interest on their part for you to learn the language, therefore, it's a beneficial context to learn.

4.1.3 Language as an empowering experience

Being very specific about children acting as language teachers, and language as a strengthening experience, Tito adds

S	dentro del foco de aprendizaje-enseñanza con niños y niñas, aprender el idioma hace más potente la experiencia en tanto es mucho mayor el entendimiento entre todas las partes, tanto al momento de realizar actividades, como al momento de vivir las dinámicas del día a día con las personas y la comunidad.
E	Focusing on teaching/learning with boys and girls, learning the language makes experience more powerful because understanding is greater among all parties involved, both when carrying out activities as well as when living everyday dynamics with people and the community.

4.1.4 Language teaching methodology

In the same vein, Ayiti adds and reflects on language teaching methodology. She advocates informal versus formal language teaching/learning (See Brebera & Hlouskova, (2012; Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

S	ellos [los/las niños(as)] son los mejores maestros, no tienen prejuicios sobre la enseñanza, no te llenan la cabeza con teoría, simplemente te invitan a su mundo,
E	They [children] are the best teachers, they have no prejudices about teaching, they don't fill your head with theory, they simply invite you to their world.

As can be seen in the extracts above, interaction was paramount for participants to learn a new language for everyday communication. Another important finding is that interaction and context do not work as separate entities, at least for these participants. In fact, one significant finding was that at the moment of categorization and sub-categorization, some categories often overlap as will be seen. Moreover, language

teaching methodology experiences permeate the narratives of participants, who perhaps learned another language in a formal context (the classroom).

According to Ortega (ibid.), new emergent theories on SLA, see the acquisition process

...as a function of experience in the world... The new approach, by redefining cognition as emergent, helps envision additional language acquisition less as a formal, deterministic and symbolic feat and more as an ecological phenomenon, ‘a dynamic process in which regularities and system emerge from the **interaction of people, their conscious selves, and their brains, using language in their societies, cultures, and world**’ [my stress] (Ellis, 2007, p. 85, as cited by Ortega, p. 155)

Thus, in regards to research question 1. How do participants perceive the role of the children in learning Haitian Creole?, as shown in the extracts above, participants found that learning HC from children was a positive and enjoyable experience, stressing the role of interaction and context, emphasizing the positive role of children as language teachers.

4.2 Language and culture

In answer to RQ 2. What aspects of the socio-cultural context do participants report as being influential in the process of learning Haitian Creole? It is evident that all participants linked language learning with culture. Addie writes

S	Con retrospectiva, considero que el contexto socio-cultural fue clave para aprender creole . Estaba ahí; necesitaba hablarlo sí o sí
E	In retrospective, I consider that the sociocultural context was key in learning creole . I was there, I needed to speak it at all costs...

4.2.1 Language, culture and need

Fernando's narrative is in agreement with the sociocultural context playing a crucial role in his language learning process. He writes,

S	...el contexto fue crucial para que pudiera aprender el idioma local; fue gracias a la necesidad de llevar a cabo mi trabajo,
E	... context was crucial for me to be able to learn the local language; it was thanks to the need to carry out my work.

4.2.2 Language with different sociocultural codes

On the other hand, Karen adds

S	... En general la necesidad de comunicarme en todos los ámbitos de la vida y encontrarme con una infinidad de barreras, el idioma... al lenguaje corporal distinto de alguna manera a los códigos convencionales que traigo conmigo , la cantidad de estímulos en la calle...
E	... In general, the need to communicate in all areas of life and find infinite obstacles, the language ...body language was also somehow different from the conventional codes within myself , the amount of stimuli in the streets ...

4.2.3 Language as a means towards acculturation

Ayiti shows a desire to know the Haitian culture and to become part of that culture, thus learning the language as a process for acculturation (See ch. 2 above). She writes

S	... a enfocarte en conocer la cultura, ser parte de ellos, que te vean como uno más de la comunidad, no como el extranjero lleno de conocimiento que quiere cambiar todo, sino como un amigo, un compañero, un colega con el cual puedo confiar...
E	... to focus on learning the culture, on becoming part of them so they see you as one more member of the community, not like a foreigner who's full of knowledge and wants to change everything, but as a friend, a mate, a colleague that can be trusted...

4.2.4 Language as a shared sociocultural experience

Tito makes a connection between language learning and shared experience in the host culture by writing,

S	[Aprendizaje del idioma] Eso va generando una conexión y un interés por la vida de las personas, se va entrando en una cotidianidad compartida , aumentan las posibilidades de familiarizarse con la cultura, con las creencias
E	[Language learning] ...generates a connection and an interest in people's lives , that allows you to share everyday experience , you have more possibilities to get familiar with the culture, beliefs...

4.2.5 Language as a means to destroy pre-conceived ideas

On the other hand, Maggie adds another dimension to the conception of culture and stereotypes when writing

S	Las ideas acerca de la población negra cambia profundamente , aparecen nuevas formas de relacionarte, se descubren nuevos colores, las emociones afloran y muchas de tus creencias se destruyen.
E	The ideas about black populations change profoundly, when new ways of relationships appear and new colors are discovered, emotions are manifested and many of your beliefs destroyed.

From the above extracts, it can be said that participants linked Haitian culture to language learning (Kasper & Omor, 2010). Participants acknowledge that language and cultural knowledge are socially acquired. Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015) point out that “the necessary [cultural and linguistic] behaviors are learned and do not come from any kind of genetic endowment. Culture, therefore is the ‘know how’ that a person must possess to get through the task of daily living” (p.10). The above extracts also show that participants had the need of using the language as an instrument for communication and to carry out their work tasks. It may be said that participants had both instrumental and integrative motivation to learn HC. Although these concepts have been criticized as too narrow, they may be applied to participants’ narratives. Gardner (2001 as cited by Ortega,

2006) maintains that “integrativeness is an attitude defined as ‘a genuine interest in learning the second language in order to come closer to the other language community’” (ibid., p. 170). This integrative motivation may have led participants to go through an acculturation process (See. Ch. 2 above) as they wanted to become members of the Haitian community. On the other hand, participants also show that their motivation to learn HC was also instrumental (ibid.) in that they ‘needed’ to learn the language to achieve a goal, to do their work (McKay & Hornberger, 1996, pp. 5-8).

4.3 Other means of communication

Another category emerged from the narratives that allows to answer research question 3: What other sources of knowledge did participants use in learning Haitian Creole? In their attempt to negotiate meaning in order to communicate, participants resorted to other communicative modes/mediational means such as gestures, dance, music, facial expressions and other to begin communicating before they could master the language. In communicative processes and social practices, some scholars (Norris & Jones, 2005; Scollon & Scollon, 2003; Van Leeuwen, 2005) have argued that human beings use multiple ‘semiotic modes’ in order to communicate and get their messages across. Scollon and Scollon note,

Our bodies as humans cannot fail to anchor us in the real, physical world in which we are performing as social actors. Whether we are actively trying to communicate a particular idea or position for ourselves or just trying to be nearly invisible, a ‘fly on the wall’ to some other social interaction, our bodies take up space, they take up particular postures, they make movements or are expressively still. Whatever we do, we communicate something to those who are there to view us as objects in their worlds. The general term which includes all of the ways in which we may be together with others in the world is the interaction order (p. 45).

4.3.1 Body language as part of the interaction order

To illustrate what Scollon and Scollon (ibid.) call the interaction order through body language, we take this excerpt from Addie’s narrative

S	Creo que lo que más rescato es la posibilidad de comunicarse con ellos mediante gestos, expresiones y movimientos.
E	I think that what I keep is the possibility to communicate with them [children] through gestures, expressions and movements.

4.3.2 Games and body as mediating tools

Ayiti adds other semiotic modes for communicative interaction (Norris & Jones, 2005; Scollon & Scollon, 2003) that helped her learn the language, and explains

S	El compartir en comunidad también me ayudo demasiado, salía a jugar con mis vecinos en las tardes, ellos me explicaban como jugar, hasta hacían mímicas, pero de que se hacían entender lo hacían.... la comunicación no es solo oral, podemos expresarnos con nuestro cuerpo de mil formas distintas y hacernos entender, y a través de esa relación entre lo corporal y el disfrute logras aprender más que en un curso intensivo de idiomas.
E	Sharing in the community also helped me a lot, I got out and played with my neighbors in the afternoons, they explained to me how to play, they even used mimics, but they did make themselves understood ... communication is not only oral, we can express ourselves with our bodies in a thousand ways and make ourselves understood, and it is through the relationship between the body and enjoyment that you learn more than in an intensive language course.

4.3.3 Body language, noise, color and smell as cultural semiotic modes

Rebeca sees body language and other mediating tools of human interaction as part of an individual who lives in a certain community.

S	...al lenguaje corporal distinto de alguna manera a los códigos convencionales que traigo conmigo, la cantidad de estímulos en la calle, los colores, el ruido, los aromas...
E	... to the distinct body language that somehow was different from the conventional codes inside mi, the amount of stimuli in the streets, the colors, the noise, the smells ...

4.3.4 Formal mediational tools

One more interesting finding was that apart from body language such as gestures and games, one participant added one formal mediational tool (Norris & Jones, 2005) to his attempts at communicating in the Haitian context. Fernando writes

S	...buscaba generar conversaciones significativas con la comunidad escolar y pasábamos mucho rato compartiendo palabras y significados que empezaban con un pequeño gesto y terminaban con una anécdota personal o con parte de la compleja historia del país...logrando establecer relaciones más significativas desde los gestos y las sonrisas y desde cuentos y canciones... que me fueron enseñando las niñas de la Escuela Nacional República de Chile ubicada en el Centro de Puerto Príncipe... ...que logré aprender <i>el</i> uso práctico y profesional del kreyol; armado de un diccionario Kreyol – Español...
E	...I was trying to generate meaningful conversations with the school community and we spent a long time sharing words and meanings que started with a small gesture and ended with a personal anecdote or with parts of the complex history of the country ...that I managed to learn the practical and professional usage of Kreyol; armed with a dictionary Kreyol-Spanish...

4.3.5 Learning and teaching mediational means

Finally, Maggie expresses the various mediating tools, besides language that she used while interacting, learning HC and teaching children her subject matter. In this case,

we can see that for this participant the same mediational means were used both as learning and teaching strategies as she writes

S	La forma de expresar de ellos es muy corporal,... su expresión facial y corporal...Mi trabajo allá, me permitió aprender y enseñar a través del juego, del baile y la música...
E	They express themselves a lot with their bodies ... their facial expressions and body language...My work there allowed me to learn and teach through games, dance and music...

From the above extracts, it can be concluded, as Norris and Jones (2005) note, that “all human actions are carried out through what mediated discourse analysts call mediational means” or tools (p. 49). Following Wertsch (1998), these scholars make a distinction between ‘technical tools’ and ‘psychological tools’. The first type of tools refer to material tools and the latter to abstract means such as language, algebraic systems, writing, diagrams, works of art, or drawings among other. In the end, they conclude that all tools “find material expression in the physical world ... languages, for example, find material expression in the physical world in the form of written texts and acoustic signals” (ibid., p. 50).

In regards to this particular study, it can be concluded that participants made use of a variety of mediational means to accomplish their two main tasks: learning the language and teaching their subject matter while engaging in several social practices such as telling anecdotes, playing with children and dancing. It can be said that they incorporated both psychological (willingness to interact with children, knowledge of communication through gestures and movement) and technical tools (body, music, dictionary) to materialize interaction in their sociocultural, historic milieu.

4.5 Education conceptions

Within this categorization participants' narratives mainly show the changing, fluid conceptions and re-signification of education after their Haitian experience. One of the main things to bear in mind is that participants were educated volunteers with certain educational experience in their home countries. Their conceptualization of education, highly resonates a socio-constructivist Vygotskian view. Kozulin, Gindis, Ageyev, and Miller (2003) maintains that Vigotsky's theory of education "makes us aware of our vision of students, for example, children defined by their age and IQ versus **culturally and socially situated learners** [my stress]. It forces us to formulate our ideal of a teacher, for example, role model versus source of knowledge versus **mediator** [my stress], and so on (p. 2)

4.5.1 Education as a shared, inclusive experience

This sub-category shows how education is conceptualized as a shared experience in which all participants play a significant role learning from each other. It also shows that education should be a pedagogy of inclusion (See Pennycook, 2001) and how teachers also become needs analysts. Addie writes

S	...Luego, aprendimos a incluirlos, a escucharlos y a generar una sinergia entre todos. Ellos probablemente aprendieron estrategias nuevas. Nosotras, como voluntarias, aprendimos que nadie mejor que los docentes conocen lo que sus estudiantes necesitan.
E	...Then, we learned how to include them [children], to listen to them and to generate a synergy among all. They [children] probably learned new strategies. We, as volunteers, learned that nobody else knows their students' needs better than their teachers

4.5.2 Education as a meaningful re-signifying experience

In this sub-category, education is perceived as meaningful to all parts involved. It is also perceived as fluid and changing, very much in the Freirian (1970, 2000) conception. Rebeca notes

S	...la educación comunitaria y en su sentido restaurador y significativo para las y los niños y para todas las personas que deseen involucrarse en el proceso. ...posibilitó y re-significó las formas de interactuar, el sentido de aprender, los métodos de aprender y las cosas esenciales que deberíamos enseñar y aprender.
E	... community education and in its restoring and meaningful way for children and for all the people that wish to get involved in the process... it facilitated and resigined the way of interacting, the sense of learning, the learning methods and the essential things that we should teach and learn

Furthermore, Fernando adds

S	...Después de generar lazos significativos con la comunidad escolar, descubrí que los modelos educativos deben ser cambiantes y adaptados a la realidad local, que resulta mucho más importante establecer vínculos afectivos con las personas que forman parte de la comunidad para establecer canales de comunicación que permitan la adquisición de nuevas habilidades y el entendimiento de nuevos aprendizajes que, sin duda, resultarán eficaces y productivos en la vida futura de cada persona y de su comunidad...
E	After creating significant relationships with the school community, I found out that the educational models should be fluid and adapted to the local reality, that it is much more important to establish affective connections with the people who are part of the community to create communication channels that allow all to acquire new skills and new ways of learning , that without a doubt, will be more efficient and productive in the future lives of each individual and their community ...

4.5.3 Education as empowering – reversing the roles

This category makes us aware that the traditional view of teachers as the only sources of knowledge may be contended and reversed. In teaching HC children became the experts and teachers became their learners. Ayiti writes

S	Con esta experiencia comprobé que la enseñanza y el aprendizaje debe ser un disfrute , lo viví en carne propia, dejando a un lado lo formal para pasar a la relación con el otro y mas con los pequeños, convertirte en uno de ellos, dejarlos sentir a ellos como los dueños del conocimiento, que se llenan de orgullo al decir yo le estoy enseñando a ella hablar mi idioma, yo soy el maestro, empoderarlos en sus conocimientos y como cada uno de ellos tiene para transformar no solo mi realidad sino la de ellos que es lo más importante en este proceso.
E	With this experience I understood that teaching and learning must be a joyful experience , I experimented it, leaving aside formalities and moving on to a relationship with the other, especially with the little ones, becoming one of them, letting them feel as owners of knowledge, that are proud to say I am teaching her to speak my language, I am the teacher, empowering them with the knowledge that each of them possesses to be able to transform not only my reality but their own reality, which is the most important in this process.

4.5.4 Education and history

It is probably inevitable that people living in a foreign country read or hear about the host country's history. As mentioned before, the participants in this study were highly motivated to learn as much as possible about Haiti including its history and education. The Haitian educational *status quo* until 2010 is summarized by Luzincourt and Gulbrandson (2010) as follows

Although various laws have declared education a universal right, it has been monopolized primarily by whichever group is in power. Throughout much of Haiti’s history, the elite, primarily French-speaking mulattoes, have sought to maintain power in this way. This has contributed to resentment on the part of the rest of society and led to noirisme, a black power movement that sought to invert the power balance in Haiti, giving privilege to the majority blacks, or at least the elite blacks, over the minority mulattoes (p. 7).

Two participants made connection between Haiti’s history as a colonized country and education. Maggie writes

S	...Haití, en el que la educación todavía es bastante vertical y hay una herida en relación a la persona “blanca”...
E	...Haiti, where education is still vertical and there’s a wound towards ‘white’ people

It seems natural to participants that as a country colonized by Spanish, English and French, the Haitian people still feel resentment towards “white” people wishing to impose their educational beliefs. As Luzincourt and Gulbrandson (2010) state in their report to the United Nations after the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, “Education has not only served to prevent, mitigate, and resolve conflict in Haiti, it has also functioned as an underlying cause of, contributor to, and trigger for violent conflict” (p. 1). The same authors summarize the state of education in Haiti until 2010 pointing out that

A number of problems plague the education sector in Haiti. The sector is given very little financial support. Many schools use outdated curricula, while others implement the reformed curriculum of the 1997 National Plan of Education and Training (NPET) only partially. The high dropout rates and low enrollment rates in Haitian schools are due to economic hardship, high repetition rates (repeating a grade), and linguistic barriers. The quality of education also suffers because of a dearth of materials, expertise, proper management, and organization (p. 2).

Bonenfant (2011), referring to HC, states that for many years, this language

was under the attack of people who followed the footsteps of pseudo-scientific racist theories and claim that Haitian-Creole was not considered as a language or less sophisticated than European languages...The concept of language universals (morphology, phonology, lexicon, semantics and syntax) , which was developed by one of the most famous linguists, Noam Chomsky, put an end to the misconception and misunderstanding of the definition of language (p. 27)

4.6 Chapter Conclusion

The findings discussed above, provide us with several significant conclusions. First, in regards to the experience of learning from children, participants found this as a joyful, enlightening experience that allowed them to become aware of teaching methods, the role of teachers, the realities reflected through language, and the importance of interaction, among other. Second, we noted the importance of sociocultural knowledge while learning a language immersed in the host community. Participants became aware of certain pre-conceived ideas about native HC speakers. They discovered new cultural meanings that were linked to language and were important in their acculturation process. Third, participants manifested their use of various mediational means or semiotic resources to interact within the school community. These tools included dance, music, gestures and facial expressions, among other. Finally, during their teaching and language learning process, participants reconceptualized the concept of education. While being learners and teachers at the same time, they became aware of issues such as inclusion, shared knowledge and their ideas reflected a social-constructivist perspective.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

5. General

This chapter will first discuss the main findings of this investigation related to its purpose and to the research questions (RQs) posed in chapter 1. Second, it will present the limitations of the study followed by directions for further research. Finally, the implications of this investigations will be discussed.

This study allowed us to investigate the HC acquisition process that six adults went through during their stay in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, scaffolded by children. The data collection process (focus groups and naratives) was facilitated by the affordances provided by technology. This case study (Brown & Rodgers, 2002; Richards, 2003; Stake, 20007) utilized mainly the principles of narrative analysis (Clandinin, 2007; Zacharias, 2016; Webster & Mertova, 2007).

It can be said that this study was conceived in a specific to general way as the research questions show (See chapters 1 and 4). The research process can be represented visually as a triangle as can be seen below.

**Perceptions about
children as teachers
(RQ1)**

**Sociocultural context as an aid to language
learning (RQ2)**

**Other sources of communication
(RQ3)**

**Conception of education
(RQ4)**

According to the principles of narrative analysis, the categories and sub-categories that emerged and overlapped during the analysis gave answers to the research questions. Several important findings, appropriately warranted by extracts, are worth noting.

It was evident that all participants found the experience of being taught HC by children enjoyable and enriching. One particular SLA theory (Doughty & Long, 2003; Odlin, 2005; Ortega, 2013) that permeates all narratives was the interactionist perspective as part of immersion in Haiti. For participants, interacting with children was key to learn the language and to carry out their work as educators. Although the aims of this study was not to assess the level of proficiency in creole attained by participants, there are certain things to consider. First, it is important to mention the fact that participants did not have any simplified input by children. As mentioned by Maggie

S	Un adulto puede hacer más básico el lenguaje, un niño es más espontáneo
E	An adult can simplify his/her language, a child is more spontaneous.

Kumaravadivelu (2006) points out that

Input may be operationally defined as oral and/or written corpus of the target language (TL) to which L2 learners are exposed through various sources, and recognized by them as language input. One can easily identify three types of input attributable to three different, but not mutually exclusive, sources from which learners are likely to get/seek input: Interlanguage input: the still-developing language of the learners and of their peers with all its linguistically well-formed as well as deviant utterances; simplified input: the grammatically and lexically simplified language that teachers, textbook writers, and other competent speakers use in and outside the classroom while addressing language learners; and **nonsimplified** [my stress] input: the language of competent speakers without any characteristic features of simplification...(p. 26)

This may lead us to reconsider the modified language input that teachers use in classroom environments. Another important fact is that communication did not take place in a literate way, both children and volunteers communicated orally and through gestures.

Narratives also indicate that integrative motivation (ibid.), regardless of aptitude, personality, cognitive style or other SLA characteristics discussed by researchers, was the

main reason for acquiring HC since participants had to ‘do their jobs’ (Doughty & Long, 2003; Odlin, 2005; Ortega, 2013) and to achieve acculturation (See Jiang, M.; R. J. Green, T. B. Henley, and G. Masten, 2009), to become full members of the Haitian community.

In regards to SLA and advocates of the critical period hypothesis, it is worth noting that participants were well beyond the critical period (See chapter 2) when they learned HC. In terms of participants’ fluency in HC, it may be deduced that they attained a certain level that allowed them to carry out their workshops with children when assuming the role of teachers.

Finally, participants brought about the issue of language teaching methodology, as participant Fernando writes

S	No tengo duda alguna, de que a pesar de que los niños y niñas no tengan una metodología formal para enseñar, fueron quienes más me enseñaron, acompañaron y esperaron mi aprendizaje
E	There is no doubt, that despite boys’ and girls’ lack a formal teaching methodology, they were the ones who taught me the most, accompanied me and looked forward to my learning.

The above may serve us, as teachers and researchers, to make a comparison between formal and informal language instruction as opposed to informal learning when being immerse in the second language culture.

Moving on to the second research question where participants reflect about the role that culture played in their language learning process, it can also be said that this was a key element, not only for language learning, but for their acculturation process. Participants perceived and differentiated the Haitian culture in terms of beliefs, communication in public transport, music and colors. Among the cultural elements, that they found important was to see that multilingualism was a phenomenon present in Haiti. Tito writes

S	...ehh también me llamaba mucho la atención cuando decías cuantas lenguas hablan los niños , porque creo que en Haití las personas, los niños y los grandes hablan probablemente tres o cuatro idiomas ...
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E	...ehhh what also called my attention, you wondered how many languages children spoke, because I think in Haiti, grown ups and children probably speak tree or four languages.
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It can be said that in this investigation, language and culture went ‘hand in hand’ as participants made connections between language and culture learning. As Ortega (ibid.) points out when referring to one of the latest trends in SLA, language socialization theory “respecifies language learning as fundamentally about social learning” (p. 237)... [where members] engaged in social routines that helped socialize the new members [adults] into the language, culture and values of their given community (e.g. Ochs and Schieffelin, 1984 as cited in ibid.)

Participants mentioned sharing experiences with children and members of the Haitian communities. They showed an interest in their daily lives. And most importantly, this exchange of experiences helped participants to change their pre-conceived ideas about the ‘black’ community.

In answering RQ 3 related to other sources of knowledge for communication, findings show that both participants and children used a variety of mediational means/semiotic modes (Norries & Jones, 2005; Scollon & Scollon, 2003) in order to succeed in communication. These means included gestures, signs, music, dance, games and the use of dictionary.

As Ortega (ibid., p. 237) notes, SLA scholars who have done socialization research and explored the cultural repertoire that members need in order to become full members of the L2 community, have encountered various obstacles.

One obstacle is the assumption of shared knowledge and beliefs, as participants mentioned when talking about the different values that they encountered in the host community, for example, talking to strangers on the bus about everyday life business.

An important point is, that contrary to what some language socialization findings (ibid.) show, access and participation in the Haitian schools and community was not restricted to educators by their members. On the contrary, children as ‘experts’ of the language, they made every effort to teach participants the language through the use of various mediational tools. Their facial expressions and miming played a significant role in this process.

In relation to RQ 4 that is related to participants’ perception of education in general, the most important finding is that working with somehow disadvantaged children

and learning the language from them, led educators to re-consider their traditional conception of education. All answers reflected that the new conceptions were based on Freire's (200) and Vygotskian socio-constructivist theories (Kozulin, A, B. Gindis, V. S. Ageyev, & S. M. Miller, 2003). We need to bear in mind participants' professional backgrounds in education and psychology as well as their previous experiences as educators.

This study reflected that knowledge and expertise is a cyclical process where teachers learn from children and vice versa. They valued sharing experiences and adapting to different roles. Similarly, they became aware of inclusive practices. As Pennycook puts it,

...a mode of working that opposed essentialist categories and attempts to engage seriously with difference; **the inclusion of participants' interests, desires, and lives; a focus on the workings of power; and an orientation toward transformative goals** [my stress] (p. 161).

What this scholar mentions, was put into practice and mentioned by volunteers who worked in Haitian schools and pursued a transformative goal being aware of the history and circumstances of the country.

5.1 Limitations of this study

It is important to mention some of the limitations of this investigation. First, we need to bear in mind that since this was a case study, no generalizations can be drawn. Also, the number of participants was limited. Second, although technology allowed the researcher to collect data for this study, the COVID 19 pandemic situation and participants having to flee Haiti unexpectedly, may have affected participants' psychological states and feelings. This may have caused participants to view their past experiences differently. One thing to bear in mind when doing narrative analysis is that, as Clandinin (2006) notes,

...our understanding bumps up against the ways in which personal hopes and feelings collide with the conditions that surround us, the ways in which the past is always present in the now and extends into the future, how in the present the hinge

between the past and the future is interrupted, renegotiated, sustained, and how the future emerges from the now and reopens the past and the ways in which a particular setting or situation impact what we experience and what we come to understand (Clandinin et al., 2006, p. 180).

Another limitation in this investigation is that focus groups were not analyzed in detail and perhaps a thorough analysis may have rendered richer findings.

5.2 Directions for further research

This study opened the way for other investigations in different fields related to SLA, language teaching/learning and sociolinguistics among other. This type of investigation may be carried out with participants from different backgrounds and purposes such as business people, doctors and nurses of various ages learning the language from different input sources. It is important to note that the participants who took part in this study were highly educated as was seen from their narratives. Fernando writes about learning

S	...pero yo creo que es algo que se resalta mucho...cómo aprenden... yo creo que bueno, según Freud [my stress] creo dice que para poder aprender tiene que haber un deseo de por medio...
E	...But I think that something very salient ...how they learn ...I think that well, according to Freud I think he says that in order to learn, there has to be a desire ...

Another research suggestion would be carrying out longitudinal research using ethnographic methods. This way, the researcher could be an insider or an outsider in the learning community, observe and talk to all parties involved.

This type of investigation could also be done in other contexts, cultures and learning other languages. By the same token, participants may speak different languages. Finally, studies can also find a formal way to assess learners' attained proficiency levels.

5.3 Implications

I hope this study has shed some light into the general fields of sociolinguistics, applied linguistics and particularly into the teaching/learning process of adults taught by children while immersed in a foreign culture. More particularly, this investigation may contribute into specific fields of creolistics, SLA social/interactionist theories, narrative analysis and critical discourse analysis.

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Appendices

1. Appendix A: Second focus group questions

1. La pregunta es cómo se sintieron en una situación en dónde un niño o niña les enseñaba a hablar Creole.

(The question is how you felt about children teaching you to speak Creole)

2. Como educadores, ¿ustedes se llevaron alguna enseñanza o aprendizaje que los llevara a reevaluar o cambiar su forma de ver la educación?

(As educators, did you take with you some teaching/learning experience that made you re-evaluate your views about education?)

3. ¿En algún momento percibieron que los niños sintieran que les enseñaban el idioma como ‘blancos’?

(Did you, at some point, perceived that children felt they were teaching you as ‘white’ people their language?)

4. ¿Qué cosas podrían emplear en temas educativos antes y después de su experiencia en Haití?

(What things could you employ in educational topics, before and after your experience in Haiti?)

5. ¿Hay algo que hicieron diferente de lo que hicieran en su país de origen?

(Is there something that you did differently from what you would do in your home countries?)

Elaboración de temas (elaborating on answers from participants):

- Algunos de ustedes mencionaron que lo que ustedes trataron de enseñar a los niños y niñas desde un enfoque de aprendizaje significativo. ¿Ustedes consideran que su aprendizaje del Creole fue significativo y por qué?

(Some of you mentioned that you tried to teach children with the principles of meaningful learning. Do you consider that your learning of Creole was meaningful? Why?)

- Algunos de ustedes mencionaron que los niños y las niñas tenían que aprender francés ¿Qué lenguas hablaban los niños?

(Some of you mentioned that children had to learn French. ¿What languages do children speak?)

2. Appendix B: Narrative instructions

INDICACIONES: Enviar en un documento de Word una narrativa de 1 hoja (600 palabras a aproximadamente) en letra Times New Roman, tamaño 12 y espacio 1,5 de interlineado. Dicha narrativa deberá dar respuesta a una serie de preguntas, que se enlistarán a continuación, de la manera más descriptiva y honesta posible.

6. ¿Cuáles fueron los motivos y las condiciones por los que decidiste ir a trabajar a Haití con niños?
7. ¿Cuáles fueron algunas situaciones de choque cultural, relacionados al idioma, que tuviste al llegar a Haití?
8. ¿De qué maneras crees que el contexto socio-cultural de Haití influyó tu aprendizaje de Creole?
9. ¿Cómo describirías la experiencia de haber aprendido un idioma nuevo teniendo como principal fuente de enseñanza a niños?
10. ¿Consideras que esta experiencia cambió las ideas que tenías sobre la educación o las formas de enseñanza? Describe.

Las preguntas no deberán ser colocadas dentro de la narrativa, son una guía y se recomienda asignar un párrafo para cada una.

En caso de que necesites más que una hoja para dar respuesta a las preguntas, el documento se podrá extender hasta hoja y media (900 palabras aproximadamente).

Las narrativas son textos que cuentan una historia, así que siéntete libre de expresarte con naturalidad.

ENVÍO DE DOCUMENTOS: El envío de las narrativas deberá ser al correo edith.tcasti@gmail.com con copia a edith.tamamounidescastineira@viep.com.mx

FECHA DE ENTREGA: Jueves 18 de Noviembre 11:59pm.

Appendix B: Focus group 2 questions.

3. Appendix C: Complete Data analysis – coding – Step 2

P	Language learning	Sociocultural context	Other communicative resources	Education in general
1	<p>... Los minutos pasaban y nos vociferaban taxistas en creole que nos querían llevar. No sabíamos el idioma... mi primera compra en la feria. Queríamos frutas y verduras por lo que fuimos a la <i>maché</i>. En ese momento, conocíamos muy pocas palabras. Afortunadamente, una compañera se había aprendido los números y logramos comprar sin mayores dificultades... ya manejaba más el idioma y quería saber cómo se decía “aburrido” y “estrés” en creole. (Language as a reflection of reality and culture) Nadie me entendía a qué me refería. Al parecer no eran palabras muy usuales en Haití. Comprendí a fuego que el lenguaje es un reflejo</p>	<p>Con retrospectiva, considero que el contexto socio-cultural fue clave para aprender creole. Estaba ahí; necesitaba hablarlo sí o sí...</p> <p>Link of language and culture (quote Tanenn?) Culture shock</p>	<p>Creo que lo que más rescato es la posibilidad de comunicarse con ellos mediante gestos, expresiones y movimientos. (mediating tools, Norris and Jones)</p>	<p>que la educación debe responder a contextos, a necesidades y a cosmovisiones. (Freire? Quizás nuestras propuestas, en principio, resultaban ser una “doctrina colonizadora” para los profesores y eso generaba rechazo. Luego, aprendimos a incluirlos, a escucharlos y a generar una sinergia entre todos. Ellos probablemente</p>

	<p>de nuestra realidad y que los haitianos no están conectados con esos conceptos.</p> <p>Me tomó tres meses poder comunicarme, hacer talleres en creole y establecer conversaciones sencillas...</p> <p>Aprender el idioma a partir de los niños es muy interesante porque al estar en contacto con ellos no solo aprendes el idioma, sino que, al mismo tiempo, la realidad desde su punto de vista...</p> <p>(Learning from children – language as a reflection of reality Un adulto puede hacer más básico el lenguaje, un niño es más espontáneo (no modified input))</p>			<p>e aprendieron estrategias nuevas.</p> <p>Nosotras, como voluntarias, aprendimos que nadie mejor que los docentes conocen lo que sus estudiantes necesitan.</p>
2	<p>conocer el idioma, y entender su historia (history of language) permite generar un diálogo distinto con los haitianos, y un interés por compartir sus experiencias en la casa con las relaciones vecinales, en el transporte público, en la calle, en el trabajo...</p> <p>Creo que fue bastante divertido, enriquecedor, revelador; porque además de darte habilidades para mejorar tu</p>	<p>En general la necesidad de comunicarme en todos los ámbitos de la vida y encontrarme con una infinidad de barreras, el idioma, al lenguaje corporal (Body language as part of culture) distinto de alguna manera a los códigos convencionales que traigo conmigo, la cantidad de estímulos en la calle, los colores, el ruido, los aromas...</p>	<p>al lenguaje corporal distinto de alguna manera a los códigos convencionales es que traigo conmigo, la cantidad de estímulos en la calle, los colores, el ruido, los aromas...</p>	<p>...la educación comunitaria y en su sentido restaurador y significativo (meaningful learning) para las y los niños y para todas las personas que deseen involucrarse en el proceso. ... posibilitó y resignificó las formas de interactuar, el sentido de</p>

<p>pronunciación, fortalece la autonomía (language strengthening autonomy) y la confianza en un país desconocido entendiendo las complejidades del espacio y las limitaciones del contexto que de por sí ya suponían varias frustraciones. Además es muy interesante generar esos procesos de aprendizaje compartido, las relaciones (language interaction as shared knowledge) humanas se presentan de manera diferente, mucho más armónica y constructiva. Puedes equivocarte, puedes hacer bromas, hay un interés genuino en que aprendas el idioma, entonces es un ambiente propicio para aprender. (mistakes are tolerated – genuine interest on the part of children)</p>	<p>Desaprender, repensar y re-significar el sentido y el significado de muchas cosas, de formas de trabajar, de construir, de entender las prioridades e incluso de comprender como el lenguaje no solo enuncia sino que también construye la realidad, (language as a mirror of reality) y yo creo que hay muchos valores interesantes que cimentan la sociedad haitiana, como por ejemplo la incorporación de la palabra “pataje”, que significa compartir, en sus conversaciones cotidianas para despedirse o para saludarse. (social values) (Learning the language) Eso va generando una conexión y un interés por la vida de las personas, se va entrando en una cotidianidad compartida, aumentan las posibilidades de familiarizarse con la cultura, con las creencias (language as shared experience – language and culture)</p>		<p>aprender, los métodos de aprender y las cosas esenciales que deberíamos enseñar y aprender.</p>
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3	<p>Este contexto me sirvió mucho para aprender el idioma tanto desde la participación de actividades, como también en la interacción permanente con las estudiantes, docentes y otras personas que forman la dinámica escolar.</p> <p>..(interaction as necessary for language learning)</p> <p>Gran experiencia con un idioma difícil de entender al escuchar, con muchas contracciones gramaticales (legales/oficiales), con gente que lo habla muy rápido, con mucho énfasis en la pronunciación y con muchas expresiones que están fuera de los libros, pero que, a su vez, guarda la belleza propia de un idioma único que nace para la resistencia.(language as liberatory – Pennycook?</p> <p>Kreyòl ayisyen, criollo haitiano, dotado de misticismo, con aportaciones del francés, el español, el inglés y distintos dialectos provenientes de la gran África, fueron conformando esta lengua, reconocida por primera vez en Haití como lengua oficial en la constitución de 1983...</p>	<p>uno se sube al transporte en Haití y puede ver como las personas, sin conocerse, van hablando de música, política, algún acontecimiento social, que sube o baja el precio del gas. Para finalizar, creo que esta experiencia de aprender un idioma, involucrándose en la historia de este mismo, (language and history)comprendiendo la importancia que tiene el idioma para la sociedad (language and society) y cómo este mismo hace que la sociedad se vaya moviendo de una u otra forma, además del sin fin de elementos relacionados a la experiencia y al país mismo</p>		
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	<p>dentro del foco de aprendizaje-enseñanza con niños y niñas, aprender el idioma hace más potente la experiencia (language to strengthening experience) en tanto es mucho mayor el entendimiento entre todas las partes, tanto al momento de realizar actividades, como al momento de vivir las dinámicas del día a día con las personas y la comunidad. (language as communicative tool for everyday interaction)</p>			
4	<p>la primera barrera es la idiomática, tener la impotencia de querer hacer todo, pero no puedes, así que debes bajar el ritmo y comenzar (language as necessary for communication . language as an aid to membership...la paciencia tan asombrosa que tenían; pero durante este proceso ratifique que una de las mejores estrategias para poder aprender un idioma es estar inmerso en el contexto y el juego,...logre aprender el idioma por la interacción, jugando en los recreos con los niños y niñas,(language learning strategies) muchos de ellos hacían apuntes y me los</p>	<p>... a enfocarte en conocer la cultura, ser parte de ellos, que te vean como uno más de la comunidad, no como el extranjero lleno de conocimiento que quiere cambiar todo, sino como un amigo, un compañero, un colega con el cual puedo confiar. (linguistic imperialism)</p>	<p>El compartir en comunidad también me ayudó demasiado, salía a jugar con mis vecinos en las tardes, ellos me explicaban como jugar, hasta hacían mímicas, (Other mediating tolos) pero de que se hacían</p>	<p>Con esta experiencia comprobé que la enseñanza y el aprendizaje debe ser un disfrute. (learning as a pleasant experience) lo viví en carne propia, dejando a un lado lo formal para pasar a la relación con el</p>

<p>llevaban, me explicaban lo que iba a aprender, y ante cualquier error no dudaban en corregirte sin vergüenza alguna, los niños y niñas tenían un afán porque aprendieras el idioma... ellos son los mejores maestros, no tienen prejuicios sobre la enseñanza, no te llenan la cabeza con teoría, simplemente te invitan a su mundo,(language teaching methodology) a conocerlo y explorarlo junto a ellos y durante ese viaje de exploración sin darte cuenta has aprendido un montón,</p>		<p>entender lo hacían... la comunicació n no es solo oral, podemos expresarnos con nuestro cuerpo de mil formas distintas y hacernos entender, y a través de esa relación entre lo corporal y el disfrute logras aprender más que en un curso intensivo de idiomas.</p>	<p>otro y mas con los pequeños, convertirte en uno de ellos, dejarlos sentir a ellos como los dueños del conocimiento (owners of knowledge), que se llenan de orgullo al decir yo le estoy enseñando a ella hablar mi idioma, yo soy el maestro, empoderarlo s en sus conocimientos y como cada uno de ellos tiene para transformar no solo mi realidad sino la de ellos (education as empowering tool. Education as</p>
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				transforming reality) que es lo más importante en este proceso.
5	<p>, uno de los desafíos más grandes fue la barrera del lenguaje y las complicaciones derivadas de no hablar francés, (French as lingua franca – language as necessary for communication) ni haber escuchado antes el criollo haitiano, por lo que uno de los primeros choques fue cuando visité una de las escuelas con las que trabajaba la Fundación...</p> <p>A pesar de tomar clases de kreyol, las situaciones adversas con el idioma no faltaron, tuve complicaciones para la compra de alimentos, para preguntar las rutas que debía tomar a mi centro de trabajo y la casa...(formal vs. Informal instruction)</p> <p>y fue gracias a la paciencia de las estudiantes del Centro Educativo donde realizaba mi voluntariado, que logré aprender el uso práctico (informal instruction) y profesional del kreyol; armado de un diccionario Kreyol – Español (use of dictionary as mediating tool)</p>	<p>, el contexto fue crucial para que pudiera aprender el idioma local; fue gracias a la necesidad de llevar a cabo mi trabajo, (language and context, need to reach a goal</p>	<p>buscaba generar conversaciones significativas con la comunidad escolar y pasábamos mucho rato compartiendo palabras y significados que empezaban con un pequeño gesto y terminaban con una anécdota personal o con parte de la compleja historia del país... logrando establecer</p>	<p>Después de generar lazos significativos con la comunidad escolar, descubrí que los modelos educativos deben ser cambiantes y adaptados a la realidad local, que resulta mucho más importante establecer (educational models fluid and adapted to local reality)vínculos afectivos con las personas que forman parte de la</p>

			<p>relaciones más significativas desde los gestos y las sonrisas y desde cuentos y canciones... que me fueron enseñando las niñas de la Escuela Nacional República de Chile ubicada en el Centro de Puerto Príncipe</p>	<p>comunidad para establecer canales de comunicación que permitan la adquisición de nuevas habilidades y el entendimiento de nuevos aprendizajes que, sin duda, resultarán eficaces y productivos en la vida futura de cada persona y de su comunidad.</p>
6	<p>me fueron dando ganas de aprender su idioma, porque para mí era más fácil o de más costumbre, decirles con palabras lo que sentía, además de querer escucharles y conversarles...</p> <p>(language as necessary for interaction and conversation)</p>	<p>Que al principio puede haber sido un “choque cultural”, pero que luego se transformó en un intercambio cultural.(from cultural shock to cultural Exchange)</p> <p>para ellos/as y para mí era un</p>	<p>La forma de expresar de ellos es muy corporal,.. su expresión facial y corporal... Mi trabajo allá, me permitió aprender y enseñar a través del juego, del baile y la música</p>	<p>Haití, en el que la educación todavía es bastante vertical y hay una herida en relación a la persona “blanca”</p>

<p>No tengo duda alguna, de que a pesar de que los niños y niñas no tengan una metodología formal para enseñar, fueron quienes más me enseñaron, (Language teaching methodology)acompañar on y esperaron mi aprendizaje. Se reían cuando me equivocaba, me aplaudían cuando lo lograba y me repetían lo que necesitaba. (Feedback – error correction)</p>	<p>reconocimiento de su valía, de su conocimiento y una transformación y ruptura de ideas preconcebidas que teníamos unos sobre otros. ..</p> <p>Las ideas acerca de la población negra cambia profundamente, (Preconceived ideas and stereotypes) aparecen nuevas formas de relacionarte, se descubren nuevos colores, las emociones afloran y muchas de tus creencias se destruyen. (changing beliefs)</p>	<p>(teaching strategies)</p>	
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