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E PLURIBUS UNUM: THE PURSUIT OF LINGUISTIC EQUALITY THROUGH ADEQUATION AND DENATURALIZATION

A Thesis

by

NATALIE A. TUPTA

Submitted to the Graduate School of
The University of Texas-Pan American
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

May 2015

Major Subject: English as a Second Language

E PLURIBUS UNUM: THE PURSUIT OF LINGUISTIC EQUALITY THROUGH ADEQUATION AND DENATURALIZATION

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NATALIE A. TUPTA

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Dr. Deborah Cole
Chair of Committee

Dr. Colin Charlton
Committee Member

Dr. Danika Brown
Committee Member

May 2015

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ABSTRACT

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The oppressive ideology of standard language in the US perpetuates linguistic discrimination in all facets of life, from the classroom to the housing market to politics. Many Americans justify the degradation of non-standard language users by identifying the imagined cognitive deficiencies of those who do not use standard language. In response to previous research providing evidence of linguistic injustices, this research confounds existent ideology and exposes the gravity of the injustices perpetuated by the US government and educational system. By comparing this linguistic social justice movement to the American Civil Rights Movement and by borrowing the philosophy of Martin Luther King, Jr., the project uses service learning to translate theory into practice to affect social justice for Americans of all linguistic backgrounds. The data collection surrounding an event celebrating linguistic diversity in the author's campus community reveals attitudes towards linguistic identity and service learning in university students.

DEDICATION

Cui dono lepidum novum libellum
arida modo pumice expolitum?
magistra carissima, tibi: namque tu solebas
meas esse aliquid putare nugas.

Adapted from Catullus' *Carmina*, 1.1-4

To whom shall I dedicate this new little book,
just recently polished with a dry pumice stone?
It's for you, my most beloved mentor,
for you've always thought my musings were something worthwhile.

Thank you for your patient, loving, unassuming guidance these past two years, Dr. Cole.

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CHAPTER I

ORIENTATION AND INTRODUCTION TO INQUIRY

"In any nonviolent campaign there are four basic steps: collection of the facts to determine whether injustices exist; negotiation; self purification; and direct action."

Nine months before I officially began my thesis investigation, I came across and noted in my journal this passage from Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous letter from Birmingham Jail. King has long been one of my heroes, and this passage from his writing struck me as remarkable evidence of his calculated approach to social justice. I had always admired King as a historical figure, as a character in the formation of my native country, generically inspirational and officially celebrated once annually. However, something about this quote from his letter from Birmingham Jail resonated with me the day I read it. In that moment I realized that this methodological approach at pursuing social justice aligned with my academic, professional, and personal goals. I did not yet know what line of linguistic inquiry my thesis would follow, but I knew I wanted King's method for pursuing justice to be my motto.

Introduction to Inquiry

When I was in the third grade at my small, private elementary school in Charleston, West Virginia, I vividly remember working on an exercise from my grammar workbook with my class. The workbook exercise provided a variety of sentences which required my selection of the "correct" verb in a blank. For example, a sentence may have been something like, "Samantha and her friend have (went, gone) shopping every Saturday this month." I remember being bored to tears by these grammar exercises. I was effortlessly read through these sentences, racing to circle each correct answer faster than I had the previous time we did an exercise like this, when my classmate Matt raised his hand and asked, honestly and innocently, “Ms. Sanders, are there really people who can’t get these questions right? These sentences are too easy.”

After a long pause as if to say *How can I explain this?*, Ms. Sanders told my class, “I know most of you guys think these sentences are really easy, but there are a lot of students at other schools who don’t automatically know the answers. They need to study really hard to know the right answers.”

“But why?” Matt asked. “Who would really say, ‘Samantha and her friend have *went* shopping every Saturday this month?’”

Ms. Sanders replied, “Some people really do say the sentence like that. You guys are all really lucky because most of you have parents who talk to you in a way that helps you answer these questions correctly. But some kids’ parents talk a different way, and those students have a lot more trouble than you getting the right answers on these exercises. And you know how they have these kinds of questions on the SAT-9? Well a lot of kids at other schools don’t do as well on the SAT-9 because they have more trouble with those questions.”

None of my classmates responded to Ms. Sanders’ explanation, although her words have stuck with me until today. In fact, I had not thought much about the gravity of this lesson until I began working on this project about the relationship between language and social justice. You see, Ms. Sanders was right. In West Virginia, many people are native speakers of language varieties that are generally called the Appalachian dialect of American English. It is not difficult to find someone who would say “Samantha and her friend have went shopping every Saturday this month.” *Fire* and *far*, *hill* and *heel*, and *pin* and *pen* are homophones in many West

Virginians' native language. "Where'd you get that at?" is a perfectly grammatical sentence. Therefore, children who are native speakers of these dialects must acquire a second dialect when they reach school age and learn that in "English," *gone* is the past participle of *go*, the difference of the vowels in *pin* and *pen* are frequently referenced in phonics lessons, and sentences cannot be ended with prepositions. Furthermore, Ms. Sanders was right in that these children really did have a disadvantage on standardized tests and perhaps in many of their experiences with formal education.

The fact that I remember such a brief conversation is a testament to my lifelong interest in the way language use relates to social power. As we will discover in this thesis, Ms. Sanders' lesson to my third grade class is supported by a few decades' worth of linguistics research. Her words inspired me to consider not only the struggles my peers may be facing but also the privileged position I held then and that I hold now. As a native speaker of standard American English, I have generally been awarded every opportunity I worked towards and I have commanded respect from my peers, coworkers, superiors, and students. Furthermore, I attribute my relatively high level of literacy to the fact that much written language reflects the language I speak natively. Baugh (1999) confirms my assertion: "While all normal children learn to talk, only some are provided with adequate opportunities to master literacy" (p. 12). I consider myself in the group of people who have been afforded adequate opportunities at the literacy which is so important to a high quality of life in the US.

Having admitted my position of privilege, I wish to make it clear that I approach the topic of social inequalities resulting from language use with a genuine desire to understand how this issue impacts others' lives and to pursue justice where any injustices are discovered. I draw inspiration from the humble and graceful lines of inquiry and writing styles of John Baugh, Rosina Lippi-Green, Debbie Cole, and so many other authors whose work I have explored in preparation of this thesis. There seems to be a consensus among many of these authors that, although we rarely experience the direct detrimental effects of these social inequalities resulting from language use, we cannot ignore the inequality we identify, a sentiment with which I heartily agree.

My hope is that you, the reader of this work, would work to examine your own language use and the social advantages you enjoy thereby. Rarely does anyone suggest that speakers, readers, and writers of standard, academic, or formal English reflect upon their language use and attitudes to figure out how their own practices contribute to systematic injustices or how to rectify these inequalities (Lippi-Green, 2012). However, that is exactly what I propose we do here. If you possess enough standard English literacy to read this thesis, then I challenge you to take the theories, ideas, and suggestions I make seriously. Consider how my work intersects with yours and how our ideas can intersect to work towards social justice.

My position as a nascent linguist frees me from many of the pressures of engaging in the politics of academia; divisions among disciplines are not particularly salient or forbidding to me yet. Thus, I find myself writing for those who share my interests in language, humanity, and social justice and who are concerned with offering innovative solutions to the problems they identify in our society. I find myself in alignment with the work of linguistic anthropologists, although I would hope to enrich the understanding of language use of any scholar, whether they be a historian or an environmental scientist; we all have something to learn from language. Although I am currently a linguist, please read this work as an invitation to interdisciplinary discourse.

What's in this Thesis

Following this brief introduction to my line of inquiry and my ethical orientation, in Chapter 2 we will embark on the first stage of King's campaign for social change, the collection of facts about language in order to determine what injustices exist. In this chapter we will discuss the American ideology surrounding standard English language use and discuss the social inequalities standard languages produces. After we understand the origin and nature of language injustices, in Chapter 3 we will pursue King's step of negotiation, wherein we will invoke several of the principles King employed in his leadership of the American civil rights movement as guiding principles in a linguistic social justice movement. In Chapter 4 we will discuss service learning as an approach in pursuing linguistic justice, both in theory and in practice as I have enacted as part of this thesis research. Service learning will be our method of purifying ourselves, as King prescribes, and preparing for action in the social justice movement. In Chapter 5 we will consider the direct action I took in my own research, an experiment following the service learning project I designed. Finally, in Chapter 6 we will engage in reflection on our investigation, an important activity for learning and progress as described in service learning pedagogy theory. In this chapter we will finalize the project by providing the big conclusions of the project, including a vision of where I think we should go in terms of linguistic justice and what specific steps we need to take to get there. We will also discuss the responsibility of educated people to use their expertise to serve the community.

CHAPTER II

"COLLECTION OF THE FACTS TO DETERMINE WHETHER INJUSTICES EXIST:" STANDARD LANGUAGE IDEOLOGY, ADEQUATION, AND DENATURALIZATION

In this second chapter, I will delve into my investigation of whether injustices exist with respect to my topic of study, which is linguistics. This chapter displays the facts I have collected about language usage and its perceptions in American society. Then I will use sociolinguistic theory to demonstrate that discrimination on the basis of language is a quotidian phenomenon in the US and that American culture, government, and education perpetuate these injustices. I approach this collection of facts with a *descriptive* view of language and linguistic phenomena, meaning that I present my findings about language only as scholars and I observe them. However, as I collect more and more evidence which suggests social injustices on the basis of language, I eventually mean to send a *prescriptive* message about ways American thought and ideology should evolve to take into account language as it is actually used. The primary purpose of this chapter is to collect and present facts, but this investigation will lead the way for recommendations I made in the pursuit of justice at the end of this chapter and in the rest of the thesis.

Ideology of Standard Language

The starting point for this collection of facts about potential injustices related to language is a discussion of standard language and the American ideology related to the standardized variety. Standard American English, hereafter often referred to as SAME as per Cole and Pellicer (2012), is rather like a living, evolving creature. That is, it is impossible to pin down or isolate SAME entirely, but examples of SAME and evidence of its effect in society are the only way we can attempt to define it. Derived primarily from the linguistic features of the Midland dialect (Cran & MacNeil, 2005), what is considered the standard dialect of American English refers to the variety of English codified by the US government and propagated in the public school system (Holmes, 2013). SAME is the language variety used by the mass media and taught in schools, and it is the code traditionally regarded as the standard for written language (Lippi-Green, 2012). The ostensible primary purpose for the original fabrication of SAME was to provide Americans with a lingua franca across geographic, cultural, and social boundaries, a unified way to use language in the US. According to Western language ideology, a country that is organized to have one language is perceived to experience progress, economic success, and a high quality of life, which is why the US has invested so much in SAME (Dorian, 2010).The myth that many Americans believe about is that there is a “correct” way to use language and that this way (i.e., SAME) is synonymous with *language* in its essence; in reality, there is no official corpus of every detail of the standard variety, including standards for the pronunciation, lexicon, pragmatics, syntax, and semantics of American language. Therefore, most of the evidence of what is considered SAME comes from the language’s reception in social situations.

For the purposes of our analysis and discussion hereafter, we will be discussing not only SAME in its essential form, but rather the realization of SAME in social contexts. Lippi-Green (2012) points out that there is no official cannon of every last detail of SAME; instead, listeners recognize both what SAME is and what it is *not* when language is used in context. This rhetorically situated SAME is what results in the ideology of standard language. Lippi-Green

(2012) synthesizes the definition of standard language ideology as, “a bias toward an abstracted, idealized, homogenous spoken language which is imposed and maintained by dominant bloc institutions and which names as its model the written language, but which is drawn primarily from the spoken language of the upper middle class” (p. 67). Hill (2008) establishes the ideology of standard language as the dichotomy between one “correct” idealization of language and all deviations. Because SAME can only be identified based on its manifestations in society, it is often identified by its distinction from other-than standard elements of language.

Linguists have identified the process by which standard language ideology is generated. First of all, standard language ideology relies on the human social phenomenon of negotiating the relationship between others and ourselves by perceiving how others perform their identities, including their language use. Language perception depends on the backgrounds of all members of a conversation and varies depending on the participants and setting, but in general, the process standardizing language exploits people’s existent perceptions while simultaneously shaping them. Standardization of language is a two-step process which first involves promoting favorable attitudes toward the standard variety (Holmes, 2013). All that isn’t “politically, culturally or socially marked as belonging to the privileged class” is devalued, while the values and practices of major institutions are validated (Lippi-Green, 2012, p. 68). In the terms of Bucholtz and Hall (2004) standard language is authorized while the inevitable inversion of this process, illegitimation, must occur for the lofty standard language to be recognized. The process of devaluing all non-standard language ultimately results in the social subordination of non-standard speakers (Lippi-Green, 2004).

The variety of language labeled standard is positively correlated with prestige, and much folk history develops to explain and maintain the elite social status of the standard variety (Hill, 2008). Therefore a social hierarchy of language use arises, and those language users who do not acquire or use exclusively the standard variety are considered cognitively and morally deficient. This exclusivity increases the enticing factor of standard language, and the cycle of SAME validation and devaluation of other language continues. When we examine how standard language ideology is perpetuated, we look at how the beliefs influence our practice on a micro level, such as individual behaviors, and on a macro level, like institutionalized, enforced policy (Lippi-Green, 2012).

According to Lippi-Green (2004), fostering standard language ideology requires the social subordination of non-standard dialects and their features. Ideologies are laden with sociopolitical, socioeconomic undertones; their goal is to allocate power (Hill, 2008). Furthermore, the ideology of standard impacts our culture’s views on race, religion, sexuality, and other social factors; all these demographic components are interconnected, and this phenomenon explains the potency of standard language ideology. Authority over language use is therefore allocated to the hegemonic group of SAME users, particularly SAME speakers; people are assumed to be arbiters of language use solely based on their (perceived) status as a SAME speaker (Lippi-Green, 2012). That is, SAME speakers are legitimized in their commentary of what language use is correct, proper, and socially acceptable. Furthermore, being a SAME speaker gives others the impression that you have strong writing abilities (Lippi-Green, 2012). This alternatively gives the impression that standard language is the only language worth writing down.

Because it serves as a linguistic “correctness” reference point for most speakers of a language, the problematic standard dialect is the most socially influential dialect. Although scholars concur that a definitive standard dialect is a mere abstraction rather than a tangible reality (Lippi-Green, 2004, 2012), they take SAME into consideration in their research because there is an undeniable societal awareness of a “standard” dialect entity (Wolfram & Christian, 1976). Proponents of the standard dialect maintain that prescriptive rules for language use preserve the communicative function of language (Cran & MacNeil, 2005), particularly among speakers from linguistically diverse backgrounds (Anderson-Mejias, 2013).

Through an objective lens, the standard dialect is not linguistically dissimilar to any other existent dialect (Wolfram & Christian, 1976). However, because of its artificial, institutionalized genesis, the standard variety has developed a social perception of linguistic correctness and formality. On the one hand, standard language use is a social indicator that the speaker is educated, which is generally regarded as a positive trait. On the other hand, Kirk Arnott, an editor for The Columbus Dispatch, says his publication avoids overuse of unadultered standard dialect, lest it begin to sound “like it was edited by a schoolmarm” (Cran & MacNeil, 2005). Also, speakers of the standard dialect may be perceived as lacking “flavor” (CBS, 2012) in their identity or character traits, such as region of origin or meaningful subcultural social groups and concomitant traditions.

Nonstandard Varieties

Because SAME is primarily identified by contrasting it with Languages Other Than Standard [hereafter often called LOTS as per Cole & Pellicer (2012), or nonstandard varieties], it is of utmost importance in our collection of facts to discuss the role of LOTS in the US. In fact, LOTS provide social significance to SAME, flavor the different facets of American culture, and become evident in authentic language use data. It is impossible for anyone to use standard language entirely, so no one is a SAME monolingual; every American uses LOTS features or varieties which are marked for (in)formality, sexuality, geographic origin, and social groups.

Linguistic variety is a phenomenon which naturally occurs because of the social subgroups present in any society. By interacting with others in their social circles, humans develop linguistic distinctions from the other speakers of their language. The way people speak, in turn, is indicative of their identity, particularly as it relates to their role in their social groups and society at large. Social perceptions of linguistic variety develop, so when a person hears a speaker's language, they interpret a complex set of identity markers.

Furthermore, Wolfram and Christian (1976) propose that dialects lie on a fluid, indefinable spectrum of a greater language as a whole. That is, dialects share common or similar features with each other, and these similarities or distinctions are often difficult to pinpoint. Scholars like Preston (1986) have endeavored to define the dialects of American English, both those that actually exist and the ones Americans perceive. These many dialects are a result of mutations in the social groups which produce dialects. Conceptualizing dialectical variety like a pot of vegetable soup, wherein the different vegetables are recognizable but united by a gustatorially complex broth, is most representative of the blending that often occurs among dialects. For example, an individual's speech patterns are unique to that person in that they draw upon linguistic features from the various groups of speakers (i.e. dialects) by which they have been socially influenced.

Because of the aforementioned factors which contribute to dialect, language use is effectively a means of expressing identity. Dialect is acquired when humans either consciously or subconsciously adopt the language of the social groups to which they belong or wish to belong (Wolfram & Christian, 1976). While humans' first social interactions may be with family members, Labov (1974) maintains that people assume the linguistic features of their peers rather than their parents. People then use language to signal to listeners both who they are and who they are not (Lippi-Green, 2004); dialects “define and differentiate” speakers (CBS, 2012). Consequently, listeners piece together linguistic clues to determine the identity of the speaker based on their socially constructed perception of dialect. There are variety of traits that listeners measure in speaker identity, including intelligence and approachability.

Lippi-Green (2012) contends that a person cannot “lose their native phonology in favor of another accent as any linguist would agree” (p. 157). However, I disagree because it *is* possible to gain or shift phonological abilities as one interacts in new social groups and alters the way they speak, either consciously or subconsciously. In fact, such a shift may be inevitable as even one language variety evolves over the course of a person’s lifetime. It is not unheard of that one’s phonological repertoire might be expanded when they learn an additional n-language, like when an English speaker learns French (Hall, 2013), but this expectation for expansion in one’s phonological palette within English, for example, is diminished by the influence of the ideology of standard. Furthermore, changes in the way a person uses language may come as they learn the details of the registers within English that are appropriate in domains that are new to the speaker. The ideology of standard leads us to believe that there is only one “English” and that we are all on a path of forsaking our LOTSness in favor of SAMEness, but in fact LOTS varieties are more appropriate than SAME in many social contexts. Learning when LOTS varieties are more rhetorically potent than SAME is a process than everyone experiences subconsciously, but the powerful ideology of standard often still hinders people from employing LOTS varieties.

This understanding of the reality of how language works versus the popular perception of language highlights how we *should* view LOTS acquisition and usage in ourselves and others. While the burden of learning LOTS registers falls partially on the speaker who wishes to join a new discourse community, it is also the responsibility of the current members of the community to establish and maintain expectations for language use. Therefore, each person is also called to examine whether their discourse communities unjustly or unnecessarily impose SAME usage, as there are many domains in which SAME is not the appropriate language. For example, black preaching style is the appropriate variety to be used in many American churches, as evidenced in Cole and Pellicer's (2012) discussion of the appropriateness of Hillary Clinton's black preaching style during a speech in a Selma, Alabama church, despite her critics in the media for using non-standard language. One of Cole and Pellicer's (2012) points, and one of mine, is that the assertion that SAME is the language variety in any domain is *de facto* bogus, and our expectations of language use in our various discourse communities should reflect this linguistic reality.

Essentialism

Our collection of facts now turns to essentialism, which will prove to possess much explanatory power over the language and identity phenomena I uncover in this thesis. As we have begun to see, the language a person uses is an inextricable part of their identity. The English word *identity* comes from the Latin word for "same," and this etymology gives us insight into what having a recognizable identity means in a social context. In an effort to qualify identities, essentialism has traditionally been a trap for social scientists in that every identity or social category has been defined in terms of what the identity is *not*; rigid dichotomies have been established as we find ways to define social categories (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004). Humans rely on *othering* for the maintenance of identities so we can determine what the otherness, or opposite of sameness, is. Under the essentialist perspective, reaching conclusions about who we *are* is a simultaneous process to understanding who we *are not*. We are therefore often forced to choose which social groups, perspectives, and identities to align ourselves with (Cole & Meadows, 2013). We select the linguistic resources we want to use, therefore deeming them personally important, claiming them as part of our identities and legitimizing their rhetorical powers.

When humans interact, they either reinforce or change indices, and they therefore participate in the “social construction of reality” (Holliday, 2011, p. 139). An *index* is a piece of material evidence which causes people to draw a generalized conclusion about the significance of that sign. For example, we would say that smoke indexes fire because, even when we cannot see it, fire is generally present when there is smoke. In terms of language use, we might say that the phrase “they be steady workin’ on they game” indexes African American Vernacular English and African American-ness. The danger is that when indices are formed and reinforced, stereotypes that people rely on psychologically develop. Berger and Luckmann (1979) call this process normalization and routinization, while Bucholtz and Hall (2004) call it naturalization. Ideologies are reinforced as the social construction of truths, and essentialist traps are then set as people rely too heavily on dichotomies and cease to consider identities along a spectrum. Overcoming essentialism involves “making the familiar strange” to see constructs we take for granted from a novel perspective (Holliday, 2011, p. 31). Choosing to step out of one’s comfort zone and experience new perspectives is a key to challenging unjust ideologies. Understanding realities that oppose essentialism requires critical discourse. The Critical Cosmopolitan Approach which Holliday (2011) employs overcomes essentialism by acknowledging diversity as the norm. For example, if you ask the average person what language is, they will typically respond that it is a mechanism for communication, especially the exchange of ideas among people. However, we often cannot escape a more pragmatic, nuanced, specific (example-based) discussion of language without referencing n-languages, like English or Spanish (Hall, 2013). While it can be useful to name and identify a language, this practice often establishes too narrow a frame in our minds around what it means to know and use language. As we have already seen with SAME, it is impossible to pin down and define any language or variety completely, and therefore we cannot divide languages clearly in essentialist terms.

Neo-essentialism recognizes the artificiality of polarization in terms of culture and language use, but finds it difficult not to discuss language outside of essentialist terms, like n-languages (Holliday, 2011). This struggle to avoid the essentialist trap is evident in linguistic scholarship. For example, Lippi-Green (2012) makes the important point that Baugh (1999) omits: non-blacks *can* speak African American vernacular English (AAVE). Both authors discuss African Americans who are SAME speakers, AAVE speakers, or bidialectal, but only Lippi-Green (2012) breaks through the essentialist wall to assert that anyone can be an AAVE speaker. Certainly Baugh, an expert in progressive sociolinguistics, *knows* that a person does not have to be black to speak AAVE, but by omitting this important detail from his book he may leave his readers with the impression that AAVE is an exclusively African American language. The point of his book is largely that native speakers of AAVE, African Americans, fall victim to educational malpractice as students of an educational system which has a bias against racial and linguistic diversity. He implies that AAVE indexes the African American race of the speaker, which explains why race and language go hand-in-hand in the unjust educational practices. However, I further his argument by proposing that any AAVE speaker, particularly the monodialectal native AAVE speaker, regardless of race, falls victim to educational injustices by merit of their nonstandard language use alone. The details of these injustices will be discussed in further detail below, but the point for now is that it is important to avoid the essentialist trap when discussing social groups. Careful, deliberate phrasing and discussion of identity issues will help a scholar resist essentialism while still drawing meaningful conclusions.

Linguistic Realities

The next step in exploring the social implications of linguistic variety is to understand some realities about language which enable us to be objective as we proceed with our collection of facts. First, we should qualify the term “dialect.” In a general sense, a dialect refers to a specific variety of a language shared by a group of speakers with one or more commonalities (Wolfram & Christian, 1976). Linguistically diverse dialects develop based on a variety of features of the speakers’ identities. Gender, social class, social status, age, education, urbanization, ethnicity, and race all play a role in dialect formation. Geography also influences dialect, particularly in areas whose physical features, like deserts or mountains, isolate the region’s speakers from contact with other dialects. Consequently, migration facilitates language exchange among speakers from different areas. Diverse linguistic features are the evidence of speaker identity as “manifested” in various dialects (Wolfram & Christian, 1976). Dialects contain unique lexicons, phonology, morphology, syntax, pragmatics, and semantics, and from the descriptivist perspective, no dialect is superior to another in any socially charged way. Wolfram and Christian (1976) propose that dialects exist with respect to each other rather than being compared to idealized SAME on a pedestal. Despite these differences, dialects are granted linguistic egalitarianism since rules for language use are not intrinsically charged. It is imperative to maintain an objective view of dialect in order to evaluate the social phenomena occurring in a linguistically diverse United States.

In additional to an objective view of dialects, a critical understanding of the way the term *accent* is used will add to our collection of linguistic facts. In everyday use, the word *accent* is used relatively. That is, when lay people refer to an *accent*, they typically mean a non-standard, “foreign,” L2, or otherwise unfamiliar way of speaking. Many times, a speaker of SAME is not considered to have an “accent.” In this way, the term *accent* comes to mean way of speaking which deviates from the hypothetical standard. However, to a speaker from London, a SAME speaker may be considered to have an accent because the way of speaking is not the standard in that person’s UK home and thus sounds non-standard and “foreign” to them. From a linguistic standpoint, *accent* may refer to the characteristics of any language variety you speak, and therefore every speaker of every language has an accent.

A basic principle of language to understand which flows logically from the above discussions of dialect and accent is that each language is useful, efficient, and neither inherently “good” nor “bad.” Language with any grammatical features is capable of being effective for communicative purposes, regardless of whether the language is widely considered to be “grammatical” or “ungrammatical” in reference to the standard variety (Lippi-Green, 2012). In fact, Dorian (2010) emphasizes that there are no inherent “good” and “bad” forms in a language, as evidenced in the neutral attitudes toward language diversity in isolated, intimate speech communities where there are no standardized forms. If the grammatical variety of language were inefficient, the language would shift toward efficiency, as we see in ever present language shifts. Although some linguistic traditionalists lament language shifts towards informal usage and integration of new lexical items based on technological and cultural changes (Cran & MacNeil, 2005), these language shifts are inevitable as speakers navigate ways of making the language more efficient for communicative purposes (Lippi-Green, 2012).

Our next discussion of language realities is not well established in the literature, but is rather a point that I make which is worth considering as we continue our investigation of language facts. Linguists have traditionally drawn sharp distinctions between written and spoken language, fixating on the calculated and permanent nature of writing, whereas speaking encourages fluid usage of non-standard features, negotiation for meaning, and freedom from the constraints of orthography and punctuation rules (Lippi-Green, 2012). However, contemporary technology has blurred the lines between written and spoken language. For example, it is now common for people to communicate with each other by speaking messages into their phone before the phone transcribes a written version of their message. Furthermore, text messages are often sent with little consideration for the rules of standard language, orthography, and punctuation. In many discourse communities, texters and online chatters respond to each other so quickly that their written messages contain much of the "non-standardness" which has traditionally been regarded by linguists as reserved for spoken language alone. Generic conventions have developed for text messages which require the use of nonstandard language and orthography. Baron (2005) discusses students' ability to differentiate between SAME and LOTS usage in the genres where these varieties are appropriate. Standard language ideology has traditionally regarded SAME as the written and high variety of the spoken code and LOTS as a low status spoken code, but contemporary writing practices are blurring the lines between spoken and written language. Texting, social media, and other modern writing venues give LOTS a legitimized voice which has traditionally been reserved for written standard language.

Social Injustices

The following section uses the above understanding of standard language ideology in contrast with linguistic realities to expose social injustices related to language. No more than we would argue we should wear an American uniform, that we should be required to weigh a certain amount, or have certain hair color, we cannot mandate homogeneity in terms of language (Lippi-Green, 2012). Much in the same way that it is impossible for a person to use SAME exclusively, it would be impossible for every American to use the same phonological, morphological, lexical, syntactic, pragmatic, or semantic systems because diversity within living beings is an inevitability. In fact, the claim that we should (or could) entirely standardize language use recalls historical efforts like the regime which vengefully promoted the Aryan race. St. Pierre (2012) explains: “Stigmatization becomes systemic in that it is nourished by rewards provided for conformity and negative sanctions for deviation from its norms” (p. 111). The “rewards provided for conformity” which St. Pierre (2012) describes are often incentives like success in the mainstream education system, acceptance into the powerful social groups of the country, and a general assumption by others that you belong in those powerful groups because you use SAME. Contemporary American legislation mandates that one cannot oppress others on the basis of sexual identity, religion, gender, or skin color, but we do not hesitate to ridicule others based on their nonstandard grammar use, to recommend amendments to others’ language use, and to protest about the features of contemporary American language usage (Lippi-Green, 2012). These discriminatory behaviors are only a few of the most basic of St. Pierre’s (2012) “negative sanctions for deviation from [SAME] norms.” In the section which follows, I will present more facts that I have collected which reveal the social injustices prevalent in American society as a result of the ideology of standard language.

Often times, being critical of a speaker’s non-standard usage distracts the listener from making meaning of the message, but this failure to understand is the psychological result of the listener’s history with the ideology of standard. The burden of understanding in communication is omnipresent, but we are more willing to accept this burden with some interlocutors than with others. Although negotiation for meaning is inevitable, we are more willing to negotiate with another SAME user because we assume it is an issue with the communication of an idea rather than the grammar that serves as the idea’s vessel. However, when negotiating for meaning with a

LOTS user, we often attribute the need for negotiation to mispronunciation or deficiency of language (Lippi-Green, 2012). This bias against LOTS speakers leads to prejudice against LOTS users and unjust discrimination against them.

There are a few generalizations about LOTS prejudices to be made. First, speakers of more marked varieties are thought not to have travelled and interacted with those from other varieties, which is associated with a lack of cultural refinement (Baugh, 1993). Next, marked language use is considered a failure to acquire standard language as a result of cognitive or personal inadequacies. People unfamiliar with linguistic principles fail to recognize the grammatical legitimacy of vernaculars, believing instead that nonstandard language is an "unorganized" or "incomplete" version of the standard language. Finally, these supposed subpar linguistic systems do not allow their speakers to develop cognitively to the degree that speakers of standard language are able. However, each of these assumptions are inaccurate and refutable (Baugh, 1999; Lippi-Green, 2012). Each variety's complex set of grammatical and pragmatic rules provides an effective way for its speakers to communicate; if people could not use a language to perform a full range of rhetorical functions, they would modify the language to make it effective. However, the ideology of standard language causes us to jump to prejudiced conclusions about languages' effectiveness and cognitive abilities of these languages' speakers.

Another of the social consequences of standard language ideology is the public attitude which devalues language diversity, or deviations from the established national standard (Dorian, 2010). This means that multilingualism and multidialectalism are seen as unfavorable, as they inevitably mean that their speakers use at least one LOTS variety. Furthermore, bilingualism and bidialectalism can indicate social status depending on how the different varieties were acquired. That is, if a person is bilingual because of their life circumstances, such as growing up using a different language at home than at school, their multilingualism is valued less than an individual who chooses to acquire a second language later in life. Valdés (1988) establishes such a dichotomy among Mexican Americans between elite bilingualism and natural bilingualism. While she is referring to bilingualism in terms of English and Spanish, this distinction could exist among those who must acquire standard language in addition to their nonstandard home language.

Linguistic Profiling

When we open our mouths to speak or allow our hands to write, we make choices about our language variety use which reveal parts of our identity. Each time we output language, we play on how we assume our audience will interpret our language use, based on the rhetorical situation and the shared ideologies of producer and recipient of language. *Linguistic profiling* is the result of these subsequent social stereotypes at work. That is, we make evaluations about the speaker's moral character based on whether they use SAME or deviate from the prescriptive, idealistic standard dialect.

The way humans perceive others based on language use is a subjective process, based on the practice of navigating organic social tension between two speakers (Lippi-Green, 2004). That is, there is a complex web of social expectations and comprehensibility concerns woven among people in a conversation that must be considered for communication to occur. Each individual's social experiences prime them to perceive various dialects a certain way. For example, some consider the "Southern" dialect accent indicative of the speaker's charm, while others perceive the same speaker as unsophisticated (Lyon, 2006). Also, the "New York" accent is considered either harsh and unfriendly or "charming" and "endearing," depending on the listener's priming (CBS, 2012). Kinzler and DeJesus (2013) found that children from both "Northern" and

“Southern” dialects harbored both favorable and pejorative stereotypes about their respective dialects. Finally, there are some nonstandard dialects, such as actress Sofia Vergara’s Colombian Spanish-influenced English or Senator Ted Kennedy’s Bostonian English, which society exempts from negative judgments on account of their high social status (Lippi-Green, 2004). Language perception is a subjective process which depends on the social background of both listener and speaker.

The process of hearing and interpreting what a speaker is saying, therefore, becomes a way for the listener to measure social differences between herself and the speaker (Labov, 1974). In accordance with social constructivist theory, people form and reinforce stereotypes about dialectal features by engaging in the complex set of prejudices held by their own sociolinguistic group and stemming from ideology (Kinzler & DeJesus, 2013). These stereotypes are also exploited for rhetorical effect in movies, television shows, comedy sketches, Internet memes, and other media (Lyon, 2006).

Americans have established commonly held stereotypes about their many dialects. For example, the dialect of New York is described by listeners as either “gruff,” “angry,” and “thuggish” or “charming” and “endearing,” depending on how the listener has been primed to receive this dialect (CBS, 2012). AAVE is seen as “bad” or “lazy” English in some contexts (Cran & MacNeil, 2005), but in others this dialect is a sign of “linguistic creativity,” “ingenuity,” and “originality” (Labov, 1974). Southern dialects are often perceived as unsophisticated (Lyon, 2006) and “bad” English, although also “charming” (Cran & MacNeil, 2005) and “gentile” (Lyon, 2006). Speakers in Massachusetts may deem their dialect “perfectly grammatical,” although Dennis Preston says Americans throughout the country generally consider the dialect of the Midwest “normal” speech (Cran & MacNeil, 2005).

The problem of linguistic profiling arises when these stereotypes about linguistic features translate into implications about the character of the speaker, an extrapolation which Wolfram and Christian (1976) condemn as illegitimate. For example, if a person speaks at a slow pace, they cannot be assumed to be cognitively deficient or lazy. In the same way, speakers of dialects which employ a heavy use of adverbs and intensifiers cannot be assumed to be more detail-orientation people (Wolfram & Christian, 1976). However, the reality is that humans often rely on stereotyping as a defense mechanism which informs the social interaction a listener pursues with a particular speaker. For example, Dennis Preston's informal interview of Northerners revealed that some American listeners associate Southern dialects with racism (Cran & MacNeil, 2005), an association would ostensibly deter a listener from engaging in a more intimate social relationship with the speaker. Additionally, New York Senator Kirsten Gillibrand's political career has been riddled with criticism because, although her political views are popular and sound, she speaks in a way that the public views as appropriate for a "pre-workforce age" teenage girl rather than a politician ("Gillibrand's vox (un)populi," 2010).

However, the chief ethical danger occurs when linguistic profiling violates civil rights. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its subsequent provisions provide legal protection against discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, and "trait-based discrimination," which includes language linked to national origin (Lippi-Green, 2004). Some American students have been denied their right to public education by teachers who linguistically discriminate against them (Cran & MacNeil, 2005). That is, self-fulfilling prophecies, in accordance with the Pygmalion Effect, occur in classrooms where teachers are unwilling to respect linguistic diversity (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). Baugh's (2007) extensive research on linguistic profiling in the housing industry and lending agencies is a prime example of the discrimination that can occur. His research has implications for groups such as employers seeking workers or universities recruiting students. Lippi-Green (2004) cites many historical instances of linguistic profiling, including several law cases. University of Wisconsin Milwaukee employee Florence Kyomugisha was fired because her supervisor claimed her English with Ugandan accent rendered Kyomugisha incapable of performing her job duties (Kyomugisha v. Clowney & University of Wisconsin Milwaukee, 1998). In Washington a bank employee was denied a promotion because he did not speak "American" (Xieng et al v. Peoples National Bank of Washington, 1993). An IRS employee was fired because her supervisors felt her accent would adversely affect the image of the IRS as a US government agency (Park v. Baker, Secretary of the Treasure, EEOC, 1988). However, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission allows for employment termination if the employee's language interferes with their ability to perform their job appropriately (Lippi-Green, 2004). Policy making on linguistic variety is problematized by the argument that some dialects are more easily comprehensible to the "general public" and intended audience, as well as the existent ideologies which influence the way consumers view employees of businesses with whom they interact.

As per Title VII of the Civil Rights Act's protection of people from diverse national origins, there is some level of protection for people who speak with other-than-American accents based on the protection of those from diverse national origins. However, there is no protection for speakers of American LOTS varieties. Furthermore, in many cases where linguistic discrimination against a non-native American has occurred, it is difficult to demonstrate that the discrimination occurred related to the person's national origin, which is currently the only legal way to qualify wrongdoing (Lippi-Green, 2012). These inadequacies in civil rights legislation allows for discrimination in the housing market (Purnell, Idsardi, & Baugh, 1999), job market

(Lippi-Green, 2004, 2012), and the legal system (Smalls, 2004). It is clear that current American law does not make enough provisions to protect Americans from language-based discrimination, thus silently but powerfully perpetuating the ideology of standard language.

In summary, discrimination on the basis of language is not an inevitable social phenomenon. Instead, the stereotypes born of standard language ideology subconsciously motivate people to commit injustices. The objective details of the language varieties are not relevant when the language ideology influences identities and social practices (Lippi-Green, 2012; Baugh, 1999). Many of the injustices resulting from standard language ideology have been inadequately covered or disregarded by American law and policy. As a result, linguistic discrimination in terms of housing, employment, and criminal law cases is legal. But the scope of language injustices in the law and in everyday life is larger than what has been documented. Americans' quality of life is affected by language ideology, including their ability to be a LOTS speaker and fully participate in voting, commerce, and a broad range of discourse communities (Ruíz, 1988). We will see in the next section that formal American education is one of these domains where injustices persist.

Educational Injustice

The goal of formal education is to cultivate productive, engaged members of society, and SAME is promoted as the gateway to the progress and social mores students need to become these citizens (Lippi-Green, 2012; Dorian, 2010). The educational system's push for SAME, even with a separate-but-equal approach, would only be appropriate with the legitimation and celebration of languages for their rhetorically appropriate usage (Lippi-Green, 2012; Bucholtz & Hall, 2004). The most progressive way to express the current approach to education seems to say, *It's OK to use LOTS at home, but SAME is the only legitimate language to use for serious* *endeavors*. Although the language of the educational policy is not overtly racist or prejudicial, the lessons many students learn at school every day teach them that their nonstandard language usage is wrong and so are they (Lippi-Green, 2012). "To suggest that children who do not speak *SAE [SAME] will find acceptance and validation in the schools is, in a word, ludicrous," Lippi-Green emphasizes. "A child who tells her stories in stigmatized varieties of English is quickly corrected" (Lippi-Green, 2012, p. 68). If the education system is responsible for the well-being of students and ethical pedagogical practices, then belittling students' language practices and subsequently insulting students' cultural background is completely unacceptable. Furthermore, schools ought to be responsible for more than just educating students to be financially successful in capitalistic America; students' development of identity, interpersonal, and intercultural understanding is critical. Students should learn to be community leaders in every variety in their linguistic repertoire.

Although nonstandard language does play a role in students' educational experiences, to "dismiss nonstandard English as a barrier to academic success" is foolish negligence of the incredible potential resource we have in linguistic and cultural diversity (Baugh, 1999, p. 54). When linguistic and cultural diversity are celebrated and utilized carefully in an educational setting, students (and their teachers) can learn and grow from the diversity experience. Ruíz (1988) calls us to focus on the language planning and policy orientation of language-as-resource, which has historically been ignored as contradictory of standard language ideology. Baugh (1999) underlines the need to incorporate language diversity into formal education: "To strive for homogenized educational policies in a diverse and continually changing society is both futile and misleading" (p. 16). As we discussed earlier, language is alive and constantly mutating to meet the rhetorical needs of language users in their ever-shifting social dynamics. Therefore, students' linguistic practices and their wants and needs out of their education must undergo ongoing assessment so as to implement educational and language policies which benefit students rather than hold them back. Furthermore, since Americans, both immigrants and native populations, come from language backgrounds other than SAME, the historical result of the imposition of SAME through education has been the erasure of much American language diversity (McKay & Wong, 1988). McKay and Wong (1988) articulate the unfortunate result of standardization: "Curtailing mother tongue maintenance among immigrants and then providing foreign language programs for Anglophone monolinguals (many of whom are former bilinguals)... is, to say the least, wasteful" (p. vii-viii). Repression of LOTS varieties marginalizes social groups, beginning when the students are very young.

We can begin to see diversity as a resource rather than a hurdle in the classroom only when we choose to facilitate discourse about linguistic and cultural diversity in the classroom to overcome oppressive ideologies by critical understanding. If we elevate our students to the position of experts in the language and culture of their discourse communities, then our role as teachers becomes handing over the tools of critical analysis to our students rather than lecturing at them. Students who not only observe what happens in their society but also ask *why* begin to claim ownership over the issues affecting and affected by their culture's ideologies. There is nothing wrong with students learning SAME in school, especially since this lingua franca can improve students' ability to be literate and active outside of their native linguistic groups. However, if the path to acquiring SAME is one that denigrates students' linguistic and cultural identities, then educational policy and pedagogical practices must be reimagined. Language and identity are so inextricably linked that educators and education policy makers must be sensitive to the way formal education helps students discover and shape their identities; these students are the future of our world, after all.

Adequation and Denaturalization

Although the next chapters will focus on strategies for addressing the inequalities, there are two last pieces of theory we need to latch onto so we can understand the approach to linguistic justice. These are two pairs of Bucholtz and Hall's (2004) tactics of intersubjectivity, or ways to describe the social relationships that result from ideology and other semiotic processes. The first pair of tactics that lends especial importance to our investigation is *adequation* and *distinction*. Adequation, Bucholtz and Hall (2004) say, "involves the pursuit of socially recognized sameness" (p. 383). Seeing language adequatively means responding to the linguistic reality that all languages, varieties, dialects, and accents are equal from an objective point of view. When we understand the intrinsic beauty and value in each language, we can promote use of both LOTS and SAME in the rhetorical situations where each is appropriate. The ideology of standard promotes distinctive language practices when one would be expected to highlight sameness with another speaker by adopting the LOTS characteristics the interlocutor is using. While distinction in and of itself is not wrong, it promotes hegemony evidenced by language use when SAME is preferred in situations where LOTS varieties are more rhetorically compelling. Working towards adequation would defy standard language ideology in that LOTS subordination would no longer be meaningful; as a society we would have to find new ways of conceiving of SAME's value. The result of adequation would be revaluing of not only LOTS, but more importantly LOTS speakers and their contributions to society.

In conjunction with a willingness to use language adequatively, we also need denaturalization as a step to address language injustices. Bucholtz and Hall (2004) describe the tactics of *authentication* and *denaturalization* as the social processes by which identities are created and dissolved. Authentication occurs when the standardization process occurs, authenticating what is SAME and distinguishing what is not. The injustices resulting from the ideology of standard are evidence of too much authentication of SAME in American society, because we now see standard language as synonymous with language. In opposition to the process of authentication, *denaturalization* is a stripping down of all the stereotypes about language varieties which inhibit us from seeing language adequatively. As we have seen, these stereotypes and prejudices about language varieties and their speakers influence the way people treat each other. Language stereotypes lead to linguistic profiling, which can be performed subtly or explicitly, and this leads to injustices. I recommend that we denaturalize the standard variety so as to open the way for adequative language use.

Although the theory behind adequation and denaturalization is solid, the challenge will surely be putting these concepts into practice to address linguistic injustice. Armed with this critical theory, our task is to cease to be folk theorists and to look critically at the way ideology influences our own thoughts and behaviors. Folk theorists do not look for evidence that contradicts the conclusions about language they have drawn (Hill, 2008); instead they grow comfortable accruing a mound of evidence which supports their perspective, a deceivingly comfortable vantage point/position (of power), albeit usually socially powerful. It takes guts to admit that the ideologies you buy into made you think or do anything unjust and that you have been participating in a counter-productive, anti-justice system your whole life. In the next chapter, we will discuss a plan for using adequation and denaturalization to address the injustices we identified here.

CHAPTER III

"NEGOTIATION:" THE LINGUISTIC SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT AS DENATURALIZATION

"In any nonviolent campaign there are four basic steps: collection of the facts to determine whether injustices exist; negotiation; self purification; and direct action."

The best place to begin our discussion of how to approach the linguistic injustices discovered in Chapter 2 is to return to the thesis' driving quote from Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous letter from Birmingham Jail. The two things that I have always admired about King are communicated in this quote. First of all, King worked tirelessly to pursue justice; he assumed the oppression of all black Americans as his burden. Secondly, he sought after justice using a carefully crafted, potent method. King's movement was not a rash, defensive lashing out, nor was he an advocate of rudimentary recoil as a means of achieving justice. Instead, King's work invites all who wish to make a difference in the world to educate themselves before they calculate the steps to justice. For the equality his movement has already achieved and for the theoretical framework he left behind for others who seek justice, King is a true American hero.

Having completed the "collection of the facts to determine whether injustices exist" in Chapter 2 and with the theoretical explanation of linguistic injustices established, we will move on to the "negotiation" stage of King's method. In this chapter, we will negotiate the terms of a rebellion against the American linguistic status quo, the *linguistic social justice movement*. To authenticate my claim for the legitimacy of this movement, I have identified nine key ideas in

King's methodology of executing effective social justice movements. I will elaborate upon each point not only in terms of King's work, but also incorporating others' theories and discussions. For each key point, I juxtapose one of King's quotes on affecting social change with an adapted version of his words which lend specific meaning to our linguistic social justice movement. The nine key principles explored will be:

1. Our adversary is existent ideology.
2. Our goal is to value human life by bringing dignity to marginalized linguistic groups.
3. Humans, although diverse, are nonetheless interdependent.
4. Agency for all groups and participants will be key in our movement.
5. The movement will take years to make the changes we are working towards.
6. However, we are propelled by a sense of urgency.
7. We will advocate for a two-pronged approach at justice: change via education and legislation.
8. Our movement is flavored with American national pride.
9. We will only accomplish our goals by putting theory into practice.

The goal of this chapter is two-fold. First, I want to define the linguistic social justice movement I am advocating for. This investigation will build on the sociolinguistic theory presented in chapter 2, developing particularly the discussion of how the process of denaturalization (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004) will be integral in changing the standard language ideology that produces social injustices. Secondly, by aligning my work with King's philosophy and by comparing the linguistic rights movement with the American racial civil rights movement of the 1950's and 60's, I demonstrate the gravity of present linguistic injustices and the implications of my work. I have identified linguistic injustices which are not viewed by society as legitimate concerns under current ideologies; however, when they are juxtaposed with a movement against racial injustices which are clearly immoral to most contemporary Americans, linguistic injustices assume the same threat to the US as racial injustices do.

King's Key Themes

Let us now examine the nine themes identified in King's philosophy which apply to our linguistic social justice movement. Each one will add dimension and insight into the nature of the battle against oppressive ideologies we are fighting.

Principle 1: Our adversary is existent ideology

"It is not the race per se that we fight but the policies and ideology that leaders of that race have formulated to perpetuate oppression" (King, 1996, p. 33) → "It is not standard language per se that we fight but the policies and ideology that users of standard language have formulated to perpetuate oppression."

Linguistic social injustice is not as immediately apparent as others. Americans have a sensibility that people should not be discriminated against in the workplace based on race. Our collective acceptance for gender diversity is ever-increasing. However, belittlement of non-standard language users remains socially appropriate because the ideology of standard allows it. However, with the volume of research and writing that has been done about language injustices, as evidenced in Chapter 2, there is no excuse for American thinkers ignoring the injustices they see. As Paulo Freire, another advocate and social philosopher whose work will support the linguistic social justice movement, writes: "Radicals cannot passively accept a situation in which the excessive power of a few leads to the dehumanization of all" (Freire, 1973, p. 11). Because it is clear that the American ideology of standard results in an imbalance of power, those who are educated about the linguistic injustices can no longer remain silent.

We are by no means advocating for the demise of standard language. In fact, I am grateful for the linguists, educators, and policy makers who have worked tirelessly in the past to enable greater numbers of people to communicate via the lingua franca of standard language. Standard language serves to unite language users worldwide, from diverse linguistic backgrounds. In fact, standard language usage allowed me to move cross-country to pursue a graduate degree; standard language is the linguistic medium I am exploiting in disseminating this research. I have used standard language to become the scholar I am today, and it provides a gateway to civic engagement, scholarly work, and business prosperity for others who want to learn it, too. We are not advocating for the supreme elevation of LOTS or a total reversal of language ideologies, which would inevitably yield inadequacies opposite from the extant ones, but rather adequation and distinction.

What we are protesting is the idea that standard language is synonymous with *language*. The essentialist view that standard language is the only legitimate way of using language creates a false understanding of grammar, language acquisition, and language usage in the folk theorist. I cannot advocate for the current ideology of standard, so oppressive and diabolical that it empowers Americans to treat each other as less than human based solely on non-standard language use. My objection is to the methodology of teaching standard English which involves intimidation, belittling of LOTS varieties, and terrorizing students into learning standard language. No SLA practitioner using contemporary theory-driven, research-based pedagogy would ever advocate for these inhumane methods, so why do we allow it to happen in the classroom? Reframing all learning as language acquisition and empowering educators with ethical teaching methods will be the keys to the framework of the equitable classroom experience.

Because standard language is entangled in the most powerful facets of American society, it will not be easy to shift the ideology that promotes it. The first step to educating ourselves about how to change ideology is to understand how it is perpetuated. Whenever we act in a way that sends a message about how we view others based on their language use, we either transgress or confirm existing norms (Jordan, 2002). That is, we either solidify or shift the existent indices which contribute to ideology. It is important to note that King does not prescribe literally fighting people or institutions, but rather he emphasizes that we must challenge the intangible reality that is ideology. Because most of the enforcers of standard ideology are well-meaning people who are practicing the language theories they have learned from the authorities in their lives, there is no sense in degrading the practitioners of injustice, but rather to educate them on the effects of their practice.

What we are really seeking in the linguistic social justice movement are shifts in power dynamics and the social redefinition of language variety, which will yield social and cultural change. In order to affect change, non-normative, nonstandard ways of using language must be authorized by the social groups currently in power (Jordan, 2002). By “groups in power,” I mean both common citizens who wield standard language in everyday use and the educational, government, media, and corporate institutions who have the authority to authorize adequative but distinct language use (Jordan, 2002; Bucholtz & Hall, 2004). By conferring power over community decision-making and commerce to speakers of nonstandard varieties, we redistribute political power which was once reserved only for speakers of standard language. Furthermore, through denaturalization, we must demonstrate that what is inadequate about language diversity is not the LOTS varieties themselves but rather our way of conceiving and discussing them. By stripping away the stereotypes about LOTS we subscribe to, we decompartmentalize language use and find more adequative and equitable ways to conceptualize the ways language varieties, including SAME, are used in American society.

In order to approach the gargantuan task of shifting ideology, we must call Americans to engage in critical analysis of the phenomena occurring in our culture daily. The method of critical interpretivism, comparable to the ethnographic approach, uses “thick description” to chip away at existent ideologies, making way for critical analysis of the underpinnings of culture and the injustices it facilitates (Holliday, 2011). King says that, “there is little hope for us until we become tough-minded enough to break loose from the shackles of prejudice, half-truths, and downright ignorance” (1996, p. 30). We already began this task of breaking free from ignorance about language use when we discussed linguistic realities in Chapter 2. We will continue this investigation here and in subsequent chapters, because Holiday (2011) emphasizes that thinking critically about the mutual influence of culture, language, and ideology means going beyond separating myth from reality to investigating the complexities that make cultures work as they do.

King warns us that, “to ignore evil is to become an accomplice to it” (1996, p. 18). If we want to be catalysts for change, we researchers and thinkers must process our observations of everyday life according to equitable frameworks like Bucholtz and Hall’s (2004) adequation and distinction and Holliday’s (2004) critical cosmopolitanism. The conclusions we draw from these critical analyses do not only have just implications on marginalized groups, but rather on mankind as a whole. After we come to appreciate the gravity of linguistic injustices and decide to take action, it takes courage to assume an unpopular position, one that defies established ideology. The popular opinion on language in the US, the linguistic status quo, is often “so ambiguous that it will include everything and be so popular that it will include everybody” (King, 1996, p. 24). That is, as a society we have found ways to explain the acceptableness of the way we promote standard language. Therefore, facing the truths about descriptive language use can be challenging for the folk theorist and requires honesty and humility. King encourages us: “To be honest is to confront the truth. However unpleasant and inconvenient the truth may be, I believe we must expose and face it if we are to achieve a better quality of American life" (King, 1996, p. 89).

In conclusion, we will only affect change by providing tangible, relatable examples of the manifestations of standard language ideology for the lay people and folk theorists who are not yet aware of the linguistic injustices. Then we must demonstrate how this ideology produces injustices in its manifestations so that others will realize the gravity and legitimacy of these injustices. Further discussion of specific ways we can put this theory into practice in everyday life will be presented in subsequent chapters. For now, let it suffice to remember that our enemy in this fight for linguistic social justice is not any human or institution run by humans, but rather the pernicious language ideology which manifests itself in the practice of well-meaning Americans.

Principle 2: Our goal is to value human life by bringing dignity to marginalized linguistic groups

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character" (King, 1996, p. 95). → "I have a dream that my children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by their language use but by the content of their character."

In reflecting on her late husband's social impact, Coretta King remarked on the fact that King's chief effect on society was that black Americans began to command a higher level of human dignity, both because they claimed this dignity for themselves and because the social change they pursued redefined their value in American society (King, 1996). King recognizes the intrinsic value in human life: "Now let me say that the next thing we must be concerned about if we are to have peace on earth and good will toward men is the nonviolent affirmation of the sacredness of all human life" (p. 83). This point applies also to our linguistic justice movement. It feels like an insult to my audience's morality to discuss this basic fact, but the evidence of linguistic injustices indicates that the point must be made as the crux of this whole thesis project: *Each human life is intrinsically valuable, and no life is more valuable than another. Whether a person uses SAME, LOTS, or both, they deserve the same respect, love, rights, and privileges as any other person.* Because this foundational claim of social justice is not being observed widely, our movement is attempting to put this value into practice. Language rights are not just about language. Because language use indexes racial, ethnic, and social class identity, promoting adequative use of standard language would ensure that each person has an equal chance at the American quality of living.

Principle 3: Humans, although diverse, are nonetheless interdependent

"All men are interdependent" (King, 1996, p. 18). → "All language users are interdependent."

Our work will have a ripple effect and will be affected by other movements, ideologies, policies, and activists. In a racially and linguistically diverse society, no group can survive without communicating, collaborating, and working with members of other social groups. One of the features of discourse, including critical discourse, is the inclusion of multiple perspectives and voices. If we buy into the theory of mobilization of linguistic resources and ideologies via the internet, media, face-to-face interactions, and other forms of communication, then we must also acknowledge the interconnectedness language globally (Cole, 2014).

According to the cognitive praxis approach to social change, we need to create a space for the solutions and ideologies we are proposing in the public consciousness (St. Pierre, 2012). Furthermore, it is important to recognize that there will be variety of interpretations of the linguistic injustices and of plans for achieving equality: “No social movement is unified around one core vision; all circulate constantly around different ideas” (Jordan, 2002, p. 50). Therefore we each see the problem of linguistic injustices differently based on our backgrounds. Consequently, each person interested in affecting change brings different proposals for solutions and unique ideas for translating theory into practice to pursue equality. For example, teachers impact members of their classes, parents educate their children, politicians and policy makers impact legislation, and other civilians and civil servants control how laws are enacted *de facto*.

Principle 4: Agency for all groups and participants will be key in our movement

“Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve...You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love” (King, 1996, p. 17). → “Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t have to use standard language to serve...You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”

Lippi-Green (2012) observes that in order for a language variety and, more importantly, its speakers to be socially subordinated, the speakers must to some degree consent or acknowledge the subordination. Even if these groups are not represented in the policy-making sessions or whatever moments in time language is standardized and this variety is authorized, the groups *must* feel the effects when they experience the illegitimation process. That is, a LOTS speaker must experience moments when they are told, directly or indirectly, that they are *wrong* to use nonstandard language. These social cues, whether explicit or subtle, often cause a reaction from the LOTS speaker. Whether this reaction entails realignment towards standard language, resentment for SAME and its speakers, or a mixture of these two responses, the LOTS speaker generally remains compliant with the ideology of standard. Lippi-Green’s (2012) point is simply that it is fascinating and tragic that at some point the groups marginalized by their nonstandard language usage have relinquished agency of their social well-being. King warns of the danger of minority groups’ loss of agency:

> When an individual is no longer a true participant [in society], when he no longer feels a sense of responsibility to his society, the content of democracy is emptied. When culture is degraded and vulgarity enthroned, when the social system does not build security but induces peril, inexorably the individual is impelled to pull away from a soulless society. This process produces alienation -- perhaps the most pervasive and insidious development in contemporary society. (1996, p. 19)

The purpose of this linguistic social justice movement is to reclaim the agency that minority linguistic groups have relinquished at some point in history, to help LOTS speakers find their voices to respond to oppressive ideology.

Americans need not be invited into discourse about language usage. By merit of their own language use, each person already maintains a set of ideologies, theories, and opinions on language. I am not suggesting that we need to invite people to a conversation about language, but rather that we must change the conversation. Those who use SAME ought to reflect on their own attitudes toward language use and their practices which may contribute to social injustices, although the burden of reflection and preparation for action has rarely been assigned to SAME users (Lippi-Green, 2012). King’s focus, however, remains on the power of the minority groups, in our case LOTS users, who decide to stand up against the oppressive status quo.

Jordan (2002) provides a meaningful metaphor that explains the role agency and action will play in our movement. He says that when we have people who are educated about social issues in a way that makes them passive recipients of knowledge about the injustices, we are like a group of people in a movie theater who share an experience of watching a movie and viewing what is on the screen. The moviegoers remain silently still in a dark room while the movies plays, but their solidarity means nothing because they do not interact with the content of the movie or each other. However, what is required of effective social movements is the type of education and solidarity which empower people to be members of a discourse community about the injustices and agents for change. That is, Jordan (2002) says it does not suffice to unite as believers in a cause, but rather to unite as activists in a movement. Furthermore, he explains that we live in an age that is ripe with activist possibility, since modern media and technology allow people from anywhere to collaborate on social justice endeavors. Additionally, according to the research mobilization theory, successful social movements are led by educated people who have the ability to use their resources to make a difference (St. Pierre, 2012). By "resources," I am referring to the energy, relationships, time, knowledge, money, and organizations that agents in the change need to carry out the little changes. King emphasizes the power of everyday people to vote, to spend money, and to engage in business and social interactions which can change communities and ultimately our nation. This power will only be harnessed when everyday people are transformed into agents for social change.

Principle 5: The movement will take years to make the changes we are working towards

King, in his speech accepting the Nobel Peace Prize, said, "I feel as though this prize has been given to me for something that really has not yet been achieved" (1996, p. 12). This humble, realistic assertion that the struggle for justice is ever ongoing, despite some progress, is a reminder to those of us who grow weary of our long struggle for social change. King reminds us that "human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable" (1996, p. 59). Instead, social justice movements require tireless work and sacrifice on the part of all participants. King often employs the metaphor of the social justice movement as a war. Freedom is not won in one battle or one phase of the movement, but rather in each step of each march. Indeed, subtle ideological shifts toward social equality may feel big, but we must remember that they are really just steps in the long journey toward equality.

Jordan (2002) writes, “It does not mean that activists are defining our future society; rather, they are part of the creation of values by which we may judge our future society” (p. 23). Because our goal is to shape and shift ideologies, we cannot expect quick results from our efforts for justice. Instead, our process of changing hearts and minds will take some time. Change may not occur how or when we envision, but we *will* ultimately reshape “definitions of the good world” (Jordan, 2002, p. 23). Therefore, we ought to focus our energies on “fine-tuning” social systems, not rebuilding them from the ground up (Jordan, 2002, p. 36).

The beauty of our movement is that any changes we will make will be attributable to linguists, educators, lawyers, and other theorists who have worked over the years to change the way Americans handle language. Because of the gradual nature of social movements and since activist groups rarely actually see their visions come to fruition, it is usually difficult to attribute overall changes to particular activists or movements. Therefore, our work will contribute to a corpus of scholarship, actions, and progress that have already occurred.

Principle 6: However, we are propelled by a sense of urgency

“Oppressed people cannot remain oppressed forever” (King, 1996, p. 39). → “Oppressed linguistic groups cannot remain oppressed forever.”

Social justice movements rely on discomfort within the minority group which becomes unbearable to the point of action. A sense of urgency is an important catalyst in our linguistic social justice movement. There’s no time to wait. It is easy for people who are unaffected to wait to take action, and many of these “unaffected” citizens are SAME speakers who benefit from the social power their language use gives them. However, King believes that the oppresseds’ yearning for justice will inevitably, in some way, somehow cause change. In other words, those who have been marginalized because of their LOTS usage will someday realize the ways they are being oppressed and will be compelled by a sense of urgency to rectify social injustices for the sake of their children, their loved ones, and their cultural pride. In order to affect change, Jordan (2002) says "reformers pit the present against the present in order to shape the future" (46). In our linguistic social justice movement, we are juxtaposing existent ideologies from whose shackles we so urgently wish to be released, with linguistic realities, revealing the systematic injustices inherent in US culture at the moment.

Principle 7: Our movement is flavored with American national pride

"We have an opportunity to make a better nation" (King, 1996, p. 94).

King's work and movement are strongly intertwined with nationalism. In his proclamation regarding the first observance of the holiday of King's birthday, Ronald Reagan wrote, "He [King] challenged us to make real the promise of America as a land of freedom, equality, opportunity, and brotherhood" (King, 1996, p. 101). The founding fathers established our country based on the values of liberty and equality; in establishing this linguistic social justice movement, we join into the history of Americans reshaping what these ideals look like in practice.

It is important to revisit the concept of essentialism to understand how the American usage of the ideology of standard plays out in the construct of American nationalism. The essentialist point of view, for example, says that English is American and Spanish is Mexican, that using English is patriotic and using Spanish is foreign (Holliday, 2011). Essentialism says that standard language is correct and non-standard is incorrect. This way of thinking causes us to compartmentalize language use. With the essentialist point of view, we are limited by arbitrary geographic boundaries; the borders between nations become the borders between languages. Essentialism doesn't see the reality that language use, particularly in this digital age, is not bound by geography, ethnicity, or race.

The critical cosmopolitan perspective, on the other hand, emphasizes the artificiality of the idea of *nation*. The US is inhabited by humans - American-born citizens, naturalized citizens, residents, or transients - who interact with cultures and languages based on region, sexuality, faith, profession, interests, and other factors. Like its occupants, the US is alive, breathing air that knows no boundaries, engaging in transnational exchange of goods and ideas. The internet effectively erases boundaries or barriers between the US and much the rest of the world, mobilizing linguistic resources in and out of the physical boundaries of the US (Cole, 2014). In order to redefine American qualities, it is important for us to analyze the reality of what it means to be American and what could conceivably someday be entered in a new definition of Americanism.

The claim that social change of any kind would be beneficial to the American way of life and international reputation seems to be one of the strongest rhetorical arguments necessary to connect social injustices with a cause the average American cares about. Furthermore, since the change being suggested directly challenges the language practices of Americans in many power dynamics, the US government, education system, and mass media, it will undoubtedly be difficult to convince folk theorists that injustices exist, much less that they should be rectified. This work can not only accomplish our goal, but also influence the cultural climate of our country. Appreciation for diversity of *all* types, including language, would be a radical but logical next step for the US, considering its civil rights movements in the last hundred years.

Principle 8: We advocate for a two-pronged approach at justice: change via education and legislation

"Through education we seek to change attitudes; through legislation and court orders we seek to regulate behavior. Through education we seek to change internal feelings (prejudice, hate, etc.); through legislation and court orders we seek to control the external effects of those feelings...One method is not a substitute for the other, but a meaningful and necessary supplement. Anyone who starts out with the conviction that the road to racial justice is only one lane wide will inevitably create a traffic jam and make the journey infinitely longer" (King, 1996, p. 40). → "Anyone who starts out with the conviction that the road to linguistic justice is only one lane wide will inevitably create a traffic jam and make the journey infinitely longer."

Making our social change is a bi-faceted movement: legislation and education. Direct action and legal action complement each other in affecting change in the most influential institutions in our nation. King says that morality cannot be directly controlled by the law, but that behavior can, which is why seeking legislation which serves linguistic justice is an important step in changing the cultural climate. As we explored in chapter 2, US law currently enables linguistic discrimination, and a change in legislation is desperately needed to ensure just practices. Baugh (1999) writes: "Somehow, the linguistic scope of the judicial system must be expanded so that our rich linguistic diversity will not be a liability for any American" (p. 76). Although an uphill battle, it may be relatively simple making *de jure* changes. However, changing social structures and cultural climate is difficult and should be thoughtfully and strategically undertaken (Jordan, 2002).

Education reform is the second component of our movement. Change is fueled by education, or an increased understanding of things which are not immediately obvious to the folk theorist. Confrontation and critical discussion between people from different perspectives is the way to incite change (King, 1996). We have already seen that critical education will be key in affording agency to those who wish to work for justice. Education is the space for logical and scientific thinking; this type of pedagogy also teaches intelligence as the companion of strong moral character. Furthermore, it doesn't suffice to "create justice;" we have to implement systems which actively pursue justice. For example, you can spend one lesson or unit on the nature of language, but it would be more effective to implement a systematic change in the class, curriculum, or educational policy in general. Ideological shifts as a result of education will certainly influence legislation, and just legislation will force the educational system to promote standard language adequatively.

Principle 9: We will only accomplish our goals by putting theory into practice

"These are days that demand practices to match professions" (King, 1996, p. 40).

According to King's philosophy, it's not enough to believe in this message; we must calculate the ways to turn theory into practice. Part of our movement is a call for structural change. This could entail a systematic shift of power in classrooms and a hierarchical shift in society. This requires that social and linguistic groups currently in power share the status and respect standard language usage brings. Furthermore, in the subsequent chapters of this thesis we will investigate options for translating the sociolinguistic and social movement theory we have discovered into practice which promotes the denaturalization of unjust language attitudes, an adequative view of language, and an ideological shift.

Conclusions

As we conclude this chapter, it may be helpful to review the nine principles of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s philosophy on social change which speak to the linguistic social justice movement we are initiating. These principles, along with King's words juxtaposed with versions adapted for the linguistic justice movement, have been outlined in Table A.

Table 1: Juxtaposition of King's principles in the two movements

King's principle	**Civil Rights Movement**	**Linguistic social justice movement**
Our adversary is existent ideology.	"It is not the race per se that we fight but the policies and ideology that leaders of that race have formulated to perpetuate oppression" (King, 1996, p. 33).	It is not standard language per se that we fight but the policies and ideology that users of standard language have formulated to perpetuate oppression.
Our goal is to value human life by bringing dignity to marginalized groups.	"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character" (King, 1996, p. 95).	I have a dream that my children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by their dialect but by the content of their character.
Humans, although diverse, are nonetheless interdependent.	"All men are interdependent" (King, 1996, p. 18).	All language users are interdependent.
Agency for all groups and participants will be key in our movement.	"Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve...You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love" (King, 1996, p. 17).	Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to use standard language to serve...You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.
The movement will take years to make the changes we are working towards.	"Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable" (King, 1996, p. 59)	
However, we are propelled by a sense of urgency.	"Oppressed people cannot remain oppressed forever" (King, 1996, p. 39).	Oppressed linguistic groups cannot remain oppressed forever.

We will advocate for a two-pronged approach at justice: change via education and legislation.	“Through education we seek to change attitudes; through legislation and court orders we seek to regulate behavior. Through education we seek to change internal feelings (prejudice, hate, etc.); through legislation and court orders we seek to control the external effects of those feelings...One method is not a substitute for the other, but a meaningful and necessary supplement” (King, 1996, p. 40).
Our movement is flavored with American national pride.	“We have an opportunity to make a better nation” (King, 1996, p. 94).
We will only accomplish our goals by putting theory into practice.	“These are days that demand practices to match professions” (King, 1996, p. 40).

In this chapter, we have explored the characteristics of this linguistic social justice movement, and by applying King’s philosophy and words from the American civil rights movement to this description, we elevate the urgency for social change. Linguists past have set the theoretical stage for this movement. However, the implication of this work in comparing the linguistic social justice movement to the civil rights movement is that the push for change becomes organized, systematic, and calculated. With this newfound level of understanding about the social justice we are seeking and how we are going about it, linguists, educators, policy makers, and lay theorists can work together to reshape ideologies. When we work together to help the general public denaturalize their conceptions of language and use language adequatively, we will begin to reach the linguistic social justice befitting of the US.

CHAPTER IV

“SELF PURIFICATION:” SERVICE LEARNING AS METHODOLOGY

The goals of this chapter are to provide an autoethnographic account of my attempt to work for linguistic social justice through a community service project and to illustrate that service learning is a viable approach to working through the challenges to linguistic justice. Since our linguistic justice movement aims to change ideology which is, in its purest form, an invisible abstraction, we need to stimulate discourse about the ways ideology is manifested in our cultural practices. Because the ideology of standard language results in so many behaviors which have become normative in American culture, this discourse serves to make us less comfortable with our behaviors. Discourse and reflection on our habits allow for subtle changes in our collective consciousness which will ultimately be crucial to the efficacy of the linguistic social justice movement. Service learning will be the proposed method for initiating the critical discourse which produces material evidence of progress in communities. As we examine the reasons why we behave the way we do, contemplate the injustices that inadvertently result from our behavior, and measure the disparity between equality and the US at present, we engage in the self-purification that is necessary in King’s plan to affect change. This chapter will first provide a theoretical background on service learning. Then there will be discussion of the ways service learning became an important way for me to process the linguistic injustices I discovered in my thesis research.

Service Learning Definition and Principles

Let us begin our discussion of the self-purification through service learning with a definition and theoretical understanding of service learning. Brown (2001) defines service learning as “the integration of students’ service in the community with an educational correlate in a course, tied to active academic reflection on the connections between the experiences” (p. 10). Service learning gives students the chance to be active in the community and to use their skills and interests to promote change. “Social justice depends on citizens being informed and active,” and service learning is equivalent to training students as these agents for change (Brown, 2001, p. 12). By welcoming and valuing the expertise of each student based on his or her unique experiences and background, we allow the students to become agents in the social change, as King deems necessary. Furthermore, according to Brown (2001), service learning is relevant in any discipline, not just political science, although an outsider may see civic engagement as synonymous with political science. In fact, if we perceive politics as a mixture of power and discourse, we understand that anyone who claims power in a facet of their community and who is willing to enter a discourse community about social issues is a politician.

Brown (2001) outlines a methodology of the development of service learning project in an educational setting. First, the curriculum designers and/or instructors should create a strong network of contacts from their own institution and the potential community partners. Second, the planners should develop the syllabus or curriculum which incorporates service learning as an integral part of working towards course goals. Then the service learning project should be assessed with relationship to the goals established by the syllabus. Finally, a resource should be born of the service learning project which will set a precedent for a sustainable project in the future. Each of these steps is important to building and establishing strong relationships between institutions of learning and the community.

During service learning projects, students work in a symbiotic relationship with the community to work towards progress in their education and in the state of the community. The community relies on the emergent expertise of the students, but to the same degree the students rely on the feedback and expertise of community members. The trap we often fall into when engaging in service is what Holliday (2011) calls "The Morality of Helping," when the educational institution or class views the community organization as the recipient of their charity (p. 18). Instead, the school should work in an equal partnership with the community organization in order to provide feedback to students and each other regarding the efficiency of the project. Similarly, a potential challenge to service learning is that we want to be sure we are truly making change in the community and in ourselves rather than just participating in a "fun" project (Brown, 2001). One of the goals of service learning is to bridge the distance between higher education and the community by establishing mutually beneficial relationships between the university and community entities. Furthermore, when we frame our learning in the community as a mutually beneficial endeavor, we facilitate the long-lasting progress we hope to make in the community and in our students.

Service learning is somewhat of a pedagogical novelty, as it is *different* from traditional American education. Service learning is a vehicle for affecting the social change we desire, which is often not a primary aim of the traditional American educational system (Brown, 2001). However, effective social change can only occur when educated people put in work to make a difference, so service becomes a logical alternative to traditional pedagogical methods which situate learning in an enclosed classroom. Traditional classrooms are an artificial space because they do not facilitate contextualized learning or finding solutions to authentic community or world problems. It makes sense to put our education to use to improve our community, and service learning allows us to use our school resources to do this. Service learning promotes civic engagement in both the school community and the community at large, asking us to practice being producers of progress, not just a consumers.

Service learning not only differs from the traditional pedagogical practices in American education, but in fact it is *superior* to traditional American education model. First of all, by the time students reach college, they should not be "learning" by rote memorization any longer, as traditional pedagogical methods often rely on students' rote memorization; instead, students must learn *why* things are as they are, thinking critically to affect social progress (Freire, 1973). Furthermore, as Freire (1973) claims, "responsibility cannot be acquired intellectually, but only through experience" (p. 16). Service learning is contextualized learning, so it gives students an opportunity to experiment with using both their content and interpersonal skills to address authentic community issues. Much of this learning could not occur within the confines of a traditional classroom. For these reasons, service learning is a deeper, more meaningful learning experience than the traditional classroom experience in that it empowers students to learn in ways that are sustainable after the end of the service learning course.

Paulo Freire (1973) offers insight to the connection between education and social progress towards justice in *Education for Critical Consciousness*. Freire writes that humans ought to approach life critically, reflecting on the past, present, and future. Our level of critical consciousness affects whether we shift or reinforce societal thinking which has a direct impact on social justice. Our educational practices, therefore, influence our students' thinking, which has the power to affect change. Freire (1973) describes three key steps in pursuing critical consciousness through education: *history* which informs *praxis* and is sustained by ongoing *dialogue*. Historicizing social issues and locating them in a cultural context provides direction in the pursuit of justice. For example, in the pursuit of linguistic social justice through education, it is the instructor’s responsibility to help students understand how standard language is seen as a pathway to capitalistic success in American ideology (Dorian, 2010) or how marginalized populations’ linguistic features are a direct result of their history, like Baugh (1999) discusses in his description of the evolution of African American vernacular English out of slave trade creoles. The classroom, therefore, becomes a “safe space” for dialogue about social injustices and their complex and sordid histories, as well as a laboratory for experimenting with the solutions to these problems.

An understanding of Brown’s (2001) ideas on a model for service learning and of Freire’s (1973) theoretical contributions in support of educational practices which promote critical consciousness allowed me to formulate a three-step model for executing a service learning project which would be effective in promoting linguistic social justice. The first step in my model for service learning for social justice is to become an expert on the social issue you wish to address through your service. A thorough understanding of the historical and cultural context of the injustices you are targeting is crucial to deciding what type of interaction with the community will be effective in stimulating the discourse necessary to produce just practices. The second step is that the initiators of the service project, whether they be educators or students, use their understanding of the social problem to design, plan, and execute a service project which serves their instructional objectives, course goals, personal goals, professional goals, pursuit of social justice, and community needs. Third, the participants in the service learning project, including educators, students, and community participants, should reflect on the project, as reflection solidifies and deepens learning (Brown, 2001). Furthermore, reflection which occurs in the form of discussions or writing promotes dissemination of the important conclusions about social progress, methodological workings, and community issues which can inform future service projects. In the rest of this chapter, I will describe the service learning project I designed to pursue linguistic social justice, demonstrating my engagement in the three steps of my service learning model.

Conception of “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity”

As I learned more and more about the linguistic injustices I discuss in Chapter 2, I became more eager to take steps to address these injustices in whatever way I could. At the same time, I was challenged with designing a research project as part of the requirements for this thesis. I decided that I would like to design a service learning project for myself as an integral part of my thesis work. I completed the first step of my service learning model by learning about the ideology of standard and its influence on social justice. Armed with my nascent expertise on standard language and linguistic social justice, I sought primary research methods which would allow me to have discussions about language issues with people in my community. I was inspired by Debbie Cole’s (2014) research method of collecting data in response to a socially and linguistically stimulating event from my interactions with event participants. I conceived of an event on my campus which would involve participants in a critical discussion about the role of language diversity in our community. There is an annual event at my institution called the Festival of International Books and Arts (FESTIBA), and I decided to plan on registering my event about language diversity with this festival so as to receive more community attention. I also realized that as a teaching assistant for a first-year rhetoric and composition course (ENG 1301) at my institution, I had the power to plan a curriculum for my students which would allow them to participate in my service learning project as well. The “bigger picture” of the project I wanted to design was coming together, but I still needed to plan the specific details of the FESTIBA event.

For this event in a campus community in the Rio Grande Valley, a border region which enjoys diverse influences from US and Mexican language and culture, I decided it was best to create an event which would be a celebration of language. Working against social injustices with positivity and love aligns with the philosophy of one of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s most revered role models, Gandhi. Jordan (2002) tells us that Gandhi used *satyagraha*, "variously translated as 'soul-force' or 'love-force'" as his *modus operandi* for nonviolent campaigns for social change (p. 56). Furthermore, Jordan (2002) describes how pleasure can be a form of protest when it defies social norms and ideologies. I identified that celebrating linguistic diversity directly opposes the influence of the ideology of standard language, so it became clear that creating a pleasurable experience for my event attendees would be an appropriate way to address the social issues surrounding language. The intention was for participants in the event to experience pleasure surrounding nonstandard language when they have historically seen LOTS as controversial, laughable, or derisive. Jordan (2002) explains that when you create a pleasurable experience for event attendees, it does not feel transgressive, even if it is. The tendency to enjoy the event experience and live the moment overtakes intellectualization of what is really at stake in that pleasurable moment (Jordan, 2002).

Having decided to pursue a pleasurable event which presents language diversity, particularly LOTS, in a positive light, the event, "Celebrating Linguistic Diversity" was born. The event consisted of two parts. The first part of the event would be a brief performance by some of my acquaintances and me which would showcase the way we naturally use LOTS varieties on a daily basis. We collaborated on a script in which the same cameo is repeated using different language varieties. The storyline was that each performer was in a new place that was far away from "home," and they performed an interaction with a person they met in their new location, using language that would strengthen a social bond with the person in their new location. Each performer also received a phone call from their mother during the performance, which caused them to demonstrate the code switching, dialect switching, and register shifting we all do in different social situations. The language varieties used in the performance were Texas frontera Spanish, English and Spanish code mixing, Midwestern American English, Appalachian English, Javanese-influenced Indonesian, and English and Indonesian code mixing.

Such a performance was meant to highlight the ways we use language adequatively when interacting with people in our various social networks in ways that are rhetorically appropriate, as well as our need to denaturalize ideas about who "outsiders" in a community are when they develop aspects of their identity to adopt the linguistic features of new social groups and contexts. Critics of exposing people to multiculturalism say the experiences present other cultures as exotic "others;" this performance was meant to highlight the multiculturalism already present in our campus community (Holliday, 2011, p. 82). My goal was to challenge the audience's perceptions of the roles of standard and nonstandard language when they realize that the "other" or hybrid identities the ideology of standard teaches us to fear are already among us and in our linguistic repertoires. I wanted to create a spectacle that would catch the audience's attention and make them rethink everything they took for granted about the linguistic phenomena occurring around them on a daily basis.

The second part of the event was an opportunity for attendees to interact with my first-year composition students who had designed stations to teach attendees about some aspect of language diversity. My students had spent the first part of the semester reading and discussing about some of the major concepts in language diversity and social injustices which are presented in Chapter 2, as was appropriate at their level and in the context of an introduction to rhetoric and composition course. Later in this chapter I will outline the details and rationale of the service learning curriculum I designed. My students worked in groups to develop the concept for their station, create the materials, and present their stations at the “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity” event. There were five groups of students, and they each designed unique stations. One station was a game where attendees would listen to songs sung in Spanish and were to identify the country of origin based on the features of the language and music. Another station incorporated a game where attendees learned profane words and phrases in a variety of languages, with the goal of making participants think about what makes curse words profane and the relative nature of profanity. The third group designed a game where attendees spun a spinner which landed on one of the four languages the group members spoke, including Spanish, French, German, and Persian, and the attendees would learn to say something in that language. The fourth group designed a game where attendees shot a Nerf dart at a large world map and had to tell what the official language(s) of whatever country their dart landed on were. The fifth and final group created a station which would provide our guests with refreshments during the event, and they designed a display where they presented pictures of foods with their names in various languages. These stations were intended to be a way to engage and involve my students in the process of planning and executing the FESTIBA event.

The “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity” attendees also played a crucial, active role in constructing the event. When attendees arrived at the event, they were given a “mini research question” frame to investigate during the course of the event and a program containing space to take notes about their findings. The question frame included the start of a question but allowed attendees to customize it to fit their preferred line of inquiry. For example, two of the question frames were, “How does multilingualism in the UTPA community affect ___________?” and “How does texting language affect the way students ____________?” Attendees were instructed to investigate their research question by discussing their question and perspectives with other event participants, including performers, my student presenters, and other attendees. As they left the event, attendees left behind their notes on their investigations, and I later added their research questions and notes about findings to a public Google document whose link I shared with the attendees. The participants were able to read, add to, and comment on their investigation notes on the document. The purpose of the mini-investigations was to actively involve attendees in conversations about language diversity and to promote engagement and deep discussion between my students, the performers, and our guests.

“Celebrating Linguistic Diversity” and ENG 1301

In this section I will describe the service learning curriculum I designed for my ENG 1301 students and explain my choices, especially in terms of theory about education for intercultural competence. I should begin this section by reporting that one of the most important ways I have worked towards justice in my life is through teaching. Being an educator means playing incredibly powerful role in others’ development, and influencing the way others think is a job that I take very seriously. Furthermore, teaching rhetoric and composition became an opportunity for me to translate my graduate work in linguistics to a meaningful format for my first-year composition students. Baugh (1999) points out that, “While linguists, of course, have no special expertise on the political factors that support racism, they are in a unique position to expose racially loaded fallacies about language and mind” (p. 9). I take it very seriously that my work with my students helps to establish a point on the timeline of ideology's face and its effects on American society.

In addition to the lessons I wanted to teach my students specifically about social issues related to linguistic diversity, it was also important to me to share a greater message with them of socially responsible scholarship. Engaging in *socially responsible scholarship* means recognizing that high levels of education are a unique gift which puts the scholar in a position to use their thought and work to positively impact the world. My ENG 1301 students are in the first semester(s) of college, and it is important for me to share the message of higher education with these emerging scholars as a road to critical consciousness and to pursuing social justice. My researching service learning and the experience creating "Celebrating Linguistic Diversity" has inspired a piece of my teaching philosophy that says teaching how to use your education to help others is an important factor in giving purpose for learning. Freire (1973) says that, "Our traditional curriculum, disconnected from life, centered on words emptied of the reality they are meant to represent, lacking in concrete activity, could never develop a critical consciousness" (p. 37). I wanted to teach my students that by engaging in service learning and learning by community engagement, they can engage in college-level level cognition while addressing the "big issues" plaguing our society (Brown, 2001). Furthermore, when students, including myself, engage in service learning, school becomes a place of activity in using our scholarship to improve our community, not passivity in simply recognizing social injustices.

In order to ask students to analyze the linguistic and cultural phenomena occurring in the Rio Grande Valley community, the UTPA community, and their own home communities, we needed to incorporate learning about intercultural competence. Deardorff and Edwards' (2012) framework for intercultural competence learning involves five aspects of goals. First, students should develop their *attitudes*, such as respect, openness, and curiosity towards other ways of thinking. Secondly, students build upon existing *knowledge*; in the case of my ENG 1301 class, students are developing their sociolinguistics, rhetoric, and composition knowledge. Furthermore, students learn *skills* like critical thinking, analyzing, evaluating, and drawing conclusions when they explore intercultural studies. Deardorff and Edwards (2012) also make provisions for the expected *internal outcomes* of intercultural competence learning, such as empathy and flexibility, as well as the *external outcomes* like acting with cultural appropriateness.

My curriculum responds to one of Deardorff and Edwards' (2012) questions for future directions in service learning assessment research: "How can components of service learning courses and programs - including content, community-based experience, and critical reflection - best be designed to help students 'interrogate issues of power, racism, oppression, or social injustice' (O'Grady, 2000, p. 14)?" One of the greatest challenges in designing a curriculum with facilitates discourse about language issues in society is ensuring that students challenge their existing stereotypes about language, which are largely influenced by the ideology of standard. I wanted my students to relinquish their imagined certainty about culture and language and acknowledge the complexity of the ways we use language in various rhetorical situations every day (Holliday, 2011). In my class, we would operate using contact hypothesis theory, which says that we learn about other cultures by working face-to-face with people from different backgrounds (Deardorff & Edwards, 2012). If *identity* is defined as sameness (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004), then we can only discover our identities in relation to others. When we have class discussions and do group activities, the students, who are from very diverse backgrounds, particularly with regard to language, work together towards common goals and learn from each other. The fact that the ENG 1301 course philosophy and course goals emphasized teamwork, critical thinking, and mutual respect as important in the learning environment and outcomes was crucial in designing a class which addressed the sensitive but important issues surrounding social injustices.

Finally, I will provide an overview of the readings and activities I incorporated into the ENG 1301 course which prepared students for the “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity” service learning project. Our class engaged in the first stage of the service learning model I articulated when we prepared for our service by engaging in readings, assignments, and critical discussions about the language diversity issues we would be addressing with our FESTIBA event.

I designed a set of course activities which were intended to take my students to their respective next stages in Bennett’s (1993) stages of intercultural sensitivity: denial of the need for intercultural competence, defense against accusations of intercultural insensitivity, and minimalization of difference among cultures, which called the ethnocentric stages, and acceptance, adaptation, and integration of cultural differences, which are called ethnorelative stages. The idea was to increase students’ intercultural competence, supervise their participation in a service learning project, and then design a reflection on the experience to maximize their learning (Deardorff & Edwards, 2012).

During the first part of our ENG 1301 semester, students included introducing students to the major concepts in linguistic diversity. Students read the introduction to the book "Do You Speak American?" which facilitated a class discussion about varieties of language that Americans use (Cran & MacNeil, 2005). Students then read sections from Holmes’ (2013) sociolinguistics textbook entitled "Language Choice In Multilingual Communities" and "Code Switching.” These readings introduce the concepts of linguistic repertoire, domains of use, social factors that affect code choice, and why people code switch. In our class discussions about these readings, I explained the connection between these linguistic terms to the concepts of writing for a specific audience, for a specific purpose, and in a particular form based on the rhetorical situation. The students came to the conclusion that we only use certain types of language, like academic English or profanity, when we speak to certain people and trying to communicate certain things. The major assignment students completed during this stage was a language and literacy narrative where they describe their linguistic repertoire and literacy history over the course of their lives. This assignment required students to apply the concepts they learned about language diversity to their personal histories.

In the second unit of the curriculum, we read about and discussed some of the problems that arise in linguistically diverse communities. Students first read Kinzler and DeJesus' (2013) article "Northern=smart and Southern=nice: The development of accent attitudes in the United States " In this article, the researchers demonstrate that children pick up language stereotypes by the time they are nine or ten years old. In the class discussion of the article, we debated where language stereotypes originate and how they are perpetuated. Then students read Purnell, Idsardi, and Baugh's (1999) article which demonstrates discrimination in the housing market. When researchers call a landlord to set up an appointment to see the advertised apartment for rent, they were able to successfully set up an appointment when they spoke standard English as opposed to African American vernacular English or Chicano English. The class conversation in response to this article focused on how language stereotypes can lead to discrimination. In terms of course goals more closely linked to rhetoric and composition, these two articles served as examples of research writing in terms of their format, organization, citation, and academic English language use. The last reading in the second unit was Lippi-Green's (2004) narration of real world examples of language ideology manifested as discrimination. For example, Lippi-Green tells the story of people who are fired from their jobs because they do not speak "American" or standard language. In the discussion about this reading, I asked students to pretend they were the mediator or human resources representative in the situation Lippi-Green describes and to propose how the situation should have been handled or resolved. They ended up debating what the best way to handle language diversity issues was. This was our last reading on language diversity, and our conclusion was that although language diversity is a beautiful thing, it is complex to handle in society. This acknowledgement of complexity provided a segue into preparing for the “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity” event.

In the third phase of the semester, students designed and planned for the “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity” event. They met in their station groups during almost every class session during this phase, at which time they discussed the concept for their stations, drew up station proposals for me which communicated the primary message of their station and what accommodations they would need me to procure for them, and assigned roles in creating the station materials. The climax of this phase was the “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity” event day, which I should mention was the only class session of the semester where every student attended and engaged in the activity. The final activity of this phase of the curriculum was to engage in service learning reflection activities in class and to write a service learning reflection essay.

In the fourth phase of the semester, students asked a research question related to language, culture, reading, writing, or learning. Because of the passionate discussions stimulated during the language diversity units, most students were able to design an investigation which was personally meaningful to them. As a result of our experiences with service learning, we discussed how to approach our research projects as socially responsible scholarship. We discussed who the audience for our research was, what our purpose for writing was, and how our research could be used to make the world a better place. Although language diversity was not directly the focus of research for many of the students, the respectful and critical way we had discussed language and culture earlier in the semester informed the way the students approached completing their research projects and articulating their findings.

Conclusion

It is my hope that this chapter serves to inspire other teaching assistants, graduate students approaching design of their theses or dissertations, and others who are working towards (linguistic) social justice to incorporate community service projects into their work. The experiences of completing a Masters thesis and of teaching a class was made much more fulfilling when I conceived of a community event to disseminate my ideas about language diversity which were transgressive against standard language ideology. Also, I was able to multiply my efforts by involving other students in the learning, discourse, and service related to linguistic social justice. Freire's (1973) articulates what I was able to accomplish in my thesis and teaching work: "The important thing is to help men (and nations) help themselves, to place them in consciously critical confrontation with their problems, to make them the agents of their own recuperation" (p. 16). King prescribes agency for all those who want to work for justice, and I found that service learning was an important way of empowering myself and my students. Also, by asking my students to engage in the practical process of social justice, and by doing this myself, I give them the tools and mindset they need to solve real problems in the workplace, in their families, and in other discourse communities.

CHAPTER V

"DIRECT ACTION:" CELEBRATING LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

Our collection of facts to determine whether injustices exist led us to the conclusion that a great deal of linguistic discrimination occurs in the US and the educational and legal systems facilitate these injustices. Then we negotiated the terms, goals, and approach at our linguistic social justice movement before identifying service learning as an appropriate methodology for pursuing linguistic justice. The "Celebrating Linguistic Diversity" event became the vehicle for creating discourse about language varieties and for involving my students and me in inquiry about language diversity in the "real world" through service learning. This chapter will discuss primary research conducted after the event which investigates the discourse stimulated by "Celebrating Linguistic Diversity." Specifically, the research seeks to discover UTPA students' attitudes toward language diversity after having attended the event. Thoughts and impressions about the event where gathered in focus groups comprised of my students, the event presenters, and other UTPA students who attended our event. Furthermore, it is important to examine the language students use to discuss language diversity in order to make significant conclusions about the quality of the discourse stimulated by the event. This primary research seeks to enact King's step of direct action by participating in primary research on discourse about language diversity to produce publishable conclusions.

Method

This research gathers data from two focus groups of students who attended the

“Celebrating Linguistic Diversity” event; one group is comprised of my ENG 1301 students who created and presented the event, and the other group contains other UTPA ENG 1301 students who attended the event. The focus group methodology was selected because it promotes discourse by merit of its nature as a group interview format. A set of questions about the event was prepared to stimulate conversation among the focus group members, and those questions or follow-up questions to the students’ responses were used to create and sustain the focus group conversation.

The first group of participants, the focus group members from my ENG 1301 class, are four males and two females, aged between eighteen and thirty, who are beginning their college careers at UTPA. These students’ pseudonyms for this research are Sam, Jessica, Marc, David, Victor, and Isabel. These students have been studying language diversity and its concomitant problems for several weeks as the introduction to their ENG 1301 course, and their full language diversity curriculum was outlined in Chapter 4. As a result of the assignments and class activities these students completed in response to articles about linguistic diversity and linguistic profiling, these participants were accustomed to classroom discourse about language issues. Furthermore, these students planned the “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity” event as a class service learning project, which included conceptualizing and executing their group’s interactive station, as well as writing a critical reflection on their service learning project. This background in critical thinking about language diversity and rhetorical choices for an audience of their peers gave these participants a special perspective in answering the focus group questions.

The second group of participants, the focus group members who attended the “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity” event, was also comprised of ENG 1301 students. This group contains two females of similar age to the first focus group, and their pseudonyms are Briana and

Clare. Their ENG 1301 curriculum did not include the language diversity readings and activities that the other group’s curriculum contained. However, these participants had been studying basic rhetoric and composition theory as they completed the writing assignments for their course. The perspective of the students in this focus group is unique in that they did not have any special background knowledge or discussions about language diversity which were planned to prepare them for participation in the event.

In order to create a comfortable environment for focus group participants which would facilitate discussions about “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity,” participants were recruited in their ENG 1301 classes, participation was voluntary and anonymous, and the focus group sessions were held in the participants’ usual ENG 1301 classrooms. In order to create a record of the focus group discussions, the sessions were audio recorded. The participants in each group sat in a circle and sustained their discussion for about thirty minutes. I led the discussions, using the questions in Table 2 as a guide for generating conversation.

Table 2: Focus group prepared questions

- Prior to attending the event “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity,” did you ever think about language diversity? If so, what did you think about it?
- What did you expect to experience at the event “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity” before you came?
- Please describe your experience at the “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity” event. (i.e., What did you observe?)
- What message(s) do you think the event planners were trying to send to audience members?
- Did you learn anything new at the event? If so, what was the most important thing you learned?
- Was the event entertaining? If so, what was entertaining about it?
- What was your favorite part of the event?
- What was your least favorite part of the event?
- Do you think events like this are useful or important on our campus?
- Do you have any final thoughts on language diversity or the event that you would like to share?

The plan for data analysis was to analyze the conversations generated in the focus groups in response to “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity,” paying special attention to the specific language students use to describe language use. This analysis will reveal patterns in the discourse which will be compared to concepts from to the sociolinguistic theory discussed in Chapter 2. Furthermore, the focus group discussions will be analyzed for implications about the effectiveness of service learning pedagogy as a method for pursuing linguistic social justice.

Results

Because there were many times in the focus groups when multiple participants were speaking simultaneously, the transcript has been edited in the results section for the sake of coherence and clarity. That is, comments and interjections made during a conversation which do not directly pertain to the point being made in the focus group or this essay are often removed. However, the content of the conversations remains authentic in the transcriptions provided here as well as in the appendices. The two focus group discussions have been transcribed in their entirety and preserved for reference in the appendices. These transcriptions reveal details about the chronological order of all audible utterances from the sessions, even those which are edited out from the following results discussion. The transcription of the session for event presenters is located in Appendix A, and the session for attendees is in Appendix B.

The focus group discussions yield data which addresses five areas of interest to our investigation of language diversity and linguistic justice. The first main area discussed by participants is the task of understanding an interlocutor and being understood. The second important point for analysis is the participants’ usage and discussion of the term *accent*, as they illustrate some of the sociolinguistic theoretical principles which explain linguistic discrimination. Next, observations will be made about the participants’ theories of what it means to know and use particular language varieties. The fourth major finding is the number of instances where participants cannot escape explaining sociolinguistic concepts without employing essentialist terms. Finally, the clues students give into the effectiveness of service learning in creating critical discourse about language diversity in the community will be discussed. For each of these main areas, passages from the transcription will be used to illustrate and discuss the significance of the participants' conversation to each of these main areas of findings.

Task of understanding

One of the prominent themes in the focus group discussions is the phenomenon that occurs when people wish to communicate. In any communication situation, there is a complex set of factors influencing both a speaker's effectiveness in sending their message and also a listener's successful reception and processing of the sender's message. Prototypically the process of communication requires minimal subconscious effort on the part of the speaker and interlocutor when both parties are using a similar variety of language. However, the task of communicating ideas and understanding another person is often further complicated when the parties using different language varieties want to communicate (Lippi-Green, 2012). The focus group participants reveal several different reactions to this complex task by recounting past experiences which required them to communicate with a speaker of a language variety that is unfamiliar to them. It is important to note that in each the following examples, the task of communication occurs between two people who are speaking different varieties of the same n-language, a communication situation which is presumably achievable.

One reaction to a difficult communication situation participants discuss portrays the task of communicating between language varieties as a heavy burden.

> Marc: Asian people, they're funny, though. Whenever they speak in English, I think they were funny
>
> …
>
> Sam: Yeah, like in high school I had a chemistry teacher and she was Filipino, and so most of the words she's say, cuz chemistry has like hard words sometimes. Sometimes she'd speak and I couldn't understand anything she'd say, like "Can you put that in writing?"
>
> PI: Ok. Has anyone else had an experience like that?
>
> Marc: With an Asian person, yes. I couldn't understand and she asked me for, like what's a Nintendo does, so I explain her but she make me repeat myself a lot because I think she didn't understand me and I didn't understand what she wanted to say
>
> Sam: Especially when they get mad, it's like whoa, you need to slow down cuz I can't understand you
>
> David: And then they get even more mad because
>
> Sam: because you can't understand
>
> Marc: cuz you can't understand the question she was like
>
> PI: By the end of the class could you understand them better, or it was always difficult?
>
> Sam: Yeah, yeah I guess so.
>
> PI: Like, do you get used to the way
>
> Sam: Mhmm, like towards the end, my chemistry teacher, I could talk to her one-on-one, like last day of school, I could've talked to her.

There are a few important observations to make about the challenge Marc and Sam identify when they describe their interactions with their "Asian" teachers. First of all, the term *burden* of communication seems to be an understatement, as both students describe the hindrances to communication between themselves and their instructors as insurmountable. Lippi-Green (2012) warns that we may simply write off necessary negotiation for meaning as a communication impossibility if our bias against LOTS varieties clouds causes us to blame the burden on the other person’s incomprehensible language use. It is undeniable that the teachers in question used a variety or style of English that is less familiar to Marc and Sam; however, the teachers were indeed speaking English, just like March and Sam were. Furthermore, the subjects of conversation in the examples, chemistry and Nintendos, are difficult concepts to explain and to understand when they are unfamiliar, a fact which is easily forgotten when the anti-LOTS bias takes precedence in the conversation (Lippi-Green, 2012).

The second remark that we simply must visit after examining this passage is that the participants are not only telling the story of communication issues with particular teachers; instead, this dialogue reveals that the students have generalized their experiences to develop toxic stereotypes about LOTS-speaking teachers. First of all, Marc is describing an experience he had with an “Asian” teacher whose nationality or native language he never actually identifies. Furthermore, he introduces the story by proclaiming his negative attitudes towards communicating with “Asian people.” Lumping difficult-to-understand instructors from a variety of backgrounds as “Asian” is unfortunately not a stereotype that Marc created. This reference to Asians speaking English plays upon an American stereotype which belittles the cultural, linguistic, and ethnic identities of these instructors by failing to acknowledge the diversity which is present in the almost fifty Asian countries. Furthermore, when Marc calls all Asian English speakers funny, he mocks the LOTS usage and dismisses these clearly educated instructors as incompetent communicators. Marc is not inherently immoral for using these terms, but rather he is participating in and therefore perpetuating American discourse about LOTS varieties which stems from the ideology of standard. This reliance on pejorative language when discussing communication challenges is precisely what leads to the linguistic injustices we are working to change.

Marc and Sam's discussion communication barriers with LOTS speakers is only one interpretation of the task of communication. David offers another story about communicating with someone speaking an unfamiliar variety, and his account indicates that he has a more balanced view of the task than the previous example.

> David: It's cuz some of 'em [accents], some of 'em you have to listen very attentively to understand it. Like, especially like I worked for an event center, so I know, we've had events with Hindu people. Some of 'em you can't understand 'em, you have to- actually there was, I have a funny anecdote, there was a Hindu guy, it was an older guy. He was maybe like in his late 60's, and I was at the bar and he asked me for vodka, or like I thought it was vodka, but he's like "Oh, can I have some vodka?" I'm like "Ok," so I'm like "Do you want anything with it or just plain?" He's like, "No, just plain." So I serve him vodka, just like that in a glass, and then he drinks it and he almost chokes and he's like, "No! Vodka!" And the girl's like, "He wants water."
>
> Victor: Oh…
>
> David: And he drank it cuz it was clear anyway so he didn't say anything about it until he like, he chugged it
>
> Sam: Oh, like agua?
>
> PI: No, water, but just with a different accent
>
> David: He's like "watah," but I heard vodka, so the guy chugged it cuz he thought it was water, you know he didn't see me pour it, he turned around when he turned back around he's like
>
> Jessica: Oh, water
>
> David: But that guy, he was ok with it. He was just like, "It's alright." He's like half drunk by that time.

David's account of communicating with a speaker of an unfamiliar variety initially seems more objective than Marc and Sam's. However, the fact that this experience is so remarkable to him indicates his anxiety about interacting with people with whom more effort is required to reach mutual understanding. That is, David tells the story in a way that makes the miscommunication seem lightly funny and ultimately harmless. However, the way he chooses to tell this story demonstrates his anxiety that the interlocutor's pronunciation of *water* is a stumbling block and that at a certain point it is not possible or practical to negotiate for meaning. Sam, Marc, and David all tell their stories in a way that communicates their belief that the fault of the miscommunication lies on the side of the person speaking to them. They do not acknowledge or discuss their own role in the miscommunications.

This tendency to deny culpability in miscommunications is even evident in another participant's description of an experience when she was the one being understood.

> PI: So, Marc said that the teacher had difficulty understanding him. Have you ever had a situation, like you're saying with some accents of Spanish or, I guess English also, that you have trouble listening to them, but have you ever had a situation where someone has trouble listening to you?
>
> Jessica: Yes. In classes of English in Mexico, I speak way too fast. Like, "Can you please slow down? Not everyone can understand you."
>
> Sam: I bet that'd be kinda different. Like if you're in an all-Spanish class and then you start speaking English
>
> Jessica: No! It, it was an English class
>
> Sam: No, I know, but like you know what I mean
>
> Jessica: Oh. Yeah. Yeah, people used to come up to me like, "Oh
>
> Sam: Spanish, but then you're speaking English too fast.
>
> Jessica: The last year of high school they were like, "Oh you're going to the university, right, to study, yeah? Speak in English!" "Why? Just watch a movie or...Why do you want me to speak in English?"
>
> Sam: *laughs* I bet that's different, I don't know, it seems cool.
>
> Jessica: Yeah, like most of the people where I'm from don't understand English that well. They're used to people watching movies, like, in Spanish even though they're in English, like they're all used- they're really lazy

Jessica's story about not being understood in English is a testament to our tendency to place the blame of miscommunication on the other party rather than on our own failure to do our part in the task. Jessica, a native speaker of Spanish herself, describes a failure to send her message as a testament to her English fluency skills in a classroom of her native Spanish-speaking peers. In this indirect slight towards her classmates, she implies that her language use was too SAME-like for her interlocutors, therefore establishing a position of power for herself. Furthermore, when she explains more about the social situation surrounding her English language use at this time in Mexico, she concludes that her classmates did not possess the same mastery of English language skills as her because they were lazy. The fact that many of her classmates did not put as much effort into improving their English skills as she did may likely be true, since we know she was practicing English in anticipation for enrollment in an American university. However, her choice of the word *lazy* in delivering this fact demonstrates her attitudes toward people who do not work tirelessly to acquire and use standard language and her dismissal of the other complex factors which may have influenced her peers' second language acquisition. Again, the participant does not acknowledge the role she plays in the miscommunication she discusses.

Another story Marc tells about his trip to Spain also highlights the attitudes he and others have when approaching communication with speakers of unfamiliar varieties.

> Marc: In Europe, it's, I went to Europe on my senior trip, we went through Spain, and that was the only place I was happy because I could actually speak Spanish because every other place was like, like Portugal and all those ones. We didn't know what to say, in Spanish, we were like "Oh maybe we can communicate with people" and like actually order stuff. No, because, yes but no because in Spanish they have different meanings to the same words that we have, and it was, and they were like
>
> Jessica: Coño
>
> Marc: coño, like coge lapiz
>
> PI: zumo

> Jessica: Coge eso
>
> Marc: Sí
>
> David: Oh yeah, don't say coge in Mexico
>
> Jessica: No, that's not true!

In this passage, Marc does not so much blame the interlocutor who uses an unfamiliar variety for the communication challenges, but instead he focuses on the differences between his variety of Spanish and the unfamiliar variety. In his story, he describes his desire to communicate using Spanish in Spain rather than in the context of the Rio Grande Valley where he typically communicates in Spanish. He describes his target language use domain as a restaurant, where he hopes to order in Spanish. However, he then describes the unfamiliar lexical items that Spanish people use as a noteworthy hindrance to communication, a virtual non sequitur when you consider how simple the language required to order food is. In this example, like the ones before it, the speaker presents the challenges to effective communication as burdensome.

Despite the preponderance of evidence about the participants' negative attitudes toward communicating with speakers of unfamiliar varieties, there is some expression of a willingness to bear the burden of finding meaning in a challenging communication situation. The following conversation was the answer to my asking what their favorite part of the event was.

> Victor: The Indonesian part of the performance. I've never like heard
>
> PI: Cuz it was different, right?
>
> Jessica: Aw yeah! I didn't get anything
>
> David: And you knew what they were saying because of the previous stuff, so you kinda try to figure out like what part of the area they were when they were saying it. At least I tried, but of course I didn't understand it, but at least I knew what they were saying.

Although this example involves the task of communicating across n-languages rather than within one n-language as was the case with the previous examples, we can still make some meaning from the dialogue here. Jessica's focus was clearly on the fact that she did not have any skill level in the n-language of the performance, which explains her failure to make meaning from the Indonesian part of the performance; she missed the important point about language that the script was designed to make. The performance at the event required careful attention to the registers and varieties used in different rhetorical situations, situations which were repeated in different geographic and social contexts. David explains that he "understood" the Indonesian portion in that he understood the message, although the words were not familiar to him. This explanation gives hope that although in most instances our tendency may be to focus on the differences in language variety which complicate the task of communication, with careful attention and diligent effort we can communicate effectively with those whose language variety we do not share.

Usage of *accent*

The second major area of findings from the focus group discussions is that the way the word *accent* is used reveals some of the ways the ideology of standard influences our perceptions of language and identity. In the following passage, the focus group participants use the term *accent* to describe language varieties which are relative to each other and to SAME.

> PI: What do, what are your attitudes in terms of different American dialects? Like, the way people speak English in the Valley versus English in New York or like in the South or
>
> Briana: Like accents or like the little words they have
>
> PI: Yeah, but it's kind of like words, but also, I don't know, it's more than words too, it's like the sounds and everything

> Briana: Yeah, like the way they say it, like I had, my first semester I went to Corpus and they told me *I* had an accent. I was like, "what are you talking about?" They're like "You have an accent!" I was like, *laughs*, "What kind of accent? I'm speaking English like you are." They're like, "No, you say words differently." I was like, and then I try to like listen to myself, but it's just like I don't hear it. And they're just like, "No, it's something about you." They're from like Arlington and Austin and stuff so they're just like, "No, you sound different." And I'm just like, I don't, I don't understand like how, but
>
> PI: Did you notice that they had an accent?
>
> Briana: Mmm, they use different words. Like, they, not to say slang, but they have certain little words that they use up there compared to like down here. Like, I guess you can compare it to like social media stuff and, well like you can use the term rn for right now right now and stuff, so like those kind of little terms they use but out loud instead of just like, communicating through like phones and stuff.
>
> PI: So like it's going to a different genre and actually coming out in the speaking
>
> Briana: Kinda sorta, yeah.
>
> PI: Interesting.
>
> Clare: I think they're cool, people with accents. I like people telling me I have an accent
>
> PI: *laughs* How does that make you feel?
>
> Clare: It makes me feel different!
>
> PI: Like exotic or something? Like, "Oh!"
>
> Briana: Like, you'd have the accent if you went somewhere else.
>
> PI: Uh huh.
>
> Clare: My mom, she was born in Idaho and she was migrant so summers and she went six months and six months back and forth and everyone says she has a really weird accent because she picked up both and mixed them together.

First, we notice that the participants demonstrate that *accent* is used to refer to a non-standard speech variety which is adopted as part of one's identity. Furthermore, the participants' usage indicates that *accents* are markers of geographical origin as opposed to being particular indicators of sexual, ethnic, or other identity factors. Briana was only told she had an accent when she traveled to Corpus Christi, and it was there that she found her speech differentiated her from people whose origins were Austin, Arlington, and other places that were not her origin. Furthermore, Clare reports that her mother's accent is flavored with elements from two different geographic locations, ones which reveal her personal history to those who hear her speak. Accents are highlighted by Briana and Clare as distinctive speech characteristics; "having an accent" is what sets one apart when they are surrounded by those from different backgrounds. The participants use the term *accent* to mean a speech variety which distinguishes one from others from other geographic origins, and the accent is made apparent when one interacts with people from other origins.

We can see evidence of the ideology of standard in the way the students are using the term *accent*. First of all, it is important to note that neither of the participants chose to speak about accents in an adequative way, or one which elevates the power of an accent as a unifying factor among those who choose to use the same features with each other. In fact, LOTS accents are used adequatively every day to create a sense of belonging or community among people, but this is a linguistic reality the ideology of standard causes us to overlook. Furthermore, the contrast between the LOTS accent and SAME is evidence of the ideology of standard in the students' attitudes towards language. For example, when Briana says she defended herself in the face of accusations of having an accent by telling her accusers, "I'm speaking English like you are." Briana's reaction demonstrates the fear that "having an accent" means one is speaking a LOTS variety of English, which, according to the ideology of standard, is hardly even English at all. The reality of Briana's situation is that she *was* speaking English, although her English was unlike her interlocutors'; denaturalization breaks down the essentialist boxes around the term "language" to help us realize that Briana and her interlocutors were able to communicate successfully using English, albeit different varieties of English. Finally, Briana's lack of self-awareness, or at least admitted self-awareness, of language use is noteworthy because it reveals the anxiety the ideology of standard instills in us about being identified as LOTS speakers. She is able to analyze the distinctive language features of her interlocutors in Corpus Christi, yet she repeatedly says she did not understand how her own language was different from the others'. It is unfortunate that the ideology of standard prevents us from reflecting on the beautiful complexity of our own language use, which is arguably crucial in understanding and developing our identities within our global community.

Knowing and using languages

Although this section of the findings truly leads to more questions about the way language ideology plays out than it does to answers, I find it important to share some of the interesting observations I made about the ways my participants hinted at what it means to know and use language. The following passages will demonstrate the students' conceptualizations of language in terms of separate n-languages which one only "knows" if they are fluent in what is socially considered those n-languages. First, we will examine Briana's description of her language use. Towards the beginning of the focus group, Briana describes her limited abilities with Spanish:

> PI: Ok, so what would you say, like before this event or like I guess even now are, were your attitudes towards language diversity? If you could describe them
>
> Briana: Like, it would be complica-- ok. For me it would be complicated because I honest cannot learn Spanish, or either my teacher was just horrible or something, but I feel it's complicated to like try to talk to people, but it's not their fault that Spanish is their first language and English is mine, so like if like we kind of meet in the middle and as long as they can understand what I'm trying to get across, then I can understand what they are. And I, I don't really see it being something bad, it's what they like grew up with.

It is remarkable that Briana's first assertion in the focus group and in her description of her experience with linguistic diversity is her own incompetence with the Spanish language. Going into our focus group discussion, therefore, Briana had me convinced that she did not know Spanish. However, I was surprised by something she said later in the focus group:

> Briana: Yeah, like I lived in North Dakota for like five years and if like I would say any Spanish term or anything that just like, they'll look at you weird, like "What is that?" But like some people there, like there's more people now that are like Hispanic and different cultures

In this later passage, Briana disputes her earlier assertion that Having been given the impression at the beginning of the focus group that Briana did not speak Spanish, I was surprised to hear her own account of using Spanish in North Dakota as a distinctive practice for her, whether she meant it to be or not. Again, Briana's lack of self-awareness of the pieces of Spanish in her linguistic repertoire (Holmes, 2013) which differentiated her from others around her is an unfortunate manifestation of the ideology of standard and essentialism. The ideology of standard manifests itself in both English and Spanish since there are standard varieties of both n-languages. This ideology causes us to disregard interlanguage and "incomplete" mastery of n-languages as viable and important parts of our linguistic repertoire, or our rhetorical toolbox. The tendency to downplay one's abilities in language is also evident in self-reporting monolingual Sam's account of his travels to Mexico:

> Sam: When I go to Mexico, people couldn't understand me cuz I couldn't talk to them cuz I'd be like, um, water, like I'd be pointing at things like just like move my hands
>
> PI: But, you know the word for water, right?
>
> Sam: Yeah, but I mean that was just like an example like if I wanted a "toy" like or "food" or something like that, I'd just point at it

> Marc: Well, what’s water in Spanish?
>
> Sam: Agua
>
> Marc: No
>
> Sam: That’s not it?
>
> Marc: *laughs* I’m just kidding
>
> Sam: Like, I don’t know

Again we see that when one is surrounded by those who are able to use a variety more fluently, they downplay the linguistic resources they possess. Briana belittles her own abilities to use Spanish in the context of the Rio Grande Valley were Spanish is prominent, whereas Sam negates his knowledge of Spanish when he travels in Mexico. While Sam truly may not be able to use Spanish fluently enough to engage in full conversations in Mexico, he does not even acknowledge the Spanish words or phrases he can use to communicate on a basic level. The ideology of standard prevents Sam from using his Spanish resources confidently and adequatively when he is in Mexico.

These findings are further complicated when Briana claims to “know” French as a result of a simple activity she experienced at the “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity” event. First, in response to my question about the participants’ reaction to the event, Briana says:

> Briana: I enjoyed it. I mean I like learned French! I learned a term, but it was actually pretty cool to like realize how many different languages are used

Then, in response to my question about what activities they participated in during the event, Briana says:

> Briana: Well I played the shooting one and the one where like you spin it and you get to pick either German, French, or Spanish and I don’t remember the last one. But, I thought that one was pretty cool. I learned a French term. When I was at the house I told my mom, “Oh, I know French!” She’s like “Oh, shut up.”

> PI: *laughs* Why did she say that?
>
> Briana: She's like, "You don't know French. You've never been to France." I was just like, "Oh, that's cool." She's like "Oh."

The irony of Briana's discussion of her experiences learning French is that the activity she took part in required her to learn and practice saying one simple sentence in French, directed by my students who are native French speakers. Briana denies her ability to use Spanish, yet she demonstrates that she has used Spanish in certain contexts before. However, she is eager to claim that she "learned French" and "know[s] French," although her exposure to the language was limited to a simple experience at our event. One hypothesis for this finding is that language diversity is regarded positively when it is seen as novel or revered in the social context. Furthermore, the data demonstrate that when a "LOTS" variety is esteemed in a social context, speakers are more willing to embrace their intrapersonal diversity. This may explain why Briana was willing to discuss her use of Spanish in North Dakota; even though speaking Spanish there was a distinctive act, the attention this language usage generated for Briana was likely meaningful in terms of constructing her identity as different from her peers. In the case of French, Briana is proud to announce her new language skills because they are novel to her in her social networks and they provide a way for her to use language distinctively over others who do not possess this traditionally valued language.

In addition to the students' discussion about their own language usage, their conversation reveals how the ideology of standard influences views on multilingualism. As the focus group turns to discussing how code-switching between Spanish and English plays a role in communication among those who know and use both languages in the Rio Grande Valley, Sam decides we ought to have a definition of the code-switching variety many call *Spanglish*:

> Sam: Spanglish is like, when I'm, when you're speaking and then you can't like figure out the word so you say it in Spanish.

The ideology of standard is manifested in Sam's definition of *Spanglish* because it becomes clear that he conceives of code-switching as a cognitive deficiency in the speaker. The reality of code-switching is that it is a LOTS variety which is used among speakers who know at least two n-languages or dialects and choose to communicate using these multiple varieties within the context of one conversation (Holmes, 2013). Often code-switching is socially agreed upon as speakers pick up on social cues which communicate whether or not each member of a conversation wishes to send and receive messages using code-switching. In the context of the code-switching conversation, the code-switched speech becomes a variety in and of itself. However, Sam's definition of the code-switched variety Spanglish implies that Spanglish is a bastardization of English, and standard Spanish militants might ostensibly believe that this variety is also a bastardization of Spanish. Furthermore, Sam's definition suggests that people who resort to using Spanglish only do so because they forget how to say things in English. This idea that multilingualism or linguistic variation is somehow incompetent or incomplete simply defies the linguistic reality that all languages are objectively equal, and that code-switching varieties exhibit the same quality of grammatical patterns as any other variety (Holmes, 2013). Again the ideology of standard has tricked the participant into discussing language in a way that belittles the linguistic practices of others.

Finally, I would like to present two instances from the focus groups where the ideology of standard influences even the minutest of comments. The most basic evidence of the social injustices resulting from the ideology of standard is often found in little comments inserted into conversations. It is easy for these subtle but unambiguous comments to slip past us as they are often presented as comic relief or playful remarks in a dialogue. Here we will discuss two instances of the foundation for social injustices which are shared among those who have become friends in the context of a discussion- and group work-based classroom. The first instance is Sam’s jovial jab at Spanish speakers:

> PI: Sam is our resident linguist *laughs*
>
> Sam: I’m the Spanglish guy. *changes accent* I /spikə də/ Spanish.
>
> Jessica: No. Alright.
>
> David: *laughs* That was not Spanish.

In this passage, self-proclaimed English monolingual Sam pokes fun at the non-standard English pronunciation of many Spanish speakers by attempting to imitate their accent, although his imitation does not actually employ phonetic features of the typical “Spanish” accent. His botched imitation of this LOTS variety elicits a negative response from his focus group mates who all speak Spanish, some with more marked accents in English than others. These participants clearly feel the pain of being stereotyped as a LOTS speaker, which is brought out by the ideology of standard. Sam claims he does not speak Spanish, and his joke about the way some bilinguals speak demonstrates standard language hegemony on the small scale of this one comment.

Another example of a subtle but undeniable social injustice which arises in the focus groups occurs when Marc endeavors to explain to Sam the example Jessica describes about language use in Mexico City. It is important to note that Marc’s English pronunciation is marked in a way that reveals that his native tongue is Spanish, although he is perfectly capable of expressing a full range of complex ideas in English. In the conversation, Marc illustrates Jessica’s story by setting a hypothetical scene where he and Sam are native speakers of English who are studying together in Mexico City, but he is interrupted by a brief comment from David:

> Marc: I think what she’s trying to say is, like for example let’s say you and I were in Mexico, right?

Sam: Uh huh

Marc: We both are native English speakers and we're trying to learn Spanish

David: You're a native English speaker, Marc? *sarcastically*

Marc: Um

David: Oh, an example *laughs*

I have attempted to recreate the brief exchange between Marc and David that occurred on the side of a larger conversation in a way that preserves the pejorative sense of David's words in written form. In just seconds, so brief that they would be forgotten if the listener were not paying close attention, David makes a sarcastic comment which scoffs at the prospect that Marc could be considered a native speaker of English, even in a hypothetical situation. Taken aback by this derisive comment, Marc can scarcely respond, so he mutters a mere "um." It is clear that the ideology of standard is so strong that it causes us to view LOTS speakers as subordinate to SAME speakers, and while this tendency may remain latent much of the time, it slips out of David in this conversation. Marc is clearly confused and hurt by the "joke," but the conversation sweeps on and the comment is forgotten by the participants except Marc, who will store this spiteful comment in his conscious or subconscious memory, added to the litany of other experiences he has had which have taught him that his English skills will never measure up to the standard. Although these instances were small and almost undetectable, it is important to highlight them and preserve them in this work as a testament to the social cues we regularly produce and internalize as we make meaning of the ideology of standard and its resultant social structures in our culture.

Again I repeat that this section providing examples of the way students speak about their own and other's abilities to know and use and language is largely ironic and surprising as it contains examples of intriguing ways the ideology of standard is manifested in conversation. First of all, we saw that students claim knowledge and usage of language varieties based on the variety's reputation with regards to standard in the social context it is presented. Briana does not acknowledge her Spanish language skills, although she demonstrates that she has used Spanish, yet she is excited to discuss her knowledge of French, although this knowledge amounts to one simple sentence. Perhaps because French is a highly revered novelty language to her and in her community, Briana is eager to discuss her French language skills. Furthermore, we see evidence of the origins of social injustices when Sam gives a definition of Spanglish which does not flatter Spanglish speakers and when David pokes fun at Marc's marked way of speaking English. The Spanglish speakers and Marc both have high levels of English language ability, yet the ideology of standard influences the way the participants view and express judgment on the others' language abilities. Sam and David see others' language use as sub-standard rather than just non-standard.

The essentialist trap

We identified in Chapter 2 the essentialist tendency to conceive of *language* in terms of n-languages (Hall, 2013) which are often defined and separated by national borders (Holliday, 2011), and this essentialism is evident in the participants' discussion. In the following excerpt from the beginning of the focus group, we see the way the participants conceive of language as they respond to my question about their past experiences with language diversity:

> PI: Ok. Um, did anyone think about language diversity before?
>
> Marc: While, while working in the mall I noticed like different people in it, like you'll see people from many places going to the store speaking differently from others like you see people from north, from Mexico, down Mexico and like that
>
> Jessica: Oh yeah, you know there's different accents and

> David: Asian, Hindu
>
> Marc: Asian people, they’re funny, though
>
> David: different races
>
> Marc: whenever they speak in English, I think they were funny
>
> Sam: like different types, but they all, everyone has like a Mexican accent when there’s like a Spain accent and like, you know, a Colombian accent and
>
> …
>
> Sam: Yeah, like in high school I had a chemistry teacher and she was Filipino, and so most of the words she’s say, cuz chemistry has like hard words sometimes. Sometimes she’d speak and I couldn’t understand anything she’d say, like “Can you put that in writing?”
>
> PI: Ok. Has anyone else had an experience like that?
>
> Marc: With an Asian person, yes. I couldn’t understand and she asked me for, like what’s a Nintendo does, so I explain her but she make me repeat myself a lot because I think she didn’t understand me and I didn’t understand what she wanted to say

In this dialogue, we see the ways in which students define and conceive of “language diversity.” Marc and Jessica refer to linguistic diversity based on geographic region and “accents,” but the rest of the conversation is presented in essentialist terms. Using the term “Asian people” as an entry point into a discussion which relies on stereotypes is dangerous because, although the term “Asian” can technically refer to those whose lineage may be from a wide variety of culturally and linguistically diverse countries, the term ignores Asian diversity and carries a derogatory meaning. Many stereotypes against “Asians” are perpetuated through students’ folk theories (Hill, 2013) about the ways people with a certain set of physical and linguistic characteristics are difficult to communicate with, and these toxic stereotypes are fed by the ideology of standard.

Furthermore, the essentialist tendency to conceive of divisions between identities and linguistic practices as separated by geographic boundaries is also apparent in Sam's speech above. Sam describes what I will assume are varieties of Spanish, saying that there are differences between a "Mexican accent" and a "Spain accent" and a "Colombian accent." While the way a Mexican person speaks Spanish will in fact likely differ from a Spaniard's Spanish, this description of language variety neglects the regional, ethnic, socioeconomic, sexual, religious, and other variation which likely occur in Mexico, Spain, and Colombia. The same tendency to view language diversity as an international rather than intranational issue is also apparent in the following discussion of how the "Celebrating Linguistic Diversity" event fits on our campus:

> PI: Ok, do you think that events like this are useful, like, specifically on our campus?
>
> Sam: What do you mean?
>
> Jessica: Yes, because there's a lot of language diversity.
>
> Sam: Oh, ok. Yeah I guess cuz we're close to the, the border, there's a lot of
>
> Jessica: No, and you have a lot of international students. That has nothing to do with it, like right there *points to nearby classroom table*
>
> David: No, it's just cuz it's a college, you have a lot of different transfer students. Just the table over there alone you have three different languages.

In this passage, we again see that diversity is seen as an international issue. Of course linguistic diversity certainly includes the language practices of our international students, but it also includes the variety of ways people in the Rio Grande Valley use language, including variation in each individual's language as they engage in their respective speech communities. Jessica and David explain the importance of our event as a way to celebrate campus diversity in terms of students' extra-Rio Grande Valley origins, which relies on the essentialist way of thinking, that things which are not “from here” are essentially “diverse.” Sam is the only one in the exchange who recognizes that the diversity within the Rio Grande Valley would be an appropriate reason to host a celebration. There is, however, little to no understanding that diversity exists within communities which are traditionally thought to be homogeneous.

This tendency to disregard the diversity which naturally occurs in any social group, no matter how large or small, is also visible in a passage where Briana describes her experience living in North Dakota:

> Briana: Yeah, like I lived in North Dakota for like five years and if like I would say any Spanish term or anything that just like, they’ll look at you weird, like “What is that?” But like some people there, like there’s more people now that are like Hispanic and different cultures
>
> PI: Mhmm
>
> Briana: but not most of ‘em speak Spanish, but when they see you they’re just like, cuz like you’re the only brown-haired, no colored eyes person there and everybody else has like blond hair and blue eyes and you’re just like. And when I was younger, my mom took us to the park and she, she told me that some photographer came up saying “Can I take a picture of your daughter?” And she’s like, “Why?” cuz I
>
> PI: No!
>
> Briana: was like five. And then she was like beca-, he, the photographer had told her that I was exotic looking when I was like five.

The essentialism in this excerpt lies in Briana’s description of North Dakotans. In an attempt to explain how she felt as an outlier in North Dakota, she exaggerates the physical differences between her own appearance and those around her. Certainly she was not the only person in her community with brown hair and brown eyes, and certainly not every North Dakotan had blond hair and blue eyes. Furthermore, it is interesting that Briana uses “no colored” to describe her eye color instead of *brown,* as this description further distinguishes her appearance from others’. Briana’s essentialist description emphasizes her unique identity, but more importantly it highlights our tendency to overlook variation and focus on homogeneity within identity categories.

Despite the evidence of essentialism in the participants' discussions, there is one particular case where non-essentialist terms are used to describe language use. In the following passage, a discussion of language is able to occur in non-essentialist terms. As you read the passage, pay attention to the specific question I asked the participants which elicited this particular type of response.

> PI: *laughs* Ok, cool. Um, what was your favorite part of the event? Again, you may have already answered this, but if you have a different answer.
>
> Clare: I guess the introduction when you guys had met your friends and, and then called home and the way you would change your speech.
>
> PI: Cool. Why was that your favorite?
>
> Clare: Cuz it's true.
>
> *All laugh*
>
> PI: Ok
>
> Clare: It's something you don't realize 'til you actually, 'til someone points it out.
>
> PI: Cool. Ok, did you (*looks at Briana*)?
>
> Briana: Yeah, that one was actually pretty cool cuz the way like if, the way like, ok, cuz I don't say "mom" or "mother" or "mommy" like that, I call my mom "momma," like she's momma. And like, I was realizing that, like either "Hi, mommy!" or "Hey, mom!" it's just like, there's like a bunch of different terms and stuff and
>
> PI: It's true
>
> Briana: I was just like, "that's weird," like I wonder how many people call their moms "mom" or "mother" or, like at one point I used to call my mom "woman." It's like, "woman!"

One of the goals of the performance portion of the “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity” event was to highlight authentic language use which incorporates style, diction, syntax, and pronunciation choices that are appropriate between particular speakers in different rhetorical contexts. The students were able to pick up on our intentions and articulate some of the language choices we demonstrated in the performance. They say that the performance caused them to realize the different ways we called our mothers, even in the same n-languages. Finally, the students are escaping the essentialist trap and recognizing intragroup variety. In order to understand the significance of this non-essentialist perspective on language use, it is crucial to take note of my question phrasing which facilitated a critical discussion without of essentialist terms. In the other examples where essentialist discussions arose, the question I asked related to language or diversity, and these areas related to identity are ones where we often fall into the essentialist trap. However, this question asked for their favorite part of the event, a neutral question which would call for responses about activities or experiences at the event. In this case, the participants *were* able to discuss language critically, but it was only outside the confines of a typical discussion of language or culture.

Service learning

In this section, data which speak to the type of learning experience that this service project was for the students are presented. The data reveal that service projects are an effective way to engage students in learning and participating in discourse in ways they are typically not used to. Furthermore, there will be a discussion of the contradiction between the way educators may expect service learning projects to be executed in their classrooms and the ways they actually play out.

In this first passage from the focus group of my students, Sam expresses that the service learning project gave him a chance to be a leader. This leadership role was a noteworthy and novel part of the experience for him.

> PI: Ok. What was your experience like interacting with the guests and the people who came? Like at your stations
>
> Sam: It was, uh, surprising. It felt like, like I was the teacher. Cuz I was like, they would come up to us…People kept asking me, they were like "Oh, well do you, can you explain this question to me?" when the opened it and
> …
>
> PI: Were you able to help them?
>
> Sam: Yeah, I explained the language diversity and all that stuff.
>
> PI: That's good.
>
> Sam: And then I don't know, it was, it cool, but it felt weird cuz it felt like I was the teacher.

In this passage, Sam provides evidence that King's principle of assigning agency to all involved in the pursuit of linguistic social justice has occurred in the context of our service learning project. The sensation of being a leader was new and exciting to Sam, and I am happy to have been able to facilitate this experience as a leader and an agent for the dissemination of important information he had learned about language diversity for Sam. The students' positions as independent thinkers and leaders is an important and attractive feature of service learning projects.

In the next excerpt, the participants from my class continue the discussion about the active role they were able to take in the service project. They do not express a static position as leader, but rather they emphasize the active roles they had to play in creating a successful event for our attendees.

> Sam: I like the fact that if someone had a question, like they weren't afraid to ask me. Like, like, cuz I don't know they just asked, like they wanted to know
>
> Jessica: Yeah, you're a student
>
> PI: Cuz we looked legit, right?
>
> Sam: Yeah, we did! I'm not gonna lie, we did, we had all
>
> PI: There's something about standing on that side of the table, right?
>
> Jessica: Yeah, I know!
>
> David: I just forgot my bowtie
>
> Sam: But it was cool, I liked that people just asked questions and stuff.

The students' discussion of the performance of leadership, in terms of their attire, posture, and role as answerers of questions illustrates their positions as the type of learners Freire (1973) says are necessary to produce critical consciousness through education. That is, Freire says students must become teachers and leaders in their educational and community settings in order to produce social change.

In the next focus group excerpt, the event attendees discuss their active role in the event as well. One of the goals of the service learning project and curriculum design was to prepare students to be active participants and discussants during the event. It appears that this goal was reached, as the students discuss their engaged roles in the event:

> Sam: I like the fact that at most of the stations, like, you had to be active, you know, like you had to
>
> David: Yeah, you had to do something
>
> Sam: be talking or you had to be moving or involved. Like, you couldn't just stand there and be by yourself. You had to actually conversate, you know, I sorta liked that.
>
> David: And I guess all the stations were different, and so they didn't do one thing everywhere, you know?

We see clearly that the service learning project successfully stimulated discussion between participants. Again, the service learning project proves to be effective in facilitating the discourse Freire (1973) says is necessary to build critical consciousness which will affect social change. The fact that the students

Furthermore, the focus group discussions revealed that the event built upon learning that the students had been doing in other areas of their studies. In order for a deep level of learning to occur, people must make meaningful connections between their experiences and lessons, and the community experience "Celebrating Linguistic Diversity" made this possible for participants (Ambrose et al., 2010). Clare describes the interdisciplinary experience she had at the event:

> Clare: I, I'm taking English, communications, and Spanish, and I felt like it intermixed all those classes together
>
> PI: How so?
>
> Clare: Because communication is a lot about, well it's language, it's how you communicate, how you interact with everybody. Spanish, our professor's always telling us about different dialects and in Spain different words they use versus how um Latin American countries use and then like, you know English cuz it's English

The fact that Clare was able to make connections between the content of the event and her other course work and personal experiences is evidence that the project was meaningful in disseminating knowledge and stimulating discussion about language diversity that bear practical significance for attendees. Clare's account affirms this event type of community service project as a viable method for pursuing linguistic social justice.

In addition to the students' overall reactions about the event, I was interested in learning about their understanding of the main messages of the event. The following passage about event message and purpose is excerpted from the focus group of event attendees. Keep in mind that these participants are students who had no preparation for the event in terms of reading up on or thinking about language diversity.

> PI: Um, what messages do you think the event planners were trying to like send the audience members? when we were planning the event?
>
> Briana: I guess just diversity. There's different people everywhere and people interact differently depending on who they're with.
>
> PI: Mhmm
>
> Briana: Like, yeah, basically, but like just you could be, like how y'all, y'all um said that, like, I don't know which one of y'all did it, but, the whole food thing, "Oh, yeah! They showed me this, this, or this" and it was really cool and, I feel like the way that one culture can show other ones different things and then it kinda like grows on you that

I am delighted to hear that the event attendees are able to articulate, even though briefly, the main message that I had intended to send with the event, that language diversity is manifested in the variety of domains of use and rhetorical situations we find ourselves in every day. Briana's account confirmed the design of the event as an appropriate way to disseminate knowledge and understanding about language diversity.

The responses my students, the event presenters, give to my question about the primary event message(s), surprisingly differ from Briana's articulation. In this passage, the event presenters, students in my class, discuss what they perceive are the major messages we were sending through our event:

> PI: What do you think, what would you say are some of the messages or some of the lessons that we were trying to teach the people who were there or, I don't know, like what, I think we kind of wanted to create like a discussion or teach people something, right? What would you say?
>
> Jessica: We wanted to tell, like to make people aware of the fact that there's language diversity and to think about it like we do now. We didn't, now we do.
>
> David: Yeah, there's diversity in general in everything.

> Sam: And the fact that language diversity isn’t just by communicating. It’s through music, through books, through you know, just not language
>
> Jessica: even texting
>
> Sam: Yeah, even texting
>
> David: And I bet you at least one person that went to our group for the music thing, next time they heard like a Spanish music or something, they’re probably gonna think like, “Oh, I can hear, I’m trying to guess the accent.”
>
> Jessica: Yeah.
>
> David: Like maybe they’ll take it one way or another.
>
> Sam: Yeah, I feel like if they hear a song, they’ll be like, “Hmm, let me try and guess the nationality.”
>
> David: Like of course it’s not gonna be always, but maybe this’ll stick into their head one way or another.
>
> PI: Ok, so at least just to be aware
>
> David: that’s there’s awareness

When I first heard my students’ explanation of the key messages of our event, I was stunned, because the messages I had wanted to send were different from the ones they articulated. I felt that the students’ discussion speaks to my ability to lead others in a service-learning project: my students could not articulate precisely what I had in mind as the main messages of the event. My first reaction was that I had failed in getting my students to understand what I had learned about language diversity and social justice. However, after further reflection I have found a different way to interpret these students’ articulations of our event purpose. I realized that it is good to have experimented with designing a service-learning project and course, to have exposed my students to materials relating to language diversity issues, and to have asked my students to identify the messages that they found important to send to our event attendees. I realized that not all of my students have to believe what I believe or articulate their understanding in the same way I do. In fact, it would be unrealistic to expect that my students would have the understanding of linguistic diversity and social justice that I do, since I have been researching in these areas for the past two years and they were only introduced to the major topics for a few weeks in one semester. I have so far discussed my satisfaction with the level of independence and leadership that my students had in this project, and I realized that this difference of understanding of the message of our event is a result of that independence. That is, because my students were allowed to create their own stations which sent the message about language diversity they wanted to send, the students were free to latch onto whatever ideas or perspectives they found compelling. In this sense, it is a celebration of diversity that students are allowed to choose which aspect of language diversity they want to engage with a present in a service learning setting.

Conclusions

In conclusion, I would like to highlight three important conclusions that these data suggest about the primary research method which collects data from focus groups. First of all, the focus groups provided useful insights into the students' experiences surrounding service learning, both as participants in a service learning project and as attendees of a community event. I therefore recommend focus groups as a method for assessing the quality and design of service learning for future studies. Secondly, I found focus groups a useful sociolinguistics research method for gaining insight into the manifestations of standard language ideology. If researchers are in search of authentic metalinguistic discourse as a data source, then focus groups are an appropriate method. Furthermore, the fact that I conducted the focus group with my own students likely increases the validity and authenticity of the responses students gave since students are more comfortable with me than they would be with a stranger and they are familiar with the types of group discussions about language and culture which would reveal significant findings. The present study is limited in the number of participants, and future studies could involve more participants in multiple focus groups, which would provide more authentic data for analysis. Finally, I recommend the data collection method of focus groups as a way to stimulate the critical discourse about language that Freire (1973) says will be important to affecting social change. In thesis work, I was able to facilitate students' engagement in discussions about language diversity during the service learning project of "Celebrating Linguistic Diversity." However, the students who participated in the focus groups after the event engaged in further discussion on these important topics, therefore extending their learning and understanding about language even further. The method of deriving data from focus groups is a useful tool for service learning and linguistics researchers alike, and the method serves a dual purpose of generating data and promoting student learning.

CHAPTER VI

REFLECTIONS

As I explained in Chapter 4, the third and final stage of a service learning project is a critical reflection on the community service event. This service learning project involved and affected all aspects of my personal and professional life, and therefore it was difficult to sift through the layers of reading, studying, thinking, and collaborating which contributed to my research. The very process of writing this thesis has been a reflection in itself, as I discerned how to articulate all the things I have learned in the past two years about the connections between language and the pursuit of social justice. However, I would like to devote this last chapter of the thesis to my reflections on the ways everyday people, including myself, can work to pursue linguistic social justice. There are two categories of suggestions for implementation of linguistic justice concepts into personal practice that I would like to share. First I would like to share suggestions for the pursuit of just practices that anyone can try. Then I will specifically address those who have devoted their lives to the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge, scholars and academics.

Because every human uses language, each person’s language practices are significant. Furthermore, everyone can work towards social justice as it relates to language by examining the way their thinking about language affects their practices and the ways their practices affect other people. Therefore, I challenge every reader to consider the following actions:

1. Reflect on the linguistic diversity in your own language practices and linguistic

repertoire. Self-awareness of intrapersonal variation and self-acceptance of LOTS usage will be the first step in understanding and embracing language diversity, as well as overcoming the ideology of standard and treating others with the respect they deserve. When we learn to value and appreciate our own LOTS usage, we can value and appreciate others' language practices.

2. Open your mind and your heart to perspectives that differ from your own, expecting to learn from and enjoy these experiences. It is not enough to be "sensitive" to other cultures; you have to understand basic principles "underlying universal cultural processes" in order to appreciate and respect global and national diversity (Holliday, 2011, p. 2). This open and celebratory approach to linguistic and cultural diversity will inevitably promote just behaviors.
3. Consider the ways your words promote either justice or injustice. There are some terms which will certainly be counterproductive in our endeavor towards linguistic justice. For example, there is a connotation in the terms *acceptance*, *awareness*, and *tolerance* which indicate an acknowledgement of diversity, but not a respect for or celebration of diversity. Therefore, it is not enough to accept or be aware of diversity, as these levels of response to diversity are not synonymous with the highest levels of intercultural sensitivity (Bennett, 1993). Another example of a word that promotes essentialism and injustice is the term *foreign.* That is, if we want to see language diversity being celebrated, we need to stop calling Spanish, French, and German *foreign* languages; there are many people in the US who are use these languages every day, and that way they are not foreign at all. This means reframing the way formal education presents second language instruction, since *foreign language* courses and *English as a foreign language*

(EFL) are common ways of articulating the learning that occurs in these courses. A thorough reflection on the ways we articulate ideas related to language and culture will reveal the ways our words promote justice or injustice.

4. Approach your everyday work with a heart centered on love and service. This piece of advice is hardly considered "academic" by many traditionalists, but living lives of service and love will undoubtedly be the key to world peace. Choosing to spend time engaging in activities where we offer ourselves in selfless service to others communicates a powerful message of respect for humanity and the world we live in. Approaching relationships, work-related tasks, personal challenges, and all other facets of life with love will elevate the way we treat others, the quality of our work, and our ability to function as citizens engaged with our communities. Although it is typically not appropriate to discuss morality in academic writing, I find it impossible to ignore the roles that love and service played in the conception, execution, and writing of this thesis project.

While the above suggestions for ways to impact personal practice which affects justice are applicable to people from any walk of life, the following are some ways for scholars, whether they be linguists, anthropologists, historians, sociologists, rhetoricians, or others who agree with the theoretical perspective of this project, to get involved in furthering the linguistic social justice movement.

1. Get involved with projects that translate your scholarly findings and publications into the vernacular of the public. While scholarly publication remains an essential, primary component of an academic's job description and certainly plays an important role in the dissemination of progressive theory and research, writing in scholarly genres will not suffice in dissemination of knowledge which is important to the public furtherance of

(linguistic) justice. Make connections at local newspapers and news stations. Encourage the media to report accurately and justly about language findings that are relevant in the community. Furthermore, volunteering to be interviewed by popular media sources allows your name and face to appear on the television or in newsprint, which identifies you as a credible community resource for honest, justice-minded learning about language issues. This also raises awareness of language issues in the community. Other examples of media for translation of scholarship for the general public are documentaries, books, popular electronic publications, and YouTube productions, all of which are frequently shared via social media and readily available to a lay audience.

2. Socially responsible scholarship means offering practical advice at the end of all work you produce, from scholarly articles to emails to your students. Do not just leave your audience with an awareness of the social problems you have worked to identify. Relatively speaking, it is not difficult to identify problems. The difficult part is discussing the practical steps that actual people must take to resolve problems. Jordan (2002) discusses the nearly impossible task is providing a complete description of one’s vision of a better tomorrow. Although it is difficult to articulate what the perfectly just world would look like, I believe the great responsibility of approaching this task should be the job of the scholars whose education level has afforded them the privilege of being our world’s leaders in thought.
3. Instill these values of civic engagement and community service as an integral part of education in your own students. People with such a high level of education have an undeniable gift and the potential to improve their communities. Teach them that no matter what job they get, they can do their best to promote justice and improve their field.

4. Make interdisciplinary and interprofessional connections. Linguists like John Baugh serve as expert witnesses in cases where linguistic profiling is relied upon as evidence (Smalls, 2004). You can serve a similar role in cases that are relevant to your expertise. Find out who the civil rights attorneys in your community are or who the community members are who are seeking justice in a field you are an expert in. Discern how you can help them pursue justice. Attorneys are generally trained in legal research, but if expertise outside their scope can be provided, offer yourself as an expert assistant. Furthermore, Lippi-Green (2012) suggests reaching out to psychiatrists and psychologists about how to be an effective witness, as experts in these fields serve as witnesses more frequently and successfully than many linguists in the past have.
5. Be willing to meet others where they are in their theoretical grounding and assist them in the pursuit of justice, even if they come from a different perspective. Attorneys, doctors, and other professionals should reach out to academics and scholars for insight and explanations on things their disciplines do not yet have explanatory power over.

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APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

TRANSCRIPT OF FOCUS GROUP A

Focus Group A: “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity” presenters

Members: Sam, Marc, Isabel, David, Victor, Jessica

PI: So prior to attending the event, or actually even prior to learning the things that we’ve learned in our class about language diversity um, did you ever think about language diversity? Is it like a topic that is, I don’t know, important in your life or that you’ve thought about before?

S: Before the event, no. After the event, yes.

J: Yeah.

PI: Ok. Um, did anyone think about language diversity before?

D: I don’t think so.

J: No.

M: Maybe sometimes

S: Yeah, maybe like rarely

M: while, while working

PI: Ok

S: Yeah, if I was at work

M: in the mall I noticed like different people in it, like you’ll see people from many places going to the store speaking differently from others like you see people from north, from Mexico, down Mexico and like that

J: Oh yeah, you know there’s different accents and

D: Asian, Hindu

M: Asian people, they’re funny, though

D: different races

M: whenever they speak in English

D: ???? pretty racist *laughs*

M: I think they were funny

S: like different types, but they all, everyone has like a Mexican accent when there’s like a Spain accent and like, you know, a Colombian accent and

PI: Ok, so you knew that, you thought about that before

S: Mhmm

PI: Um, what did you, I mean, what did you think about acc-, different accents before?

D: Just the way they sound, I guess

J: Yeah, I didn’t really give it much thought. Like, “Oh! They sound different!” That’s it.

S: Yeah, just the way they sound

D: It’s cuz some of ‘em, some of ‘em you have to listen very attentively to understand it

J: Yeah

V: Yeah

D: Like, especially like I worked for an event center, so I know, we’ve had events with Hindu people. Some of ‘em you can’t understand ‘em, you have to- actually there was, I have a funny anecdote, there was a Hindu guy, it was an older guy. He was maybe like in his late 60’s, and I was at the bar and he asked me for vodka, or like I thought it was vodka, but he’s like “Oh, can I have some vodka?” I’m like “Ok,” so I’m like “Do you want anything with it or just plain?” He’s like, “No, just plain.” So I serve him vodka, just like that in a glass, and then he drinks it and he almost chokes and he’s like, “No! Vodka!” And the girl’s like, “He wants water.”

V: Oh…

D: And he drank it cuz it was clear anyway so he didn’t say anything about it until he like, he chugged it

S: Oh, like agua?

V: *laughs*

PI: No, water, but just with a different accent

D: He's like "watah," but I heard vodka, so the guy chugged it cuz he thought it was water, you know he didn't see me pour it, he turned around when he turned back around he's like

J: Oh, water

S: Yeah, like in high school I had a chemistry teacher and she was Filipino, and so most of the words she's say, cuz chemistry has like hard words sometimes. Sometimes she'd speak and I couldn't understand anything she'd say, like "Can you put that in writing?"

PI: Ok. Has anyone else had an experience like that?

M: With an Asian person, yes. I couldn't understand and she asked me for, like what's a Nintendo does, so I explain her but she make me repeat myself a lot because I think she didn't understand me and I didn't understand what she wanted to say

S: Especially when they get mad, it's like whoa, you need to slow down cuz I can't understand you

D: And then they get even more mad because

S: because you can't understand

M: cuz you can't understand the question she was like

D: But that guy, he was ok with it. He was just like, "It's alright."

PI: *laughs*

D: He's like half drunk by that time.

PI: By the end of the class could you understand them better, or it was always difficult?

S: Yeah, yeah I guess so.

M: Like, do you get used to the way

S: Mhmm, like towards the end, my chemistry teacher, I could talk to her one-on-one, like last day of school, I could've talked to her.

PI: That's good. So, Marc said that the teacher had difficulty understanding him. Have you ever had a situation, like you're saying with some accents of Spanish or, I guess English also, that you have trouble listening to them, but have you ever had a situation where someone has trouble listening to you?

J: Yes. In classes of English in Mexico, I speak way too fast. Like, “Can you please slow down? Not everyone can understand you.”

S: I bet that’d be kinda different. Like if you’re in an all-Spanish class and then you start speaking English

J: No! It, it was an English class

S: No, I know, but like you know what I mean

J: Oh. Yeah. Yeah, people used to come up to me like, “Oh

S: Spanish, but then you’re speaking English too fast.

J: The last year of high school they were like, “Oh you’re going to the university, right, to study, yeah? Speak in English!” “Why? Just watch a movie or...Why do you want me to speak in English?”

S: *laughs* I bet that’s different, I don’t know, it seems cool.

J: Yeah, like most of the people where I’m from don’t understand English that well. They’re used to people watching movies, like, in Spanish even though they’re in English, like they’re all used- they’re really lazy

S: When I go to Mexico, people couldn’t understand me cuz I couldn’t talk to them cuz I’d be like, um, water, like I’d be pointing at things like just like move my hands

PI: But, you know the word for water, right?

S: Yeah, but I mean that was just like an example like if I wanted a “toy” like or “food” or something like that, I’d just point at it

M: Well, what’s water in Spanish?

S: Agua

M: No

S: That’s not it?

M: *laughs* I’m just kidding

S: Like, I don’t know

J: Supposedly, in places where you go like restaurants and, I don’t know, supermarkets and stuff, supposedly there’s always a person that understands English

D: Well, there has to be

J: Mhmm, there has to be

PI: So, whenever you went to the places, do you try to

S: Yeah

PI: you try your best to use the language?

S: Yeah, I try to talk Spanish, but I mean people will be like, “Que?” Like what are you trying to say?

M: In Europe, it’s, I went to Europe on my senior trip, we went through Spain, and that was the only place I was happy because I could actually speak Spanish

laughter

M: because every other place was like, like Portugal and all those ones

J: Oh, Portuguese, that’s hard

S: My dad knows Portuguese

M: we didn’t know what to say, in Spanish, we were like “Oh maybe we can communicate with people” and like actually order stuff. No, because, yes but no because in Spanish they have different meanings to the same words that we have, and it was, and they were like

J: Coño

M: coño, like coge lapiz

PI: zumo

J: Coge eso

M: Sí

D: Oh yeah, don’t say coge in Mexico

J: No, that’s not true!

S: Yeah, when I was in Mexico I tried to say “I’m hungry,” but I ended up saying like “Eat me” or something, I don’t know, it was weird

J: I had this experience with this guy, I was outside my school and, and, there’s this bus station like a block away and this guy that looked lost, like a puppy, I just came up to him like, “Está bien?” *translates* “Are you ok?”

S: That’s why people do that to you! Ok, I’ve had that, a Mexican just comes up to me and talks some Spanish

PI: Mhmm

J: Like, it’s Mexico, like he started like saying nonsense in Spanish. I was like, I can see this person is not from here, he was like trying so hard to explain to me where he was going, and I was like “You can speak to me in English if you speak English” and he was like “Oh my god, thank you so much!” *laughs* He was like so relieved! I was just listening to him, he’s like “Uh...estacion, ca- ca- camino?” I was like, “You can speak to me in English if you want.” “Oh my god, thank you so much!” He was like so relieved.

D: But what if he hadn’t have spoken English? What if he was like Brazilian or something?

J: No, I cou- you could tell, he was like blond and whatever

D: There’s blond Brazilians!

M: I feel the people, like you can tell by the accent

J: Yeah, you can tell. And because Veracruz, it’s really like, touristic, you can tell when someone’s like from Switzerland because we have people from all over the place. You can actually tell.

PI: But you can tell also by the way they’re dressed or like, I don’t know

D: Yeah, like Americans go in shorts everywhere.

S: What are you trying to say here?

D: You have shorts on dude? And sandals

laughter

J: And also if it’s February, oh you can expect the person to be from anywhere, cuz it’s a carnival, like I don’t know why, but people love it.

S: We’re getting a little off topic

J: Yeah, but it’s

D: Yeah, I was gonna say, so how much

PI: It’s ok, it’s ok. We’re good. Any other?

J: No.

S: Next question.

PI: Ok. Um, so, I don’t know if these [questions] are really appropriate to you guys, but can you like describe the experience at the event that we had, the “Celebrating Linguistic Diversity” event? So like

S: Like our experience or the audience’s experience?

PI: Your experience.

S: My experience?

PI: Yes.

D: We could do the audience too cuz they were going from booth to booth

PI: Or what did you observe the audience experiencing? But you can’t way what the audience experienced.

S: Um, I mean what I, what I observed was in the morning it wasn’t as much people, there wasn’t like the second time, I guess cuz it was too early.

PI: Ok.

S: And, uh, they looked really interested when y’all were performing, like everyone was sitting down like just watching y’all. And whenever like something funny would happen, everyone would smirk or laugh like, especially cuz I could see everybody cuz I was at the greeter’s station, so I was like

PI: Ok

S: So yeah, everyone, and just like in the second part looked like they were having a good time.

M: Yeah, I think in the second part many were like actually going through the activities and there were more people in there

S: The first part, everyone was there like “Eh, what’s going on?”

PI: But it was kinda like our practice time, wasn’t it?

S: Yeah.

J: I didn’t listen to the presentation. We had someone with our activity, so I

PI: Ok

S: It was cool. I just, I wanted to be in the acting part. *laughs*

PI: Next year, Sam.

D: He will be the mom.

laughter

PI: Ok. What was your experience like interacting with the guests and the people who came? Like at your stations

S: It was, uh, surprising. It felt like, like I was the teacher. Cuz I was like, they would come up to us

D: You weren’t there three-fourths of the time, Sam.

S: Yeah, I was

M: *laughs* You weren’t

J: Yeah! You weren’t there. *laughs*

V: Nah, you were in the greeter’s table.

PI: Sam was schoolin’ people on how to sign in.

S: People kept asking me, they were like “Oh, well do you, can you explain this question to me?” when the opened it and

M: In Spanish

S: I felt like a teacher cuz I uh

J: Can you translate them in Spanish?

PI: Were you able to help them?

S: Yeah, I explained the language diversity and all that stuff.

PI: That’s good.

S: And then I don’t know, it was, it cool, but it felt weird cuz it felt like I was the teacher.

D: We were basically just, eh just asking them questions. We were going through the thing and I was asking them questions about it.

PI: Mhmm

D: It was ok I guess, we were trying to put more little bit of info onto the

J: Oh yeah

V: It was fun seeing like, it was fun seeing them like say the bad words,

J: I love your station! I loved it.

V: it was like saying them the bad word and they’d be like, “So what does it mean?” like afterwards we would tell ‘em and they’d be like, “I just said that?” and they would like, they would like laugh and all that, it was funny. I liked it. I liked mixing the cups. But some of em would like guess it, so I don’t like that part.

PI: They’re too good. You need to pick a harder game next time.

D: Yeah that’s how, that’s also with ours. Like they would be guessing and they would get it right, so I guess the data wasn’t really conclusive.

M: No.

D: Cuz even if they guessed and they got it right, it just, we’re screwed.

M: Oh, like a funny one, that guy who thought they were all from Mexico

D: No, he just, he just didn’t know

J: Oh! The French guy! He was French, he was like

M: Yeah, that was just bad

PI: He’s not French, by the way.

J: He’s like, “Mexico, Mexico, Mexico”

D: Oh, he just was weird.

S: Just say the blond guy.

J: He was weird.

D: The one you said was a teacher or student?

S: He’s the teacher before this class.

PI: Yes. But he’s super nice.

M: Yeah!

D: He was nice, but he was

J: He was like, “Mexico, Mexico, uh, uh, it’s Mexico. That’s not Mexico. Is that Mexico?”

S: I like the fact that at most of the stations, like, you had to be active, you know, like you had to

D: Yeah, you had to do something

S: be talking or you had to be moving or

PI: Ok

S: involved. Like, you couldn’t just stand there and be by yourself. You had to actually conversate, you know, I sorta liked that.

D: And I guess all the stations were different, and so they didn’t do one thing everywhere, you know?

PI: Mhmm

D: So like with ours was the music, with them it was the bad words and the other one was

S: Another thing was the gun. I like that one. I like it.

D: It would’ve been better if it would stick better.

S: Yeah

PI: Next year, again. Ok, so actually that leads me to our next question. What do you think, what would you say are some of the messages or some of the lessons that we were trying to teach the people who were there or, I don’t know, like what, I think we kind of wanted to create like a discussion or teach people something, right? What would you say?

J: We wanted to tell, like to make people aware of the fact that there's language diversity and to think about it like we do now. We didn't, now we do.

D: Yeah, there's diversity in general in everything.

PI: Ok.

S: And the fact that language diversity isn't just by communicating. It's through music, through books, through you know, just not language

J: even texting

S: Yeah, even texting

D: And I bet you at least one person that went to our group for the music thing, next time they heard like a Spanish music or something, they're probably gonna think like, "Oh, I can hear, I'm trying to guess the accent."

J: Yeah.

D: Like maybe they'll take it one way or another.

S: Yeah, I feel like if they hear a song, they'll be like, "Hmm, let me try and guess the nationality."

D: Like of course it's not gonna be always, but maybe this'll stick into their head one way or another.

PI: Ok, so at least just to be aware

D: that's there's awareness

S: Mhmm

PI: Ok, cool. Um, did you learn anything new at the event?

J: I learned how to say "kiss my ass"

D: What was it?

J: in German.

PI: How do you say it?

D: What was it?

J: *laughs* I don’t remember!

D: So you didn’t learn it.

S: I learned how to say “sausage” in German!

PI: How do you say it?

S: “Worst” (*pronouncing wurst*)

D: “Worst” (*pronouncing wurst*)

laughter

PI: Ok so, ok so let me, and I’m not, I’m not, I’m challenging your assertion, right, that you said “I learned” how to say that in German

J: Yeah

PI: but then when we asked you what it was, you said you didn’t know it. But so, so what did you really learn?

D: Maybe if you hear it

J: I heard, I pronounced it, but I don’t remember.

PI: So what did you learn from the experience of pronouncing that?

D: You can lie

J: *laughs*

PI: No, it’s fine! No, I’m saying, I think you, you learn something or something changes in your perspective, but it might not be that you might not remember those words.

J: It just made me curious about the language, like I want to learn it.

PI: Ok

D: Rosetta Stone

PI: (to V) What were you trying to teach people in that bad language, in that bad words one?

V: Just the way that not only do we have bad words in English, like I know they know that there’s other bad in words in like German and all that, but like how to pronounce, like how different it is.

S: At one point in my life, I thought bad words were all just the same, like you said, in like, like bitch, like it was the same in different language. That's what I thought, but

D: Biatch!

S: Like, you know how, but it's not. It's a different word.

PI: Ok, and even the word bitch can have different feelings in different languages, right?

D: Like a female dog

S: Yeah

V: Yeah

PI: And even in English there's ways that

J: There's different, yeah

S: Oh yeah

PI: you can say it in a nice way and in a bad way

D: Yeah, it's like

S: Like even with your friends, like

J: Like, "You're my bitch."

S: *laughs* Like yeah, if I said that (*sees others' reactions*) Ohh! *laughs*

J: like, "you're mine, bitch."

S: Like if I did that to my girlfriend, like she knows I'm just kidding with her

All: *laugh* Ohh!

PI: I don't think she knows

S: No, like me and her joke around a lot, so if I'm like, "Hey, you're my bitch"

V: She's gonna

M: That's what you think!

D: She slaps you! *makes slapping sound*

S: Then she'll call me a name back, be like, she'll call me like, "You fuckboy," like, you know

laughter

S: You know, but we're playing around, it's not like serious. Yeah, I mean it's cool.

D: No, I saw a video once actually where they used the word fuck in different ways of using it, and it's actually pretty diverse.

J: You can use fuck in every single sentence, any, any place you want

M: Oh, for anything, everything

D: Yeah like, you should search the video, it's pretty good.

S: For anyone listening to this, don't use bad words.

J: Don't.

PI: Why not?

S: laughs

M: Don't call bitch your girlfriend

PI: Um, ok, redirecting. What was your favorite part of the event?

J: It was eating...just kidding.

D: I guess, I was gonna say, the food station was ok, just helped a little, you know? But I guess in general, just going through 'em.

V: The Indonesian part of the performance. I've never like heard

PI: Cuz it was different, right?

J: Aw yeah! I didn't get anything

D: And you knew what they were saying because of the previous stuff, so you kinda try to figure out like what part of the area they were when they were saying it. At least I tried, but of course I didn't understand it, but at least I knew that they were saying.

PI: Yeah.

S: I like the fact that if someone had a question, like they weren't afraid to ask me. Like, like, cuz I don't know they just asked, like they wanted to know

J: Yeah, you're a student

PI: Cuz we looked legit, right?

S: Yeah, we did! I'm not gonna lie, we did, we had all

PI: There's something about standing on that side of the table, right?

J: Yeah, I know!

D: I just forgot my bowtie

S: But it was cool, I liked that people just asked questions and stuff.

PI: Yeah. Isabel, what was your favorite part?

I: Food station

PI: The food? *laughs* Alright, why did you

J: I think the food station was for us

D: Yeah, actually yeah.

PI: Ok. So what is the effect of having food with, like language stuff? I don't know

D: Everything's more fun.

J: Yes, because there's food!

S: I feel like, it lets people know like, you don't have to be all uptight, like you can relax.

D: Yeah, it's like a chill zone.

S: Yeah, you don't have to be like, you know, taking notes 24/7 or something

J: Exactly. You can have fun.

D: Yeah, instead of a food station, if we had had a person like in a typewriter just like typing away, it would've felt weird. It would've had a different aura in the whole area. Now that you have food, it's like

J: it's an event

M: Everybody's happy

J: It's not homework, you know.

D: Actually, people, again an example, I have a lot of little facts, um, I've checked that if you chew gum, like your mind thinks that it's actually in a chill zone and comfortable because it would think that you're eating. So actually they say when you're making an exam or doing something like that, you should chew gum because you're more relaxed and you're more in tune with what you're actually doing.

J: Facts 101

PI: That's cool. Yeah, facts with David.

S: I heard if you chew gum and then study for a test and chew the same gum and take the test, you'll remember the answers.

D: Yeah, yeah. Like, cuz of the taste and stuff like that.

J: What?! *laughs*

D: I read that.

J: I've tried it; it's not true.

D: No, I read it. Oh, supposedly it helps you also

J: You can't do that, it's gonna taste disgusting

D: because like your mind remembers the taste and, I don't remember, the texture

S: And the fact that all the tablecloths were colored was cool.

PI: Cool.

D: Ours was black, no, purple. Purple?

J: What?

D: Purple.

J: What?

D: Our tablecloth. I had a black, I brought a tablecloth and didn't use it. We had a black one.

PI: Oh, you could use it, I don’t care.

D: No, it’s just we didn’t want to

S: It was a little too late.

D: Yeah.

S: And also that we had candy at our stations helped.

D: We brought a candy bowl.

PI: So, back to the food and candy thing, I like that point because when I teach ESL, like for people who know nothing of English, the first thing I start with is learning about family words and then learning about food, because what do we like to- I mean, especially

S: Food, we could talk about food for hours

PI: people here. Like, when you meet someone and you say, you know you introduce yourself, you tell people like where you’re from and about your family, right? Like, my students would come in and they’re all like these old people. And they would come in and they would tell me about their grandkids and their nieces and nephews and “My grandkids are doing this and going here” and blah blah blah, and I thought, “They need to know how to talk about family,” right? And also the same with food, like if you ask people how to make your favorite food or a food that reminds you of your family or something, I mean, it’s something that people

S: they just bring up. I mean, like

PI: that they like a lot

S: people bring up the topic food just to talk about it not cuz they have to or anything, like “Oh, did you go eat at that new restaurant?”

D: “Oh, the IHOP. I like the IHOP.”

S: *laughs* And that Wallbangers, I like Wallbangers.

J: Let’s go eat.

D: I haven’t gone, they taste good, they say the burgers

S: The burgers are as big as my face, it’s crazy

D: There’s Big Daddy Burgers by the highway. I wanna try it just cuz

PI: Oh, I’ve been there before!

D: Is it good? Is it a big burger?

S: Is it a big daddy?

PI: Ehh, sure.

D: Is there a big daddy who comes and serves it?

V: Wallbangers is huge.

S: Oh yeah, dude, like for real, it's like a burger like this

V: Like the burgers are like this tall

PI: Why?

J: Oh my god

S: and it's one slice though. You literally, like, you don't wanna embarrass yourself so you cut and you use a fork

PI: How much does it cost?

V: I don't know

D: 15, 20 bucks

S: It's probably like 14 bucks

D: like a meal

M: Uh, that's pretty cheap for something like that.

J: It's a meal.

D: You get two of 'em and you eat for two weeks.

PI: Actually, yeah, it's probably more expensive just to buy the meat from HEB.

S: Yeah, cuz like um, the burger's huge and you know it's gonna be leftovers. You just know *laughs*

D: Dude, cuz I already eat two burgers.

V: cuz you have fries and you have that big Coke

S: It’s like Khan’s, you know?

J: Yeah, like Khan’s, yeah you know there’s gonna be leftovers

M: I always get sick when I go to

D: It’s cuz I go to Whataburger and I get two patty melts and I end up wasting $18 and I don’t get full.

S: What me and my girlfriend get, it’s like 20 bucks down the drain, like come on

PI: Ok, cool, food is important. *laughs* Ok, do you think that events like this are useful, like, specifically on our campus?

S: What do you mean?

J: Yes, because there’s a lot of language diversity.

S: Oh, ok. Yeah I guess cuz we’re close to the, the border, there’s a lot of

J: No, and you have a lot of international students. That has nothing to do with it, like right there *points to nearby classroom table*

D: No, it’s just cuz it’s a college, you have a lot of different transfer students. Just the table over there alone you have three different languages.

PI: Ok, but also for people who are from here

S: But I mean, there’s also, at other schools where there’s foreign exchange students and they probably have the same amount as we do here.

J: Yeah

PI: Actually, probably more.

S: Oh, well then there ya go.

PI: But, what I was gonna say, I mean I think it’s a combination of having international students or people who are from other places, but also being here by the border

S: Yeah, cuz we’re in the Valley, we’re pretty close to the border, I mean there’s a lot of

PI: I think it’s interesting, cuz I was thinking about how this event would go if it was like where I’m from and

D: it'd be more, like, Anglo-Saxon people.

PI: Yeah

S: I don't think people would, do you think people would care? Like

PI: What do you mean?

S: Like if it was in your hometown the event, would you think people would go to it?

D: would go to it??

S: and actually listen and stuff?

PI: Yeah, I think they would go, but the thing is, here I think it's not- ok, from my perspective, like it's not uncommon for me to be somewhere and to hear someone talking and not understand everything they're saying, right? And like where I'm from, everywhere I go I can understand everything everyone's saying. And like, my family, for example, like I think that it would be weird or like stressful for them to be in a place where they can't understand other people.

D: they can't communicate exactly

S: So do you think this event would help them be more comfortable?

PI: Yeah, I just think people here are more tolerant, even to code-switching or something, right? Like, people in other places in Mexico or Spain or wherever

D: they stick with their native language basically.

J: Yeah

PI: Yeah, but how do people see code-switching in Mexico?

J: If you go to Mexico City, that's where most international students are. All over the world they go there - I don't know why - and you don't see them speaking their language in the street, even though, with a friend who's from the same place.

S: So they mix it up?

J: You see them, they practice their Spanish because they know they have to speak Spanish.

S: So it's kinda like an insult if we were like to talk to a person and they'd like mix it up?

J: No! They just like to practice, because "We're gonna live here, might as well practice."

S: Ah, so they don't like mix it up like us, they actually talk proper?

PI: But I'm saying

M: Like for example

PI: Oh, go ahead

M: I think what she's trying to say is, like for example let's say you and I were in Mexico, right?

S: Uh huh

M: We both are native English speakers and we're trying to learn Spanish

D: You're a native English speaker, Marc? *sarcastically*

M: Um

D: Oh, an example *laughs*

J: Yeah

M: Well, um, like what they would do, instead of me speaking to you in English, we're gonna speak in Spanish because we want to improve our

J: They step out of their comfort zone

S: Even if I couldn't speak Spanish?

M: Yeah, even if you couldn't speak, we're trying to like

V: teach you

J: If you're there, you're trying to learn. Might as well practice.

S: Ah, ok.

D: I guess here we really don't do it because everybody else speaks both languages.

PI: But I'm saying

D: Like, if only one language was here, you would speak it. It's like, it's like he has to speak English, cuz like no one's gonna really understand Spanish.

J: I don't speak Spanish here to anyone.

PI: Ok, what I meant was, are there people in the world who are native speakers of Spanish who would say that Spanglish is bad and you shouldn't talk like that?

S: Nah, I don't think so. Maybe, there's probably most of 'em but

V: I would think so. People have their own opinion and I feel like some would probably hate it because we're mixing everything up and it's not the proper way that everybody's been taught.

PI: Mhmm

S: Yeah, like they'd be insulted.

D: Like I guess basically if you don't understand it you will get insulted.

PI: Yeah, that's an important point.

D: Cuz you'll be like, "I don't know what the heck you're saying." Like, "I speak Spanish, but I don't speak Spanglish." Like, "what are you trying to

J: Yeah, I don't speak Spanglish either.

D: Spanglish is real easy, you just mix it.

S: Or the fact that we're insulting them because we're using their language improperly. Like we're using it, and then using another language, like we're mixing it, you know?

D: Colorear

J: Is that Spanglish?

M: What? How?

J: That's a verb! In Spanish, colorear.

D: Oh uh yeah but, that was just a quick one.

M: But how does Spanglish really- ?

S: Spanglish is like, like you know you're talking

PI: Sam is our resident linguist *laughs*

S: I'm the Spanglish guy. *changes accent* I speak-a da Spanish.

J: No. Alright.

D: *laughs* That was not Spanish.

S: Spanglish is like, when I'm, when you're speaking and then you can't like figure out the word so you say it in Spanish.

J: That happens to me, but with English.

PI: So are-, but, ok, so that's one definition, but there's different kinds of Spanglish, would we agree?

S: Oh yeah, yeah there's

PI: There's like mostly Spanish where sometimes there's an English word, right?

S: cuz you can't think of the word

D: Yeah, kinda like what she said right now.

PI: And there's mostly English with a few Spanish words, and there's so many things in between.

S: I think the things in between would probably be the hardest cuz I think it's pretty hard to probably like speak English and then move to Español, eh I don't know.

J: Oh, my advisor is like that! She speaks English, but she's like mix-in, like throws a random Spanish word, like nambre me es ??, like I can't do that, like no.

S: Like pos no, no quiero, I don't want it, like yeah *laughs*

J: Like all of a sudden, Spanish.

D: Te panique

J: And sometimes students are like "What does that mean?"

S: Like you say it twice sometimes, like you say it in Spanish and then you say it in English, it's like "what do you mean?"

D: There was a husband of one of my friends and the guy would be totally Spanglish, like just back and forth. He was, there was one time where he was like "Nambre," like my neighbors were like, "nambre está freakin hot, let's go to the pool y vamos a matarnos."

J: Yeah, that's what she does!

S: You know, honestly, honestly, I’ve never met a person that’s Spanglish, but I’d probably get annoyed after a while.

PI: You’ve never met a person- ?

J: Meet my advisor.

PI: right now!

S: Yeah, but like constantly, like one of my best friends or something. I’d probably get annoyed and

J: Oh she’s, she’s constant.

D: Oh like every time

PI: Ok, so why would you get annoyed?

S: Because it’s like, I guess like after a while since I mean I don’t probably, I don’t speak Spanish, like I don’t want, I’d prefer all English and so after a while I’d be like “Ah, just come on, speak English! You already know it!”

PI: So going back to the-, so we said there are probably people who speak Spanish who think Spanglish is some like bastard child of some language, right?

S: Yeah *laughs*

PI: And I would say there are people who speak English natively or whatever and they would say, “Oh, that’s not English. What is that?” You know? So why are those the people who are upset

D: Sam?

S: Because they’re all Spanish, cuz they can’t speak English, so there’s no point.

J: They’re all

PI: Ok, so, but, so what if someone else wants to talk like that?

S: Well then they better know how to speak Spanish

laughter

D: Well if they’re speaking both of ‘em, they know how to speak both of ‘em.

M: Maybe they just like the sound of it, I don’t know if tha-

S: I mean sometimes jumpin' around I'll do some Spanglish.

J: Yeah, it's weird. The feel comfortable with it.

D: Sometimes it is just the way they talk. Some things it's just like, "dude."

S: Sometimes it's just like "Dude, stick to one language, there's no point."

D: No, I'm not saying the full conversation, I mean there's just some words that you're like, "Really? You mixed that?" You know? I really can't think of an example, but I know I've probably

PI: So there's some kind of rules?

D: Probably.

PI: Ok, so there's- if two people can speak in whatever you want to call Spanglish and if they both understand it, is there any reason why they shouldn't use that?

S: Probably not.

PI: But if you're someone like Mariela that maybe you could understand both of-, like if someone's speaking Spanglish, but you don't feel comfortable using it yourself, then maybe that person, it would be inappropriate for them, like if you express "I don't feel

D: Oh, I don't think so, basically cuz you will understand what they're saying still, so you really won't feel

J: If you understand, I don't think you'd mind.

D: Yeah.

PI: But would you, would you want to respond with Spanglish?

J: No.

M: No.

V: No, the other person can use English or Spanish.

S: The only reason I'd say no is because I can't speak Spanish and if I like, people were talking to me in Spanglish I'd be like "Um, what do you mean?" cuz I didn't get the gist of it, you know?

D: Like, he doesn't get mad.

PI: Ok, so then even then, you're not telling them, "Speak only English!" When you say "What do you mean?" They take a clue and they say "Oh, he didn't understand, so now I need to use more English."

S: Yeah. I won't be mean about it, I won't be like "Speak English!" No, I'll just give 'em a hand, like "Explain yourself. Be more specific." You know.

D: "Don't use Spanglish."

PI: Ok, but yeah, I like when you said "What do you mean?" cuz it gives you a clue, right?

S: Yep.

PI: Cool. Um do you have any final thoughts on language diversity or the event? that you would like to share?

S: Mm I wish it was longer.

M: It was fun.

J: Yeah, it was really fun.

D: I guess we really weren't bombarded with too many people.

Multiple voices: Yeah.

D: If it been like super crowded, it would've been different

J: We would've been stressed

S: Yeah, I would've probably been annoyed and been like "Eh, I'm leaving."

J: Oh my god, yeah.

PI: So many people to sign in. *laughs*

S: Yeah.

PI: Just kidding.

J: I think it was fine.

M: Like too many

S: Yeah it was fun, I liked it.

J: If it was longer, like more people but not like too crowded, that would be good.

D: I think the two periods was perfect time. It was just ok, it wasn’t too crowded, but we were constantly having some

S: I think another 30 minutes or an hour, it would’ve been fine. Maybe a little bit better.

PI: Cool. Ok. Well thank you guys so much for your input. I appreciate your conversation. Thank you.

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

TRANSCRIPT OF FOCUS GROUP B

Focus Group B: "Celebrating Linguistic Diversity" attendees

Members: Briana (Moriah), Clare (Audrey)

PI: So my first question is, prior to attending the FESTIBA event, um, did you ever think about language diversity?

B: Well, there's like Spanish and English here and there's like some people, I have relatives that are like Chinese and stuff, like you kind of like learn some of their stuff, but like, other than that, the only ones that I've really ever heard of is like just Spanish and English.

PI: Ok, you mean like personally?

B: Mhmm.

C: I had an experience where I work at the mall

PI: Mhmm

C: and I saw this lady and she had this baby, like a bottle..cover, and I asked her, I was like "Ma'am, where'd you get that? Like, it's really nice." And she didn't speak English, so I felt really awkward. I didn't know what to do.

PI: Yeah, what did you do? You

C: I was just like oh

PI: *laughs*

C: you're like, I was just like "Ok, sorry."

PI: Interesting. Ok, so what would you say, like before this event or like I guess even now are, were your attitudes towards language diversity? If you could describe them

B: Like, it would be complica-- ok. For me it would be complicated because I honest cannot learn Spanish, or either my teacher was just horrible or something, but I feel it's complicated to like try to talk to people, but it's not their fault that Spanish is their first language and English is mine, so like if like we kind of meet in the middle and as long as they can understand what I'm trying to get across, then I can understand what they are. And I, I don't really see it being something bad, it's what they like grew up with.

PI: Yeah. That's a good point.

C: I think it brings up some barriers, but like uh, language, you know how they also have like ASL

PI: Mhmm

C: as a language? I think that brings out more

PI: So, sign language, right?

C: Yeah. I think that brings out more barriers than people who can speak. And here, because you know, you're able to kind of get the jist, you see people's facial expressions and stuff and you understand them, you thought they said a joke and you're like "ha ha ha" even though you didn't get it,

PI: yeah

C: and I think like people who don't speak, it's more complicated.

PI: Ok. Um, so you're saying like um, as long as you can understand each other, I mean whether it's their body language or however they speak, like that's fine. What do, what are your attitudes in terms of different American dialects? Like, the way people speak English in the Valley versus English in New York or like in the South or

B: Like accents or like the little words they have

PI: Yeah, but it's kind of like words, but also, I don't know, it's more than words too, it's like the sounds and everything

B: Yeah, like the way they say it, like I had, my first semester I went to Corpus and they told me *I* had an accent. I was like, "what are you talking about?" They're like "You have an accent!" I was like, *laughs*, "What kind of accent? I'm speaking English like you are." They're like, "No, you say words differently." I was like, and then I try to like listen to myself, but it's just like I don't hear it. And they're just like, "No, it's something about you." They're from like Arlington and Austin and stuff so they're just like, "No, you sound different." And I'm just like, I don't, I don't understand like how, but

PI: Did you notice that they had an accent?

B: Mmm, they use different words. Like, they, not to say slang, but they have certain little words that they use up there compared to like down here. Like, I guess you can compare it to like social media stuff and, well like you can use the term rn for right now right now and stuff, so like those kind of little terms they use but out loud

PI: Oh!

B: instead of just like, communicating through like phones and stuff.

PI: So like it's going to a different genre and actually coming out in the speaking

B: Kinda sorta, yeah.

PI: Interesting.

C: I think they're cool, people with accents. I like people telling me I have an accent

PI: *laughs* How does that make you feel?

C: It makes me feel different!

PI: Like exotic or something? Like, "Oh!"

B: Like, you'd have the accent if you went somewhere else.

PI: Uh huh.

C: My mom, she was born in Idaho and she was migrant so summers and she went six months and six months back and forth and everyone says she has a really weird accent because she picked up both and mixed them together.

PI: In English or Spanish?

C: In English. Yeah

PI: Interesting, cool. Alright, cool. Um, so before you went to the "Celebrating Linguistic Diversity" thing, um, I mean I don't know how much you really knew about the event before you went to it, but um what did you expect that it was gonna be like, or what were you anticipating?

B: Um

PI: Even just in terms of your class or, I don't know.

B: It was just for a grade

PI: Just to go?

B: Yeah

PI: Ok

B: The professor told us to go, so

PI: Ok

C: That’s where we were gonna like meet that day

PI: Ok

B: And we went, we were sitting there and I was like “Are we supposed to go up and like talk to people or something?” And they’re like “No, just go ahead and sit down.” We’re just like “Oh, ok.” And we actually got up and started talking around and stuff, playing the little games and stuff and learning French and stuff. It was actually pretty cool.

PI: Cool. Um, so, I guess that leads me to my next question, like, can you describe what your experience was there? So, in terms of like what you saw and what you did or, I don’t want to say “how did you feel while you were there,” but like uh what was your reaction to the things that you experienced?

B: I enjoyed it. I mean I like learned French! I learned a term, but it was actually pretty cool to like realize how many different languages are used

PI: Mhmm

B: and like imagine having to talk to someone and you have no clue what they’re saying but, I don’t know, I think it was really cool that the same things are different.

PI: What do you mean

B: Like

PI: “the same things are different?”

B: you can be saying the exact same thing, but it’s completely different.

PI: Mhmm. That is cool.

C: I, I’m taking English, communications, and Spanish, and I felt like it intermixed all those classes together

PI: How so?

C: Because communication is a lot about, well it's language, it's how you communicate, how you interact with everybody

PI: Mhmm

C: Spanish, our professor's always telling us about different dialects and in Spain different words they use versus how um Latin American countries use and then like, you know English cuz it's English

PI: Mhmm

C: and I thought it was good I guess perspective, I didn't think they could all intermix and they did.

PI: Hmm, cool. Yeah, so maybe to put together what both of you are saying, like the same sort of principles of language apply like whether you're talking about English or Spanish or any of the other kinds of languages. That's cool. Um, what messages do you think the event planners were trying to like send the audience members? when we were planning the event?

B: I guess just diversity. There's different people everywhere and people interact differently depending on who they're with.

PI: Mhmm

B: Like, yeah, basically, but like just you could be, like how y'all, y'all um said that, like, I don't know which one of y'all did it, but, the whole food thing, "Oh, yeah! They showed me this, this, or this" and it was really cool and, I feel like the way that one culture can show other ones different things and then it kinda like grows on you that

PI: Yeah, and so it wasn't maybe just about language, it was more about like culture, and again the things that draw people together rather than the language that like separates you

C: I guess you notice it more, like when you go to another city or like um people who go to different universities not where they grew up, and then they call back home or they come back home and they're like, "Wait, what?"

PI: Mhmm

C: Like, uh my cousin, he goes to St. Edward's and he speaks really differently now than he used to.

PI: Mhmm

C: And it's like, "Wait, what? What did you say?"

PI: Yeah. Does he notice that?

C: Nah. It’s part of his everyday vocabulary now. He just adjusted over there.

PI: Interesting. Do you

C: I went to Laredo and I started speaking more Spanish and that’s cuz I really don’t know a lot of Spanish.

B: *laughs*

C: It happens.

PI: It just happened there? Cool, uh, what was I gonna say? Do you think, like, so like if you go to Laredo and you start speaking Spanish and then you like come back here, I mean you, like you get do you get like into your Valley kind of language again, or?

C: After a while

PI: Mhmm

C: It takes a while, though.

PI: Yeah. That’s interesting. Um, I don’t know if we maybe have already answered this, but did you learn anything new at the event? Or can you describe anything that you learned or thought about for the first time?

C: The um, the game where you had to listen to the songs and detect like the, I guess you would say “dialect” cuz it was all Spanish, that was cool. I didn’t know I was good at detecting different languages -- or, different regions of Spanish.

PI: Cool, finding something out about yourself.

B: I didn’t see that game.

PI: Yeah, it was like off in a corner and they wanted it to be there cuz it wa- they said it was quieter over there, but then I think people didn’t see them.

B: I didn’t see that.

PI: Sorry that you missed it.

B: *laughs*

C: It was cool.

B: Well I played the shooting one and the one where like you spin it and you get to pick either German, French, or Spanish and I don't remember the last one. But, I thought that one was pretty cool. I learned a French term. When I was at the house I told my mom, "Oh, I know French!" She's like "Oh, shut up."

PI: *laughs* Why did she say that?

B: She's like, "You don't know French. You've never been to France." I was just like, "Oh, that's cool." She's like "Oh."

PI: *laughs* Ok, cool. Um, what was your favorite part of the event? Again, you may have already answered this, but if you have a different answer.

C: I guess the introduction when you guys had met your friends and, and then called home and the way you would change your speech.

PI: Cool. Why was that your favorite?

C: Cuz it's true.

All laugh

PI: Ok

C: It's something you don't realize 'til you actually, 'til someone points it out.

PI: Cool. Ok, did you (*looks at Briana*)?

B: Yeah, that one was actually pretty cool cuz the way like if, the way like, ok, cuz I don't say "mom" or "mother" or "mommy" like that, I call my mom "momma," like she's momma. And like, I was realizing that, like either "Hi, mommy!" or "Hey, mom!" it's just like, there's like a bunch of different terms and stuff and

PI: It's true

B: I was just like, "that's weird," like I wonder how many people call their moms "mom" or "mother" or, like at one point I used to call my mom "woman." It's like, "woman!"

PI: *laughs*

B: It's just like there's, depends on the person and stuff

PI: Yeah. And it has a different like, rhetorical effect when you say like "hey, woman"

B: *laughs*

PI: or whatever

B: Like, it’s not to be rude, it’s just like that’s what she was at the time

PI: Like messing with her

B and PI laugh

PI: Um, actually that’s a good point cuz when we were like practicing it and coming up with what we were gonna say like, you know when I’m writing I was thinking like “hi, mom,” but I don’t, I never call my mom “mom.” I call her “mommy.” You know? Like, but it’s something that when you’re writing it and you’re thinking about it, you don’t uh

C: I guess you don’t like personalize it

PI: Yeah, like you can’t remember what you say, and it’s hard to like get into that mindset.

B: ‘Til when like they’re actually in front of you and you’re actually talking to them

PI: Yeah, yep. Um, did you have a least favorite part of the event?

B: Sittin’ and waitin’.

laughter

C: Awkward

B: I know, just like

C: I didn’t know what to do

B: Yeah

PI: Like, in the beginning?

B: Yeah, before everything started.

PI: Yeah.

B: I was like, “are we supposed to get up? I don’t know, I’m sitting down” I was like

PI: *laughs* It’s always a safe bet.

laughter

PI: Ok. I’m sorry.

laughter

PI: Um, do you think events like this are useful or important on our campus?

B: Yeah, maybe

PI: Or in our community I guess

B: Yeah, I guess it opens your, it opens your eyes and like you just have a different view and things.

PI: Mhmm

B: Like, you're not a closed mind -- no, not to say closed mind, but you're just experiencing something different compared to just walking around campus and going to class.

PI: Yeah, that's true.

C: I guess like you know, people here, they stay here a long, people in the Valley don't ever go anywhere other than the Valley, so they don't, they don't experience other people, so that was a good way to show other types of interactions.

PI: Yeah, I think that's true. And I, I mean one thing that I was thinking about when I was creating, or coming up with the concepts of it was like, yes, like a lot of people from the Valley may have an experience like with Valley language and culture. At the same time like Valley language and culture would be like a culture shock to people from so many other places and it's interesting that you say like, you know it's exposing people to different cultures because I feel like where I'm from like everyone just speaks English and it's like, I don't know. There's like different like kind of redneck sort of accents and stuff, but I don't know, there, a lot of people are those kinda like "Oh,well you need to speak American, speak English" kinda like people say that kind of stuff and um, I feel like it would be useful in that context as well, but you would learn something different maybe than you learn here. I don't know if that makes sense.

B: Yeah, like I lived in North Dakota for like five years and if like I would say any Spanish term or anything that just like, they'll look at you weird, like "What is that?" But like some people there, like there's more people now that are like Hispanic and different cultures

PI: Mhmm

B: but not most of 'em speak Spanish, but when they see you they're just like, cuz like you're the only brown-haired, no colored eyes person there and everybody else has like blond hair and blue eyes and you're just like. And when I was younger, my mom took us to the park and she, she told me that some photographer came up saying "Can I take a picture of your daughter?" And she's like, "Why?" cuz I

PI: No!

B: was like five. And then she was like beca-, he, the photographer had told her that I was exotic looking when I was like five.

PI: Mhmm

B: Then he says, “It’s because she’s rare.” My mom’s like “Have you not been to the Valley or som’n?”

PI: Yeah

B: And it’s basically because like people don’t really leave where they’re from unless they’re like wanting to leave or have left for something. So you don’t really see different kinds of people or learn different kinds of languages and stuff.

PI: Yeah, that can be true. And, hmm, what do I want to say? I mean if you, if you grow up in the same place and you never leave there, do you think it’s ok to never like learn about other cultures? Cuz why do you need to know about them?

C: No because you don’t know who’s gonna come down, like you don’t know who you’re gonna meet, who your coworkers are gonna be, who your classmates are gonna be.

PI: Yeah, that’s true.

B: And you’re gonna be in like shock like “What is that?”

PI: Mhmm

B: Like, yes, some people never leave, but if say it’s like you have to leave for work or som’n, like you wanna be prepared, not to say prepared but at least have some knowledge of it.

PI: Mhmm. Yeah. Plus there’s kinda that whole factor like, I mean none of us are ever gonna go to Antarctica,

B: *laughs*

PI: but I’m happy that I know it exists and like what it looks like, you know from pictures and stuff, so I don’t know. Anyways, um, do you have any final thoughts on language diversity or the event that you would want to share?

C: I have to gather my thoughts first.

PI: Ok

laughter

PI: Or any other stories, or just

B: I think I'm outta stories.

PI: Yeah, we got some good ones there.

C: I think like this, your, the thing

PI: Mhmm

C: I don't know what to call it, um it would be really good for like during orientation or something or like when high school kids are gonna choose their college

PI: Mhmm

C: cuz it reminds you like not everyone is the same, not, not everyone is like they are here.

PI: Yeah, that's true. And i-, it was interesting to me, I don't know if you guys saw like in the program that we had, like the list of the languages that like uh I had my students write down all the languages that they know or the types of language and even people just from the Valley, I mean they had so many different kinds of English, like formal English and informal English and English that they speak at church and English, you know, and all these different places and the same was for Spanish and there's you know, what you call, what people call Spanish and Tex-Mex and Spanish-English mixed and then that thing where like I talk to you in English

C: *laughs*

PI: and you respond to me in Spanish and I can understand you and you can understand me, but we're not speaking the same language and um, the other thing where people sa- like when you're having a conversation like I say something in Spanish and then I say the exact same thing again in English, do you know what when I mean when people do that? And like, what?! That doesn't even make sense. But people do it and it works, right? Um, so it's interesting to think about even all the different kinds of language variety that we have here, even though yes, like we get variety from other people from around the world and from other places in the country, but I don't know, it's very interesting and cool.

C: Yeah

B: And like, here I realized that all you hear is Spanish and like, I turn the corner, there's something talking and they're on the phone in Spanish. And in the other corner someone's talking in English, but the other person is talking in Spanish. And then cuz like that kinda like shocked me cuz when I came back from Corpus, everybody up there just talks English, and if you talk Spanish it's like "Oh my gosh, she talks Spanish." It's just like, "Yeah, a little bit." They're just like "Oh my god, that's so cool!" I'm just like, "Gosh, am I the only Mexican here or something?" But, it's kinda crazy how, if you speak a different language it's like "Wow" like it's like "holy crap, how do you know another language?" compared to like someone that only knows English or something. But

PI: Well that kinda sounds like the reaction that you had to learning French, though.

B: Yeah, and I was just like

PI: Like what the people said to you and then you're all like, "I know French!"

laughter

PI: But if it's, if it's new to you, then it's like "Wow," right?

B: Yeah, it's just pretty crazy, I was just like, it's just Spanish, like

PI: Mhmm, but "just Spanish" to you is like "Wow, Spanish!" to someone else

B: *laughs*

C: I guess it helps you remember that the Valley's really diverse, even though we don't feel that way cuz it's Spanish or English, but other people just have one language

PI: Mhmm, yeah, yeah. But I think anywhere you go there's people speaking differently, like adults, old people speak really differently than like teenagers and, I don't know, I mean other situations like that, right? *laughs* Um, but yeah but it's easier to pick up on if you're like walking down the street and you hear someone saying something that you don't understand, it's kinda like "Oo! Interesting." *laughs* Anyways, yeah. Anything else? Ok, well those are all the questions I have. Thank you guys very much for participating and showing up. I appreciate it.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Natalie Tupta completed her Master of Arts in English as a Second Language in May 2015. Prior to her time in Edinburg, TX, she completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in Latin at Marshall University in her home state of West Virginia. Natalie's fascination with language and culture began at a young age, and her path to inquiry about how language diversity relates to social justice will be one she'll continue to walk for the rest of her life. In August 2015, Natalie plans to enroll in a Juris Doctor program at the Duquesne University School of Law, and, although her focus will shift from sociolinguistics to law, she intends to make the interdisciplinary connections necessary to devote her life to pursuing the linguistic social justice movement through service. She welcomes questions, comments, and criticism of this work and can be reached at natalie.tupta@gmail.com.