"MAKING OUR OWN LANGUAGE":
THE TRANSLANGUAGING PRACTICES OF
TRANSNATIONAL YOUTHS IN ZACATECAS, MEXICO

Alejandra Núñez Asomoza

A Dissertation

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School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences
University of Dublin, Trinity College Dublin

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DECLARATION

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Alejandra Núñez Asomoza

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SUMMARY

This dissertation explores the discursive practices of twenty-three transnational youths located in Zacatecas, Mexico. The analysis of the qualitative data obtained is informed by Translanguaging —a practical theory of language (Li Wei, 2018b)—. Translanguaging breaks away from the structuralist paradigm of linguistic analysis and is rather described as a "practice that involves dynamic and functionally integrated use of different languages and language varieties. More importantly, it is taken as *a process of knowledge construction* that goes beyond language(s)" (Li Wei, 2018b, p. 15 italics in original). In incorporating translanguaging, this study draws on moment analysis as the core unit of inquiry focusing on naturally occurring languaging and participants' metalinguistic commentaries (Li Wei, 2011; Zhu Hua & Li Wei, 2016).

The study has two main objectives. The first is to identify the translanguaging practices of the participants. This is achieved through the analysis of their discourse within the context of semi-structured interviews and writing compositions conceived as translanguaging spaces. The data analysis resulted in a collection of Translanguaging Natural Occurrences (TNOs) —representing participants' translanguaging practices in their everyday activities across myriad social domains—. The second objective is to explore the ways in which the translanguaging practices of participants explain their identity construction. This is accomplished by analyzing the data corresponding to participants' Metalinguistic Commentaries (MLCs). Through their insights, the youths in this study reveal personal processes of identity construction at the same time as illuminating broader discourses of belonging anchored in the prevailing ideologies of language and identity across the multiple social domains they navigate within the transnational fields they inhabit. The dissertation is arranged around six chapters, which shall be described below.

Chapter 1 presents the rationale of the study. It explains the path leading to the selection of the theoretical framework and the research questions. Finally, it offers a preliminary outline of the literature review covering key areas such as Mexican migration, transnational youths and translanguaging.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the main factors characterizing Mexican migration to the U.S. The first part describes the historical, demographic and sociocultural aspects of Mexican migration whilst the second section outlines the main issues around language and migration, focusing on the tensions around the use of

Spanish in the United States and English in Mexico. The third section describes the characteristics of Zacatecas with a particular emphasis on its transnational profile as part of the historical region of migration in Mexico.

Chapter 3 reviews the theoretical strands underpinning the study. The chapter offers an overview of the development in the scholarship of bilingualism (Baker & Wright, 2017; Li Wei, 2007b; Wald, 1974) and language practices (Hall & Nilep, 2018), which leads to locating the definition of bilingualism for this study within concepts promoted by Grosjean (2010) and García and Li Wei (2014) anchored in the notion of dynamic bilingualism. This chapter then describes translanguaging as a pedagogical practice (Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012) and as a theory of applied linguistics (García & Li Wei, 2014; Li Wei, 2018b). It also reviews the development in the conceptualization of transnationalism with a focus on its contemporary approach embracing multilingualism and dynamic mobility (Robertson, 2013). Finally, this chapter pieces together the aforementioned theoretical strands and highlights their importance in the exploration of identity construction.

Chapter 4 explains the research design and the methodology. It begins by outlining the research design and it describes the participants, the research setting, the researcher positionality and the ethical procedures that were implemented. This chapter defines moment analysis (Li Wei, 2011) and how it operates in data analysis. The third part of this chapter offers details of the data collection process, the instruments and coding procedures. Finally, the limitations of the study are briefly considered.

Chapter 5 presents and discusses the findings of the study. The first part outlines participants' profiles focusing on key biographical information. The chapter then presents the collection of TNOs through the use of graphs and it provides sample quotes of each of the TNOs comprising the collection. This is followed by the presentation of the MLCs, arranged into five broad themes —representing the content of the interviews or text extracts taken from the data corpus—. Each theme is discussed, and interview extracts are interpreted using the lens of translanguaging and moment analysis.

Chapter 6 offers a final review of the study by reflecting on the findings and making connections to theorical perspectives of language and identity as practices of communication that challenge hegemonic ideologies around these constructs. In addition to presenting a summary of the results, this chapter also considers the general and specific implications of the study. Finally, this chapter reflects on the main limitations of the study and it suggests directions for future research.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CEFRL   Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
CIC   Consular Identification Card
CLIL   Content Language Integrated Learning
CONAPO   Consejo Nacional de Población y Vivienda / National Council of Population and Housing (Mexican Government)
DACA   Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals
EFL   English as a Foreign Language
ELT   English Language Teaching
ENDD   Encuesta Nacional de Dinámica Demográfica / National Survey of Demographic Dynamics
INEGI   Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía / National Institute of Statistics and Geography
IRCA   Immigration Reform and Control Act
LILEX   Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras
MLCs   Metalinguistic Commentaries
NAFTA   North American Foreign Trade Agreement
TESOL   Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
TKT   Teaching Knowledge Test
TNOs   Translanguaging Natural Occurrences
TOEFL   Test of English as a Foreign Language
UAZ   Universidad Autónoma de Zacatecas
U.S.   United States (of America)

TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

Symbol	Meaning
…	Pause
[text]	English translations and explicative contextual notes about gestures, accents, tones, etc.
[AN: text], [X: text]	Overlapping speech by the interviewer (AN) or the participant (X)
-	Self-interruption
CAPS	Very emphatic stress
V: / C:	Vowel or consonant lengthening
@	Laughter (the amount of @ indicates an approximate duration)
↗	Rising intonation

Based on De Fina (2003) and De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2012); (2015)

A note on transcription and translation:

The transcribed versions of the interviews shown in the extracts throughout the dissertation have not been modified or edited for grammar or spelling. The 'ungrammatical' utterances, cognates, slang, words in languages other than English and any non-standard forms used by participants were kept as in the original interviews for an organic processing and analysis of the information. Since the study looks at *natural-occurring* language the 'non-standard' forms are not regarded as mistakes nor is the aim of this study to focus on the analysis of language variation or style. The interview extracts or quotes originally uttered by participants in Spanish are always followed by an English translation in parenthesis. When there is no Spanish, the extract or quotation was originally uttered by participants in English.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Rationale

This doctoral dissertation was motivated by an array of professional and personal experiences involving *bilingualism* in the context of transnational mobility and English language learning and teaching in Mexico. As a lecturer in the B.A. in Foreign Languages [1] (LILEX), a dual-language program at the Autonomous University of Zacatecas[2] (Mexico), I began to notice the increasing presence of students who had previous schooling experiences in the United States. Although their stories and profiles are varied and unique, in most of the cases this was due to the local culture of migration and in particular to their families' migration history. Through my academic background and my teaching practice in the area of Applied Linguistics, I observed the struggles that my students faced in navigating or adjusting to a new education system in Mexico. These included linguistic as well as identity struggles, features of which I touched upon in my Master's thesis (see Núñez Asomoza, 2015). That first attempt to document the phenomena I observed in my teaching practice was the basis to develop an idea for this doctoral study.

As I began the journey of doctoral research and given my previous observations in my teaching practice in Mexico, themes related to *biliteracy*, *bilingualism*, and *transnationalism* became significantly salient. Throughout the data collection process of this study —based on a narrative platform— the stories of the participants revealed the role that social and sociocultural remittances played in their language learning process and in their identity construction. Considering the importance of such elements, these findings were discussed in the article *Transnational youth and the role of social and sociocultural remittances in identity construction* (Núñez Asomoza, 2019). However, as I continued to orient the research topic and establish a suitable theoretical framework that would help me explain what participants reported, I turned to the notion of *translanguaging* as the most suitable approach to describe the experience of transnational migration and languaging practices with a more critical lens.

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[1] Translation from the original Spanish: Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras (LILEX).
[2] Translation from the original Spanish: Universidad Autónoma de Zacatecas (UAZ).

Anchored in the theoretical principles underpinning *translanguaging*, the main research question was refined into the following global inquiry: What are the translanguaging practices of transnational youths in central-north Mexico? In order to capture the specific processes and factors characterizing the experiences of the participants three more questions were formulated: 1) What translanguaging practices were reported to occur in the academic and social environment experienced by participants in the U.S. and in Mexico?, 2) What translanguaging practices occurred during the interviews and in the writing samples used as data collection instruments?, and 3) How do the translanguaging practices found in the study explain participants' construction of their personal identity?

1.2 Research background

The early stages of this doctoral study were devoted to gaining a deeper understanding of the concepts and definitions that would be used to talk about the participants and the geopolitical context framing the research topic. Therefore, I began by looking into the history of Mexican migration to the United States (Cornelius, 1981; Délano, 2011; Foley, 2014; Henderson, 2011; Herrera-Lasso, 2009), migration typologies and patterns (BBVA, 2017; Durand, 2006, 2017; Pew Hispanic, 2011) that would help me understand the increasing presence of U.S.-born/raised students in the Mexican education system and specifically in the program where I taught for five years before undertaking this major research project. This exploration led me to identify research on transnational youth within the scope of: *1) Multiliteracies* (Abendroth-Timmer & Hennig, 2014; Boyd & Brock, 2015; NewLondonGroup, 1996; Skerrett, 2012, 2015), *2) transnational children* in basic education in Mexico (Avilés & Mora Pablo, 2014; Borjian, Muñoz de Cote, van Dijk, & Houde, 2016; E. Hamann & Victor Zúñiga, 2011; E. Hamann & Víctor Zúñiga, 2011; Hamann, Zúñiga, & Sánchez García, 2008; Victor Zúñiga & Hamann, 2009), and *3) transnational English language teacher-trainees in Mexico* (Mora Pablo, Rivas Rivas, Lengeling, & Crawford, 2015; Serna-Gutiérrez & Mora-Pablo, 2017). This background allowed me to gain further understanding of the complex literacy and linguistic practices that I had been observing in my teaching practice with transnational students in tertiary education, particularly in the context of a dual-language program. It was in this body of research where I found initial inspiration to visualize the methodological and instrumental choices available for the study design.

As I continued the search for a theoretical framework, I turned to transnationalism, where debates on issues related to identity and language use linked to migration practices became more salient. As pointed out by De Fina (2016) the investigation of "the identities of transnational individuals involves analyzing processes and practices that are different from those that are relevant for people who are firmly grounded in one place" (p.164). Therefore, the incorporation of the transnational dimension became fundamental to appreciate and frame the discursive practices of the participants of this study. From contemporary research that demonstrates the persistent pressure on young Latin-American immigrants in the U.S. "to prove their American-ness by losing Spanish as a native language" (O'Brien, 2017; 2018, p. n.p.f), thus neglecting their embedded or potential transnational practices, to perspectives on the construction of "novel configurations of identification" (Ralph & Staeheli, 2011, p. 521); the experiences and practices of transnational individuals are worth scholarly attention and exploration.

The notion of translanguaging in the field of Applied Linguistics has made significant contributions to research on transnational youths and their languaging practices, pointing at their role in encompassing a "variety of identity articulations and negotiations" (Li Wei & Zhu Hua, 2013, p. 532). Additionally, this research has put a strong emphasis on the importance of "[r]ecognising the diversity of transnational families and the experiences of different generations and individuals" (Zhu Hua & Li Wei, 2016, p. 665). The significant influence of translanguaging has been reflected in the growing body of research emerging in the last decade around the world, particularly in work which examines the tertiary education context (see Mazak & Carroll, 2017). In Europe, a number of studies have also looked at the languaging practices of transnational and multilingual university students (Kaufhold, 2018; Li Wei, 2011; Li Wei & Zhu Hua, 2013; Zhu Hua & Li Wei, 2016). Similarly, a growing body of research in Puerto Rico has illuminated the translanguaging practices of youths at university level (Carroll & Mazak, 2017; Mazak & Herbas-Donoso, 2014, 2015; Rivera & Mazak, 2017). In the United States, Canagarajah's (2013) influential work on *translingual practice* urges us to consider a paradigm shift in the way contemporary research should approach issues around languaging practices and performance. Additionally, research on translanguaging in the U.S. also includes a variety of approaches and populations, with particular attention given to Latino students and language classrooms located in the U.S.-Mexico border (Alvarez, 2014; Arreguín-

Anderson, Salinas-Gonzalez, & Alanis, 2018; Esquinca, Araujo, & De la Piedra, 2014; García & Kleyn, 2016; Ramos & Sayer, 2017; Sayer, 2013; P. H. Smith & Murillo, 2015). Studies on multilingual indigenous communities and transnational migrant communities in the south and southeast regions of Mexico (Christiansen & Farr, 2013; López-Gopar, 2009; López-Gopar, Núñez-Méndez, Sughrua, & Clemente, 2013; Safar, 2019) have added to this wave of research on translanguaging and language ideologies. Therefore, the review of the literature summarized throughout this section has led me to identify a gap in studies involving the languaging practices of university transnational students located in the central-north region of Mexico, particularly in the state of Zacatecas. Research located in this geographical context becomes highly significant considering its historically high migration rates to the United States (BBVA, 2017; Herrera-Lasso, 2009; Roberts, Frank, & Lozano-Ascencio, 1999) and its innate sense of *bi-nationality* (Thompson, 2005; Weeks & Weeks, 2013).

1.3 Content of the dissertation

This dissertation is organized around six chapters that focus on and describe particular aspects of the research project. It is fundamental for this doctoral study to have a general overview of the Mexico-U.S. migration phenomenon from the start; therefore, chapter 2 sets out to provide this background by touching on historical, sociocultural and demographic aspects that allow us to understand the complexities and characteristics of the research setting —Zacatecas— and its dynamics in the present day. In discussing the concepts at the core of this study and their development in the literature over the years, chapter 3 connects the theoretical strands offering a framework for the research. The process of designing the study entailed multiple phases and procedures. From choosing an appropriate population sample to the development and implementation of data collection instruments and ethical procedures, chapter 4 describes the methodology of the study including the process of data coding and analysis. The findings of the study are presented in chapter 5 by means of in-depth description and interpretations of the interviews and writing compositions. The analysis is anchored in the notion of translanguaging moments and the practical theory of translanguaging (Li Wei, 2011, 2018b). The concluding chapter reviews the findings and the contribution of the study in connection to critical perspectives of language,

identity and the prevalence of hegemonic ideologies. In light of these reflections, the last chapter offers suggestions for future directions in research.

1.4 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the research journey of the study described in this dissertation. Every milestone in the path towards the PhD from the initial motivation, the literature review, the planning, the design, carrying out the study and writing this document have contributed significantly to my personal and professional growth. The importance of basing the analysis on data collected through a narrative platform —comprising interviews and writing compositions— is perhaps one of the major assets of this study as it brings to life knowledge that is co-constructed through the process of conversation and translanguaging itself. Moreover, diving into theories and schools of thought that were new for me at the start of this project have allowed me to see my previous work critically questioning and revisiting previous approaches and learning to explore topics from different standpoints that have also reshaped my position with implications for my teaching, my personal life and my intended career as a researcher. The PhD journey has been one of constant reconfiguration of my knowledge-building process, beliefs and practices, which will now become part of my development in all aspects of my life. The feeling described by Xiaolu Guo about the need to locate oneself through authors with their worldviews, their "particular ways of using language, ways of dreaming" (Guo, 2016, p. n.p.) resonated with me along the journey. I keep coming back to Anzaldúa in particular; her bilingual writing and empowering thought are a source of endless stimulation to keep me believing, trying, creating and researching:

> *As you walk along the cliff, you stare down into the waves washing over the rocks, incessantly, persistently, until the end of time. You watch the sun, looking like a perfect golden stone, slowly swallowed up by the ocean. You watch the small blue boat in the bay return to the mainland. Dreaming another story, comiensas a empollar otro huevo. You head back home. Largo camino te queda.*
> (Anzaldúa, 2015, p. 115)

CHAPTER 2

An overview of Mexican migration to the United States

This chapter offers an overview of the migration phenomenon linking Mexico and the U.S. Throughout the sections in this chapter I will discuss the main factors characterizing the socio-economic aspects of the Mexico-U.S. migration flow, and I will describe some socio-cultural and geographical aspects that distinguish the research site where this doctoral study took place. Although there are myriad aspects underpinning the migration phenomenon that are worthy of deep discussion, it is the aim of this chapter to provide a broad context to illuminate the most salient aspects of the Mexico-U.S. migration movement. In giving a wide picture of this phenomenon, this chapter defines the research site where the study of this dissertation was conducted, as well providing an insight into the sociocultural dimension of the places and population living in the research site.

2.1 Factors characterizing Mexican migration to the U.S.

It is a fact that worldwide globalization and technological development have propelled human mobility to such an extent that recent international figures show that the number of global migrants is over 258 million (United Nations, 2017, p. 4). In fact, at the end of the 1990s scholars projected: "[t]he twenty-first century will be one of globalism, and international migration undoubtedly will figure prominently within it" (Massey, Arango, Ali Kouaouci, Pellegrino, & Taylor, 1998, p. 294). In line with this, Castles, De Haas, and Miller (2014) note that "[i]nternational migration is part of a transnational shift that is reshaping societies and politics around the globe" (p.13). Within this global context, the flow of Mexican migrants to the United States has attracted major scholarly attention due to its characteristics, magnitude and political relevance. Consequently, it has been described as "one of the largest mass migrations in modern history" (Pew Hispanic, 2011, p. 8). The phenomenon of Mexico-U.S. migration engenders particularities that make it distinct from other contemporary migration flows, which shall be described in this section.

According to Durand (2017, p. 23), among the different migration-flows converging into the U.S., what distinguishes the mobility of Mexican migrants to this country is: 1) its historicity, 2) the number of migrants and 3) the vicinity. The first

characteristic makes reference to the historical landmarks that have defined the relationship between these two countries. Most authors find the genesis of the migration phenomenon in the annexation of more than half of the Mexican territory to the U.S. in 1848. This corresponds to the entire surface (or large portions) of the current states of Texas, California, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Utah and Colorado. Although, many Mexicans suddenly found themselves 'living in another country', the south-north migration flow did not start *per se* until four decades later (Anzaldúa, 2012; Durand, 2017; Foley, 2014). The movement of Mexican migrants to the U.S. has thus existed for almost two centuries (Cornelius, 1981; Henderson, 2011; Mohar Betancourt, 2009). The second characteristic highlights the quantitative dimension of the phenomenon. Multiple sources calculate that there are over 11 million Mexican migrants in the U.S. while nearly 36 million Hispanics of Mexican origin live in that country (BBVA, 2017, 2018; Migration Policy, 2016; Pew Hispanic, 2017, 2019b). In addition to the massive number of people involved in this phenomenon, Durand (2017) also points at the flow of goods, services and information that contribute to increase the impact of this migration phenomenon at political, economic, social and cultural levels on both ends of the Mexico-U.S. border. Finally, the third characteristic is given by the geographical closeness of these two neighboring countries. Something unique about the relationship between Mexico and the U.S. pertains to the paradoxical nature of their geographic proximity but stark economic disparity (E. González-González, 2009). This difference in turn creates the grounds for a scenario where the U.S. growing labor market draws on the cheap labor force that Mexico 'offers'. Consequently, the migration flow emerges as "a labor phenomenon triggered by the interaction of factors originating on both sides of the border" (Tuirán, 2000). Moreover, the clash of the asymmetric economies in addition to their cultural differences have led to further and intricate political and social tensions that have resulted in an "anti-American nationalism in Mexico and anti-Mexican sentiments in the U.S." (G. González-González, 2009).

The three characteristics that have been described so far allow us to gain a broad picture of the magnitude of the Mexico-U.S. migration phenomenon. The synergies around the history, proximity and scale of interdependence between Mexico and the U.S. have also contributed to the study of delimited regions on both sides of the border that help to gain a deeper understanding of the specific geographical paths that migrants take. Additionally, the characteristics found across regions have also impacted on the emigration profiles of the migrant population adding further intricacies to the

phenomenon. We will now turn to the discussion of how these relevant factors have contributed to distinguish Mexican migration to the U.S.

2.1.1 Regions of Mexican migration origin

Proximity between Mexico and the U.S. has been one of the key factors for the emergence and prevalence of the migration flow across both ends of the border. Although the geographical closeness of these countries might give the impression that the movement of migrants follows a very straightforward direction or that it comes mainly from border areas, the dynamics of migration have an intricate behavior, as migration to the U.S. has become a widespread phenomenon across diverse regions in Mexico for myriad reasons, and at different stages of history. In order to analyze historic and statistical data around the migration phenomenon, Durand (1998; 2017) proposed the study of Mexico in four separate and broad migration regions, which are: 1) the historic region, 2) the borderlands region, 3) the central region and 4) the southeast region. This approach has highlighted significant aspects that inform the characteristics and roles that those regions have played and continue to play in the phenomenon of Mexican migration to the U.S.

Fig. 1. Mexico's migration regions: historic, borderlands, central and southeast (Durand, 2017, p. 350).

The historic region is of particular interest for this dissertation, as the research site: Zacatecas, is located in this area. Consequently, my focus throughout this and the

following sections of this chapter will be on this region. The historic region is integrated by nine states: Durango, Zacatecas, San Luis Potosí, Aguascalientes, Nayarit, Jalisco, Colima and Michoacán. These can be located in white in the map above (Fig.1). From these nine states, Durango, Zacatecas, San Luis Potosí and Aguascalientes are recognized for having expelled the largest numbers of U.S. bound migrants at given points in history. According to Durand (2017) the historic region is further characterized by the following features:

- 5 out of the 9 states in this region account for the largest population of migrants in every single statistical study, meaning that these states have sent migrants to the U.S. unceasingly over the last century. This is partially explained because the constant flow of migrants from this region created a "migration tradition" (CONAPO, 2010b, p. 17) or chain migration patterns that allowed the formation of migrant networks, which facilitated mobility from these regions. This tradition is still prevalent despite some fluctuations in the number of migrants leaving from this region starting in the 2000s (Massey, Rugh, & Pren, 2010).

- The historic region accounts for more than half the total of Mexican migrants. The given reason for this is that the first recruitments of migrants in the early 20th century were carried out in the west-central states of Mexico due to the population density of the region at the time (Durand, 2007; Foley, 2014). Therefore, it became the "heartland for migration to the United States" (Massey et al., 2010, p. npf).

- In addition to the dimension and historicity of its migration tradition, this region reports the largest number of migrants that hold a legal status in the U.S. Given that most of the first migrants recruited came from this region, their presence was proportionally larger than migrants from other regions, which was reflected in the number of beneficiaries that obtained a green card through the IRCA (Immigration Reform and Control Act) regularization law towards the end of the 1980s. Approximately 63.3% out of the 2.3 million migrants that were regularized came from a state in the historic region (Durand, 2017).

- It receives the largest percentages of economic remittances out of all the regions. By 2018, 4 out of the 9 states in the historic region were within the top-ten remittance-receiving states in Mexico. Together, the states of Michoacán, Jalisco, Guanajuato and San Luis Potosí account for 32.7% of the national total economic remittances (BBVA, 2019).

- Social networks, associations, migration circuits and routes have been built and developed by migrants uninterruptedly over one century, reaching a high level of maturity and complexity in how they operate. The migration tradition that emerged in this region shapes the transnational profile of migrants and it has strengthened migrant networks across the border under the premise that "migrants are present in the distance" (Moctezuma Longoria, 2011b, p. 22).

The characteristics of the other three regions are significantly different to those of the historic region as each one operates under very particular social, cultural and economic contexts. The borderlands region is characterized for being wealthy and for hosting large concentration of internal migration from all regions in Mexico. It also receives large percentages of the migrants that are deported from the U.S (CONAPO, 2010b). Additionally, there is a very dynamic movement of *transfronterizo* migrants who travel back and forward between Mexico and the U.S. on a daily basis to go to school, visit relatives or for commercial purposes. The central region is unique in the sense that it concentrates states with very contrastive economies, and it also comprises a large percentage of the internal migration flows to Mexico City (Durand, 2007). The population density in this area has also propelled the need for people to find in international migration the job opportunities that become scarce as population increases in this metropolitan area (CONAPO, 2010b). Many agricultural workers from the states of Guerrero and Oaxaca have created networks in states such as California and New York that facilitate their flow to the U.S. (Durand, 2017). Finally, from the southeast region, a proportionally smaller number of migrants go to the U.S., where they are often hired as cheap *maquila* workforce. The states in southeast Mexico have a large percentage of indigenous population that see in international migration a chance to improve their economic situation and escape the social conflict and inequalities that characterize this region. The southeast region also has the largest population of undocumented workers due to the fact that most of the migrants were not regularized by

the IRCA given their recent insertion to the U.S. workforce. Additionally, there are complex networks of clandestine routes to bring cheap work force to the U.S (Durand, 2017).

2.1.2 Regions of Mexican migration destination in the U.S.

It is important to look at the regions in the U.S. where Mexican migrants have found their destinations. As with the regions of origin, these have also varied and spread over time. Throughout decades the states of California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and Illinois have had the largest presence of Mexican migrants (Massey et al., 2010). It is estimated that during the 1920s, 88% of the Mexican migrant population lived in these states (Durand, 2017). The same five states concentrated 76% of the Mexican migrant population in the year 2000, and by 2010 it reduced to 71.5% (Montaño De La Concha & Herrera-Lasso, 2009). This 'reduction' of population in the traditional places of arrival responds to the spread of Mexican migrants across other regions due to economic re-structuring in the U.S. in addition to the spatial distribution of various industries that employ Mexican workers (Riosmena & Massey, 2012). A current nomenclature proposed by Durand and Massey (2003) divides the U.S. territory into five zones of destination:

1. Southwest phase one: Arizona, California, New Mexico and Texas.

2. Expanding Southwest: Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Washington.

3. The Great Lakes: Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Indiana and Michigan.

4. East Coast: Florida, New York, Georgia, North and South Carolina, Virginia, Columbia District, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont.

5. Great Plateau: Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma and Wyoming.

According to CONAPO (2010b), these regions in the U.S. have seen an intensification in the presence of Mexican migrants at different paces. For instance, by

2010 the Expanding Southwest saw and increase of 6.1% of Mexican migrants while the Mexican population increase started in the 1990s in the Great Plateau. In the Great Lakes, the city of Chicago concentrates around 90% of the total of Mexican migrants in the state of Illinois. Finally, the East Coast, though considered a developing region is rapidly gaining importance. In fact, by the year 2000 it was the second region in the U.S. with the highest concentration of Mexican migrants. The map below shows the main places of residence of Mexican immigrants across the U.S. territory by the year 2015:
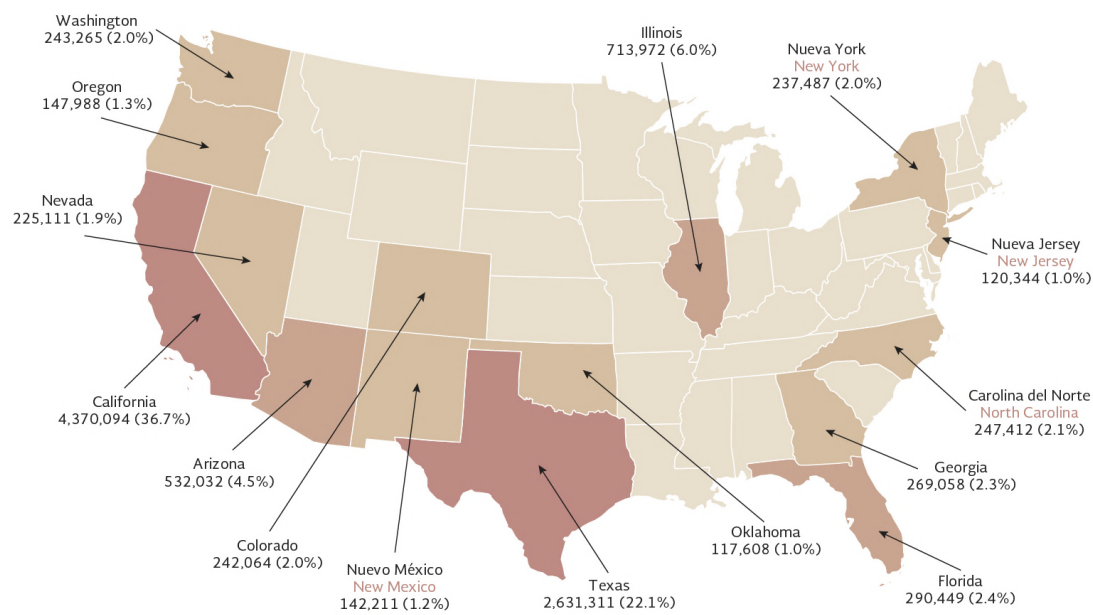
Fig. 2. Major states of residence of Mexican immigrants in the U.S., 2015 (BBVA, 2017).

2.1.3 Regions of return migration in Mexico

The flow of return migration to Mexico is of major relevance, as it implies macro and micro reconfigurations of social, political and economic processes. Return migration is in fact regarded as a new phase in the migration phenomenon Mexico-U.S. (CONAPO, 2015). Return migration is mainly caused by deportations executed by U.S. authorities or it can also be a voluntary choice for migrants. Regardless of the reasons, the return of migrants also has an effect in the geography and demographic dynamics of the communities where they arrive in Mexico; particularly as we consider that migrants do not always return to their places of origin. According to the CONAPO (2015), the historic migration region receives the largest numbers of returnees: a fact that makes

sense, given its major role as a migrant-sending area. This report mentions the states of Guanajuato, Michoacán, Jalisco and Zacatecas as the main returnee-receiving states. However, as the dynamics of migration change, other regions and states have also acquired significance. The following map shows the ten states that received the largest populations of return migrants between 2010 and 2015:
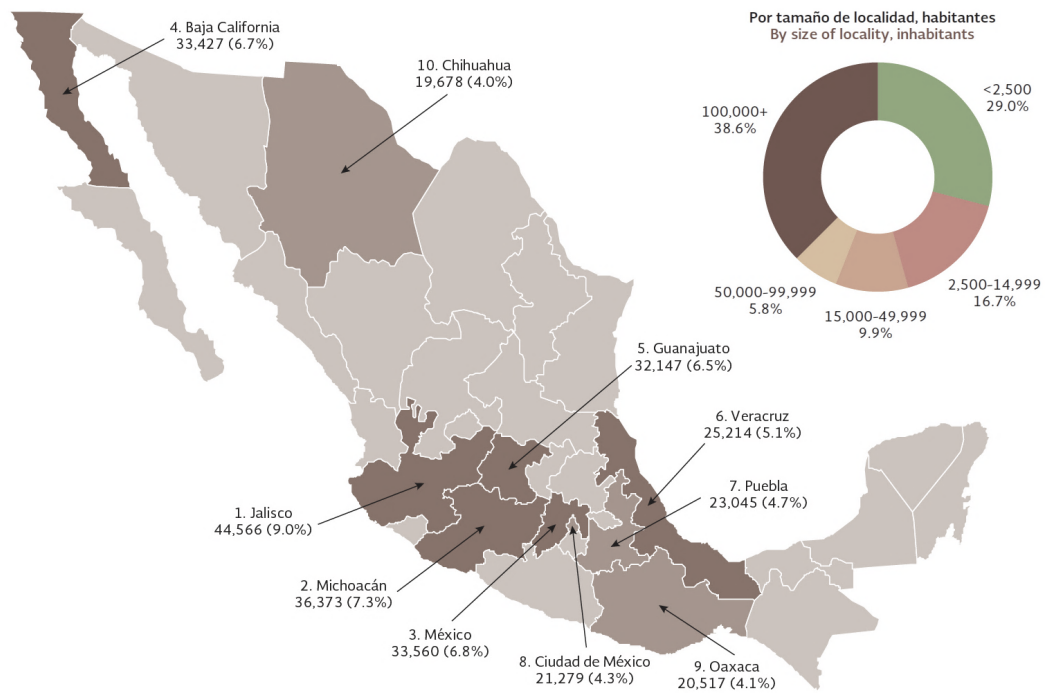
Fig. 3. Mexican migrant returnees, by state, 2010-2015 (BBVA, 2017).

In this map we can see three states belonging to the historic region: Jalisco, Guanajuato and Michoacán. We also note their significance in the reception of returnees as they are within the first five states with the largest population of returnees. Together, these states account for 22.8% of the total national returnee population for the five-year period reported: Jalisco (44,566= 9%), Michoacán (36,373= 7.3%) and Guanajuato (32,147= 6.5%). Additionally, we see how states from the central and southeast regions such as Puebla and Oaxaca also appear as important returnee-receptors. This data coincides with previous information on the increasing development and impact that these regions have had in recent decades as migrant sending areas.

2.1.4 Transient and capricious nature of migration

The deep economic asymmetries between Mexico and the United States have been at the center of the migration phenomenon since the beginning (Durand & Massey, 1992). In fact, the different phases of the Mexico-U.S. migration have been largely shaped as a response to the demands and fluctuations of U.S. economy, which at the same time adhere to the dynamics of the western global markets created in the era of neoliberalism. The establishment of the NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) in the early 1990s modified the economic scenario of the region, "creating a demand for migrant workers" in industries of *maquiladoras* (manufacturing) and agriculture (Castles et al., 2014, p. 132). Although economic markets became more dynamic as a result of new capital investments with the introduction of the NAFTA, the migration policies were not considered in the agreement resulting in "pressures for emigration and increasingly restrictive border policies", which have characterized the "patterns and processes of Mexico-U.S. migration" (Fernández-Kelly & Massey, 2007, p. 99).

The long history of the Mexican migration to the U.S. comprises various phases, which have particular characteristics closely related to the dynamics of market demands in the U.S. Many specialists coincide in the identification of at least three main periods ranging from the beginning of migration in the 1880s to the 1990s or 2000s (Foley, 2014; E. González-González, 2009; Henderson, 2011; Roberts et al., 1999). However, the latest classification comes from Durand (2017), who identified six phases that are particularly represented by patterns or profiles that define each one. In the table below I summarize the main economic, social and/or political events that contextualize the phases:

Phase 1: Attachment (1884-1920)	Phase 2: Deportations (1921-1941)
In 1882 and 1907 the U.S. prohibited the entrance of Chinese and Japanese workers respectively. The Mexican and U.S. railway systems were connected facilitating the transportation of Mexican workers to the U.S.	Recession started after the post-war leaving generalized unemployment leading to the crisis of 1929. Three massive deportations took place, and over 500,000 Mexican workers were sent to their places of origin.

Phase 3: Bracero programs (1942-1964)	Phase 4: The undocumented (1965-1986)
The involvement of the U.S. in the WWII led to the need for hiring of workers for agriculture and the railway industry. The U.S. agreed to establish a bilateral agreement to import Mexican workers legally covered by what they called Bracero[3] program. The agreements were renovated for two decades only.	At the same time that the U.S. economy began to flourish after the war, they implemented racist measures against immigration from various countries including Mexico. The lack of migration agreements during this period led to the emergence of an unprecedented undocumented migration flow. The U.S. implemented a bipolar system of tolerance and deportation to try to balance the situation.

Phase 5: Amnesty, regularization and border control (1987-2007)	Phase 6: Migration reform (2007-2014)
The passing of the IRCA law in 1986 allowed the regularization of approximately 2.3 million Mexican immigrants over this phase. The U.S. increased the border control and started using the figure of undocumented migrants as a political platform. Mexico implemented programs aimed at facilitating migrant returns or visits during holiday seasons.	The irregular *flow* of Mexican migrants reached a peak of 6.9 million in 2007 and the *stock* of irregular migrants was estimated in 12 million by 2008. A program of regularization was offered through the DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) only to a small portion of the population. "[t]he Obama administration deported a record-setting 400,000 undocumented migrants, including 90,000 parents of American-born children, leaving 5,000 children in foster care" (Foley, 2014, p. 227).

Table 1. Summary of six phases of Mexican migration to the U.S. (Based on Durand, 2017).

When we look closely at the phases in the table above it is evident that the policy towards Mexican migration has followed a "pendular movement" (E. González-González, 2009, p. 36) that is reflected in the ebb and flow of border controls. In the first phase (1884-1920), the border opened to the first wave of Mexican workers bound for agricultural and railway industries. In the second phase (1921-1941), we see the tightening of migration policies, which materializes in the first massive deportation of

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[3] The word Bracero comes from 'brazo' (arm) in Spanish, therefore it makes reference to the need for the 'arms of workers' to pick up crops and maintain railways.

Mexican workers. The third phase (1942-1964) is marked by a new type of policy, which for the first time contemplated a formal agreement. Workers, therefore, were allowed to migrate under the *Bracero* program. The fourth phase (1965-1986), saw the termination and nonrenewal of the migration agreements that proved so popular in the previous phase. This decision resulted in the strengthening of border control and more deportations of Mexican workers, a situation that led to the increase in the numbers of undocumented migrants attempting to cross the border upon the lack of a clear migration policy. The fifth phase (1987-2007), was characterized by the amnesty granted under the IRCA law in 1986, which 'opened the border' again to allow the regularization of a great percentage of immigrants who had been established and assimilated in the U.S. Finally, the sixth phase (2007-2014), which has extended and is still ongoing has seen a strong reinforcement and militarization of border control, which reached record-numbers of deportees during the Obama administration. More recently, under the direction of the Trump administration there has been a significant increase of the anti-Mexican rhetoric centered around negative and exaggerated stereotypes and the construction of a wall on the border with Mexico.

2.1.5 "Schizophrenic" U.S. migration policy and the omissive approach of Mexico

The pendular movement described as characterizing the patterns of Mexico-U.S. migration has led scholars to qualify the U.S. migration policy as "schizophrenic" (Foley, 2014; Portes & Rumbaut, 2014). This erethism of U.S. migration policy has been an unsolved issue from the beginning, prevailing until contemporary times. It can be said that the implementation of a formal policy was established until the 1940s when the *Bracero* programs started operating (Heer, 1990). However, later phases of migration have not included the creation of similar agreements, even within the framework of macro commercial agreements such as the NAFTA. In fact, Fernández-Kelly and Massey (2007) explain that U.S. supporters of the NAFTA "instead insisted on the unilateral right to prevent Mexican workers from migrating through restrictive border policies" (p.99).

Even though there have been attempts to regulate migration flows and the status of undocumented migrants in the U.S., the tensions between both countries continue to prevent the establishment of agreements (Délano, 2009). It is clear that a complex phenomenon such as migration can only be addressed with the cooperation of both countries, a situation that continues to be challenging in this case. Although the U.S.

might appear to be active through the implementation of agreements such as the *Bracero* programs or the amnesty through the IRCA law, these have responded to particular interests at specific moments in history on their side. Therefore, their approach towards migration policy is regarded as "a policy of tolerance" (Tuirán, 2006, p. 17). On the other hand, Mexico has followed a policy of omission that has been described as the "policy of no policy" (Délano, 2009, p. 770; Durand, 2017). This approach has been taken at different stages of the relationship with the U.S, although Mexico has increasingly made efforts to engage more actively in the negotiations of migration agreements.

From the 1990s the scenario for the negotiation of migration policies that would benefit both countries has seen increasing challenges. It was precisely during this decade that the situation began to deteriorate with the passing of highly restrictive laws aimed at punishing undocumented migration, particularly in the states of California and Arizona. The passing of proposition 187 in California saw heavy restrictions in access to basic services such as education, health and state welfare; while proposition SB 1070 in Arizona increased the persecution and arrest of suspected unauthorized migrants (Foley, 2014; Portes & Rumbaut, 2014). Additionally, the Clinton administration began the construction of fences along the border with Mexico and implemented "quasi military operations in the border" (Foley, 2014, p. 201).

The most recent attempt to negotiate a migration policy was carried out at the start of the 2000s. Although at the time the Bush administration in the U.S. and the Fox administration in Mexico began delineating the elements for what would have been a historic agreement, the negotiations were stopped after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 (Délano, 2009, 2011; Tuirán, 2006). Despite the unfortunate slowdown of the negotiations, the Mexican government managed to develop a closer relationship with communities of migrants in the U.S., which led to the strengthening of cooperation and "consular protection" (Délano, 2009, p. 793) of the migrants abroad.

2.1.6 Adjustments in the profile of Mexican migrants

Over the years the image of the Mexican migrant has been centered on the archetypical masculine figure representing "the poor and ignorant peasant" coming from rural areas (Alba-Hernández, 1976, p. 157). However, the profile of Mexican migrants has responded to the particularities of given moments in history, thus evolving over time. The six phases of Mexican migration discussed above (see table 1) will be

considered here as a framework to explain the changes in the profile of Mexican migrants. A particular emphasis will be put on the contemporary demographic data that provide information on the individuals embarking in migration journeys to the U.S.

During the period 1884 to 1920 important social and economic changes in Mexico and in the U.S. set the grounds for what was previously referred to as the first phase of migration. In 1884 the railroad connecting Texas and Mexico began operations allowing Mexican workers to travel from central and center-north regions from the country to be inserted in the booming agriculture and railway industries of the U.S. Southwest (Garcilazo, Garcilazo, & Garcilazo, 2012; Henderson, 2011; Hernández, 2009). Considering the labor context of the time, the flow of Mexican migrants to the U.S. was dominated by "unskilled rural workers" (Alba-Hernández, 1976). The dynamics of migration in this period extended throughout the second and third phases of migration from 1921 to 1950s. Throughout these decades the profile of migrants and their job opportunities remained a constant. The termination of the Bracero programs around this time played a significant role in the growth of illegal migration, a feature that without doubt marked the following decades and migration phases. Since Mexican workers were already aware of the job opportunities in the U.S., they began crossing the border illegally when the seasonal migration agreements that had been so popular until then were cancelled. During this time undocumented migrants became known as *mojados* or *wetbacks*. The unceasing flows of undocumented migrants during this period were used politically in the U.S. and they were depicted as an 'invasion'. This discourse led to the justification and orchestration of the *Wetback Operation* in the U.S. This was a double sided policy that on one hand allowed mass legalization, but on the other hand it aimed at deporting undocumented migrants from U.S. territory (Foley, 2014; Hernández, 2009).

During the 1970s there was an important shift in the profile of Mexican migrants, which also included the incorporation of women to the flows of workers. The number of men and women who migrated during this time was very close in proportion, and the majority of the emigrants were between 10-40 years old. A study conducted by Alba-Hernández (1976) found that most of the migrants who entered the U.S. legally during the 1970s came from urban areas, a situation that contrasted with illegal migration that comprised mainly rural workers. Additionally, the data showed that the level of education had also increased: a large percentage of migrants would have normally concluded basic education and in some cases secondary education was partially

completed. Alba-Hernández explains that even though migrants continued to find jobs in the agricultural industry, they also began to diversify their participation in the areas of construction, business and services. The incorporation of women during this period and in later phases is attributed to the encouragement of older migrant siblings or to the desire to reunite with their migrant husbands who were already in the U.S. Migrant women would then perform domestic work by minding children and cleaning (Durand, 2017; Marcelli & Cornelius, 2001).

The migrant profile during the 1990s did not change significantly. In fact, a study conducted by Durand, Massey, and Zenteno (2001) demonstrated that the profile of Mexican migrants had a "remarkable continuity" (p. 124). Their findings confirmed that the migration flows continued to be dominated by men between 18-34 years old who came from the west-central region of Mexico and were characterized for being unskilled and skilled manual workers. These authors claim that women and children were already active participants in the migration phenomenon, but demographic data gave more visibility to their presence, particularly as whole families. The authors also highlight that the apparent new urban profile of migrants was due to the urbanization of Mexico, which was reflected in internal migration and demographic changes associated with this urbanization. Finally, the data in this study shows a significant "propensity toward return migration", meaning that migrants preferred short-term or cyclical stays (Durand et al., 2001, p. 124).

After the 1990s the core characteristics of the Mexican migrants' profile has not changed significantly, but it has had some important fluctuations which also impact on the overall characteristics of the macro flows of migrants. The latest census data available in Mexico estimates that of all national emigrants, 89.4% migrate to the U.S. (INEGI, 2010) confirming that this destination is still the first option for Mexican migrants. Regarding the regions of origin of Mexican migrants, some changes are observed, nonetheless, the historic region remains the main migrant-sending region according to data from the ENDD (2014):
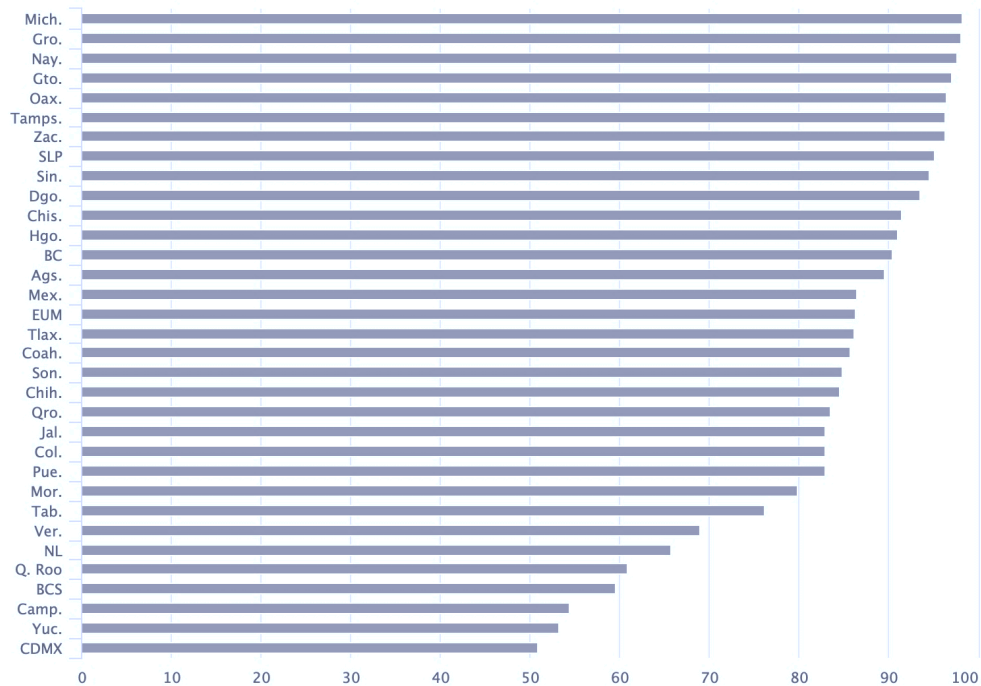
Fig. 4. Percentage of migrants with the U.S. as a final destination per state in Mexico (ENDD, 2014).

The graph above shows a list of the states in Mexico and the percentage of emigrants from those states that had the U.S. as their final destination. Within the first ten there are six states that belong to the historic region of migration: Michoacán (1), Nayarit (3), Guanajuato (4), Zacatecas (7), San Luis Potosí (8) and Durango (10). The remaining states in the top-ten belong to the central region: Guerrero (2) and Oaxaca (5) and the borderlands region: Tamaulipas (6) and Sinaloa (9). Between 93-98% of the emigrants from these states migrate to the U.S.

Although the number of Mexicans who migrate to the U.S. is still very important, there has been a major decrease. This is to a great extent attributable to the tightening of the immigration polices imposed by the U.S. government in recent years. The graph below shows the fluctuations in the number of migrants who arrived in the U.S. since the year 1975 until 2017:
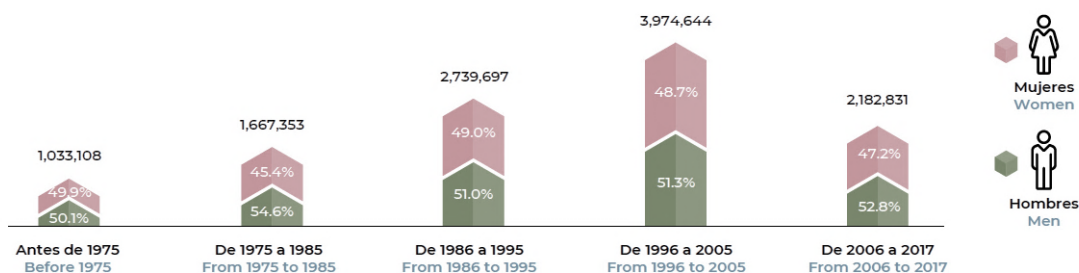
Fig. 5. Mexican migrants in the United States by period of arrival, 2017 (BBVA, 2019, p. 50).

From this graph we see that during the period between 1996 and 2005 there was a significant increase in the number of Mexican migrants who arrived in the U.S., reaching almost 4 million. This number was significantly reduced in the next period 2006-2017 where the number of arrivals dropped to 2.2 million. The gender proportion is consistent with the reports from other periods described along this section. From the graph we see that the migration flow has included almost the same number of men and women, although the percentual differences ranging between 0.2%-9.2%, for the periods in the graph, point at a slightly higher number of men estimated in 52.8% for the period 2006-2017. In terms of the legal status of Mexican migrants in the U.S. the data available show that 3.8 million (32.8%) had citizenship, while 7.7 million (67.2%) did not have citizenship (BBVA, 2019; OMI, 2017). Additionally, the Pew Research Center reports a historic decrease in the number of unauthorized migrants from Mexico estimated in 4.9 million, which dropped by 2 million since 2007 when the number reached a peak of 6.9 million. This report also shows a reduction in the number of apprehensions of unauthorized Mexican migrants, which were "outnumbered" by the apprehensions of non-Mexican unauthorized migrants (Pew Hispanic, 2019a).

Other important aspects in the profile of migrants is their level of education and their age. The latest reports indicate that 72.7% of the total of migrants have an education ranging from middle to high school. Additionally, 18.5% of these migrants have partial or complete college degrees (BBVA, 2019; OMI, 2017):
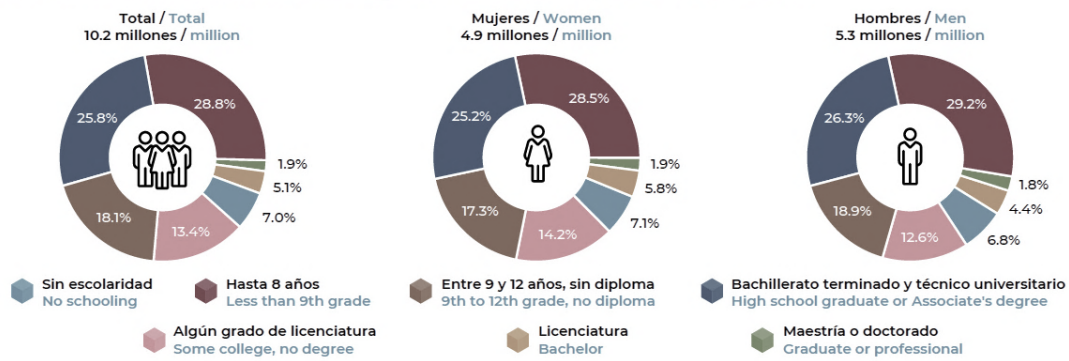
Fig. 6. Percentual distribution of the Mexican migrants in the U.S. by educational level (BBVA, 2019, p. 51).

The age profile of the Mexican migrants has shifted from that of previous decades in terms of the percentage distribution, although it remains localized between 15-64 years old. The age distribution for the year 2017 is as follows:
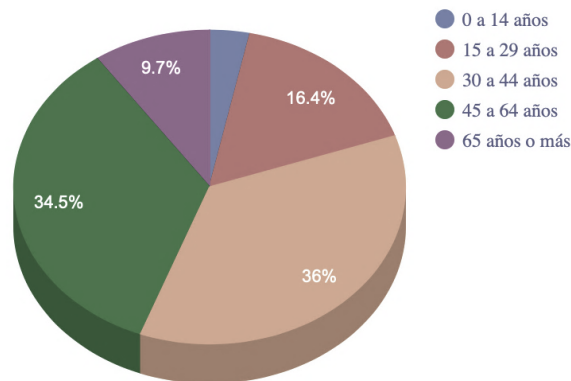
Fig. 7. Mexican migrant age groups 2017 (OMI, 2017).

Considering the wide range of ages comprising the flow of Mexican migrants to the U.S. it is worth looking at their reasons to migrate. According to the survey ENDD (2014), there were six causes of migration:

Causes of emigration	Percentage
Looking for a job	67.8%
Reunite with family	14.4%
Studying	12.4%
Violence	1%
Regularization of migration status	0.8%
Other	3.5%
Not mentioned	0.1%

Table 2. Summary of percentage of causes of Mexican emigration (ENDD, 2014).

When we consider the percentages of age groups and those of the reasons to migrate it is clear that the percentages of migrants between 15-44 years old and a good portion of those in the 45-64 group correspond to the percentage of those looking for job opportunities and studying. The older migrants and a good portion of women and children would be more likely to migrate to reunite with family. Therefore, these data confirm the continuity of the Mexican migration as a largely labor-driven flow. In this regard, the following figure summarizes the main activities of Mexican migrants in the U.S:

Fig. 8. Percentage distribution of the Mexican migrants in the U.S. according to economic activity (BBVA, 2019, p. 53).

The presence and role of Mexican migrants in the U.S. continues to have an extremely significant impact. Moreover, Mexican migrants have diversified their activities and they are now inserted in various fields, such as: construction (20.2%), manufacturing (14.3%), professional and business activities (12.6%), leisure and hospitality (11.6%), health and education (10.1%), trade (9.5%), among others. It is worth highlighting here that the agricultural sector has lowered its percentual representation. This area, which was for decades the main activity of Mexican migrants in the U.S. is now performed by only 5.2% of workers. This fact represents one of the most significant changes in the profile of Mexican migrants in the U.S. in recent years, although a large percentage of migrants continue to perform low-skilled jobs.

2.1.7 The profile of Mexican returnees

Given the relevance that return migration has had in recent years it is imperative to look at the profile of return migrants relocating in Mexico. In section 2.1.3 two types of returns were mentioned: voluntary and forced. Both types of return migration have an impact at various levels in the place of relocation. However, it is very important to consider the complexities of forced return, as it normally happens in the context of deportation and it is marked by circumstances in which migrants are put in criminal records and/or experience family separation and economic instability (CONAPO, 2015). Consequently, within this context, perceptions about returnees are commonly based on stigmatized ideas that position these individuals negatively in the eyes of general public. This situation increases their level of vulnerability and chances of being discriminated against in the place of relocation. A *return migrant* is defined in the report by CONAPO (2015) as "any individual, who returns to their place of origin, independently of the duration of their migration experience abroad, the cycle of life when it occurs or if they return temporally, definitely, voluntarily or forcedly" (pp. 32-33).

Recent reports on migration in Mexico have paid significant attention to documenting the profile and data corresponding to return migrants. The following graph summarizes the main sociodemographic features of returnees for the period 2010-2015:
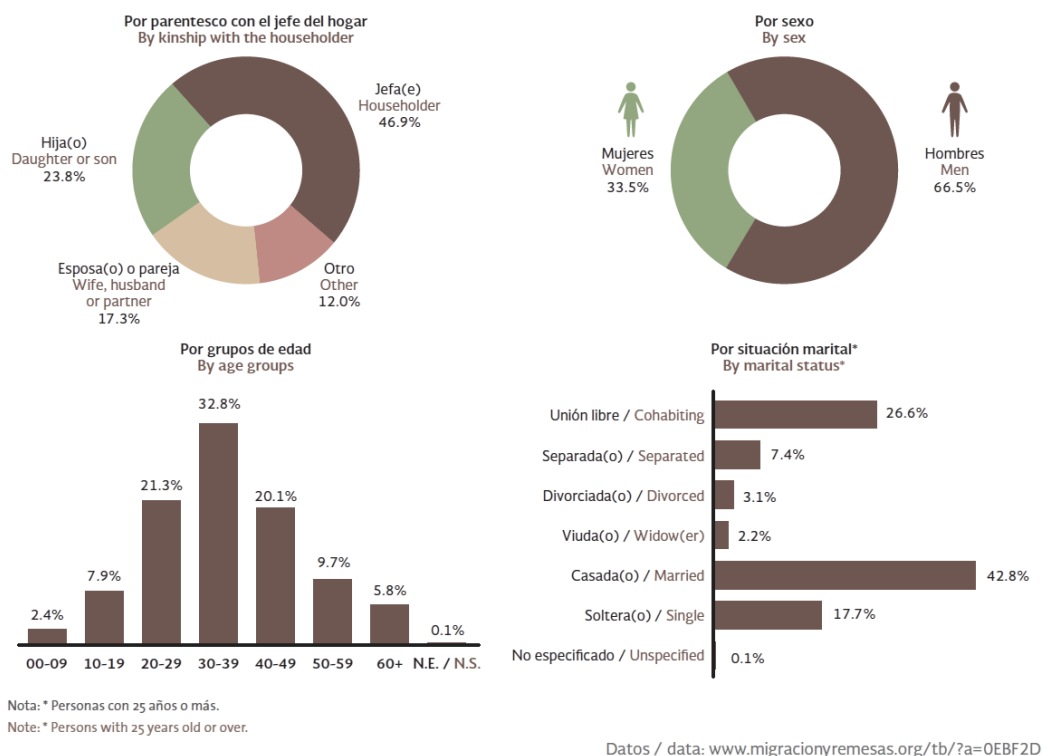
Fig. 9. Sociodemographic characteristics of Mexican returnees, 2010-2015 (BBVA, 2017, p. 96).

The data in the graph allows us to delineate a general profile of returnees. This population is characterized for being mainly composed by men (66.5%) while women make up for about a third of the total (33.5%). The age groups of returnees are varied, but most of them are between 20-49 years old, with the largest percentage between 30-39 years old. This is, thus, predominantly young population, with potential to be inserted into the labor market. The data also shows aspects of their family life indicating that 69.4% are married or cohabiting, therefore the majority of them are householders (46.9%). The report by CONAPO (2015) emphasizes the level of vulnerability of returnees between 6-24 years old as their "migration journeys and early socialization derive in particular needs" (pp.168-169) particularly in terms of access to education and health services. This aspect will be further explained in section 2.3.4 with an emphasis on the context of Zacatecas.

2.1.8 Mexico and the culture of migration

In addition to the characteristics of the Mexico-U.S. migration it is also imperative to look at the effects that this phenomenon has had at a sociocultural level,

particularly in light of this research project's analysis of identity formation, which finds its coordinates in surrounding society. The historicity and evolution of the Mexico-U.S. migration are without a doubt strongly linked to the practices, behaviors and aspirations of migrants and non-migrants. These have an effect not just on individuals' lives but also have a bearing on the communities they belong to and the places they come from or connect to through their mobility. In fact, the relevance and influence of the Mexico-U.S. migration has derived from the emergence of what scholars call a 'culture of migration'.

Even though it has been well established that the flows of migrants from Mexico to the U.S. has remained active due to the economic fluctuations and the commercial relationships between these countries, the migration phenomenon seems to be embedded in various ways. Thus, it could be said that it is transmitted through a series of mechanisms that allow it to permeate widely across social domains. Migration in Mexico, though in some regions more than others, has acquired a significant value that manifests explicitly and symbolically in the landscape, language use, government and migrant-association programs, music, arts and religious practices among others. The influence and manifestation of the culture of migration in Mexico have been documented in literature from different perspectives and it includes both quantitative and qualitative research that have led investigators to reach important conclusions on the mechanisms at the core of the transmission of this culture.

The effects of migration that might offer an explanation for the emergence of the so called 'culture of migration' have been studied according to Halpern-Manners (2011) from at least three approaches: 1) Migration as an avenue for capital flow, 2) Migration as a mode of cultural diffusion and 3) Migration as a behavior transforming the practices and meanings of family life. The first approach places the perpetuation of migration in terms of family or community economic growth. According to this approach when families or communities receive economic remittances from migrants there is an "increased consumer spending" (p.75) that causes an effect of dependency leading to migration being promoted by individuals on both ends in order to keep their prosperity. However, a criticism of this approach is the heavy focus on the economic aspect of migration and the disregard of the developments or acquisition of human capital. The second approach is strongly influenced by the lens of transnationalism. Unlike the previous approach, this second one considers human capital in a very particular way. From this perspective the emergence of a culture of migration is

attributed to "belief structures" (p.76), meaning that in addition to the exchange of economic remittances there is also an exchange of ideas, practices, skills and symbolic goods known as *sociocultural remittances*. As pointed out by Halpern-Manners, research in this area (Kandel & Massey, 2002; Levitt, 2001; Massey, Goldring, & Durand, 1994) identifies the ways in which the exchange of these sociocultural remittances within transnational fields acts as an *incentive* to maintain the cycle of migration. Finally, the third approach regards the *preservation* of migration in terms of the reconfiguration of families or communities to compensate or reciprocate migrants for their work abroad. Research following this approach has found for instance that the children of migrants tend to perform highly in school or to take on adult responsibilities in the house as a sign of reciprocity and acknowledgement of their parents hard work and the emotional support received from abroad (Halpern-Manners, 2011, p. 77). Although this research is still emergent and is concentrated in case-study investigation, the findings illuminate the dynamics of international migration and its effects on the emergence of a culture of migration in the places of origin and destination connected by migrants.

Research on the culture of migration in Mexico focuses not just on socio-cultural remittances but also looks to its prevalence in cultural forms such as art, religious expression and music (Kandel & Massey, 2002). Moreover, research has also aimed at further understanding the mechanisms that keep migration flows active from a sociocultural perspective. There are two studies that are significantly relevant to the discussion of these mechanisms. Both have been conducted in the state of Zacatecas, which belongs to the historic region of migration. The first study carried out by Kandel and Massey (2002) is a quantitative research that explored the relationship between the migration aspirations of youths and the history of migration of their families. Their findings suggest that the culture of migration manifested in the aspirations of children and teens to live or work in the U.S. are attached to family practices rather than to wider-public practices. Interestingly, they also found gender differences pointing at a higher prevalence of males to want to work in the U.S., while females were more likely to want to both work and live in the U.S. based on previous family migration experiences. The second study conducted by Moctezuma Longoria (2011b) followed an ethnographic approach that provides details on the manifestation of the culture of migration. Moctezuma Longoria claims that the emergence of a culture of migration is given by the "everyday experiences related to migration" (p.196). For instance, he

mentions the religious celebrations during particular seasons, the use of anglicisms, the acquisition of sports cars and the display of holiday photographs from the U.S. in houses in Mexico, among many others. Moctezuma Longoria explains that particularly in the historic region, the culture of migration emerges symbolically within the process of migrant-return extending to his/her descendants. Additionally, the observations of the community studied revealed that in the case of Zacatecas the culture of migration "is associated with *ranchera* and *banda* music in addition to the culture of the *ranchero* and *rural* culture"[4] (p.199).

2.2 Mexican migration to the U.S. and language issues

Language differences and language contact have been a historic and major source of tensions in the relationship between Mexico and the United States. In fact, these tensions have also been reflected and spread internally in both countries, leading to the emergence of mostly negative perceptions that have resulted in the rejection of Spanish in the U.S. and English in Mexico by a good portion of the population in both countries. On the one hand the use of Spanish has been used systematically as a political platform to support and justify actions related to immigration policy in the U.S., while the use of English in Mexico has mainly been associated with the idea of imperialism and restricted to elites.

Thousands of years before the colonization of the American continent, the space occupied by the current U.S. Southwest was populated by Native Americans and then Mexicans who had their native languages, many of which are still spoken today by indigenous groups. The arrival of colonizers from Spain to the area of Florida in 1513 and the subsequent foundation of various cities in the Southwest such as: Santa Fe, El Paso, San Antonio and Los Angeles precipitated the use and imposition of the Spanish language in that region (Foley, 2014). It was not until 1607 that English colonizers arrived in Jamestown, adding the English language to the already linguistically diverse landscape comprising native languages and languages from other European settlers such as Dutch, French and German (Kövecses, 2000). However, despite the wide spread of English as the dominant language in the U.S., Spanish in addition to many other languages and varieties such as Chicano English and Chicano Spanish have prevailed and are widely used today by millions of people in myriad social domains.

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[4] Mendoza-Denton (2008) translates *ranchera* music as Mexican country music and *banda* music as polkas.

2.2.1 Spanish in the United States

In 2018 figures showed that 40 million people spoke Spanish at home in the U.S. (Pew Hispanic, 2018b). In fact, Spanish is the second most spoken language in that country after English. The U.S. Census figures indicate that 78% of the population speak English in the U.S, while Spanish is spoken by 13.5% of the population (Census Bureau, 2018). Although Spanish is gaining significance due to the increasing presence of population from Latin-American-descent[5] in the U.S., it is still spoken by a minority of the population. Moreover, in recent years there has been an increase in the number of young Latinos who are English proficient or dominant:
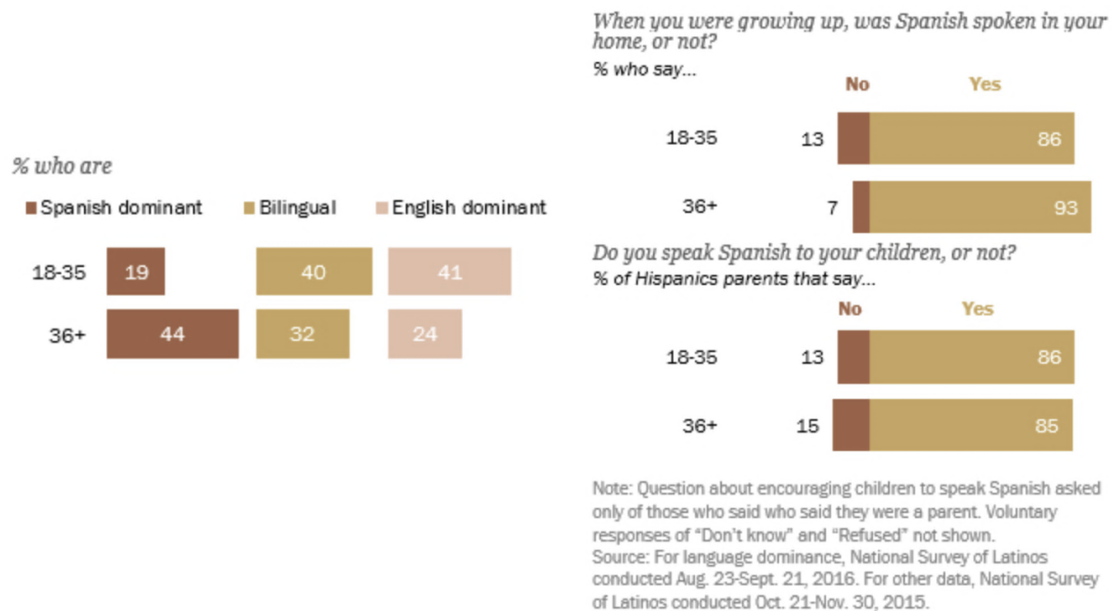
Fig. 10. Language proficiency among Latinos in the U.S. (Pew Hispanic, 2018a).

According to the figure above, young Latinos between 18-35 years old are mostly English dominant (41%) or bilingual (40%). This trend contrasts with older Latinos who are mostly Spanish dominant (44%) or bilingual (32%). Regarding the use

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[5] It is important to add a note on the nomenclature used in this section as I am aware of the various labels used to refer to Latin-American (im)migrants and their identities. Terms such as *Latino, Latina, Latin@, Latinx or Hispanic* have been used by different stakeholders in numerous ways and contexts as pan-ethnic descriptors grouping population from Latin-American countries, and some of them have emerged with the intention of being inclusive of the multiple dimensions of people's identities. A recent review by Salinas Jr. and Lozano (2019) on the evolution and usage of this terminology and particularly the term *Latinx* illuminates important aspects of the existing nomenclature and it emphasizes the importance of using labels coming directly from people's processes of self-identification without imposing or assuming the use of a label as appropriate or neutral in its origin. Therefore, in this section I use the term Latino(s) as it is used in the reports issued by the Pew Research Center in referring to the population of Latin-American descent surveyed. Other references to this terminology will adhere to the terms used by people themselves in their original comments as in the case of participant-interview transcripts or extracts cited in this dissertation.

of Spanish at home and with their children we see an overwhelming percentage of Latinos performing these practices with more than 80% in both age-groups. Something that is worth highlighting is that despite being Spanish or English dominant in a small or large percentage, Latinos in the U.S. are above all bilingual (72% adding both age-groups). Moreover, the linguistic profile of Latinos in the U.S. independently of their migration or citizenship status plays a fundamental role in the way they are perceived and treated. Language use is a major marker of identity for Latinos in the U.S. In fact, the use of Spanish has been found to be the "main cultural feature" that makes Latinos both visible and invisible placing them as the target of "racial-linguistic aggression" (Flores-González, 2017, p. 38).

Hostility towards Spanish-speakers in the U.S. has been systematic over decades, as it has been for other-language speaking groups at given points in the history of the U.S. The pressure and prosecution experienced by speakers of Spanish (particularly those of Latin-American descent) is grounded in the meaning of language under the U.S. vision. This vision places language homogeneity as "the bedrock of national identity" and the ultimate proof of assimilation (Portes & Rumbaut, 2014, p. 215). Towards the second decade of the 1900s this vision became widespread as a result of Theodore Roosevelt's "notion of good citizenship and national loyalty" (Gerstle, 1999; Macgregor-Mendoza, 1996, p. 59). Since then, efforts have been unceasing in the U.S. to try to limit the use and spread of Spanish in its territory. In fact, 27 states have passed laws declaring English the official language (Portes & Rumbaut, 2014). Actions such as these have led to the "criminalization" of Spanish (Macgregor-Mendoza, 1996) and the terrorization of Spanish-speakers and Latin-American-descent communities by extension.

2.2.2 The English-only movement targets Spanish-speakers

The idea of having the English language as the 'unifying force' in the project of the American nation has been present and reinforced systematically. Therefore, there have been multiple and constant efforts to make this the official language of the U.S. During the 1980s two organizations, U.S. ENGLISH and English First, were founded with the purpose of lobbying legislation that would make English the official language in the country. The actions and agenda of these organizations and their supporters gained strength during the 1990s and they have continued until the present. The project and ideal of the English-only moment "has its roots in the historical racism and white

supremacy in the United States" (Hartman, 2003, p. 188). As such, it is not surprising that it emphasizes the need for immigrants and non-English speakers to renounce their languages and replace them with English under the premise that this would lead them to better opportunities and equality. The English-only movement has managed to push their ideals far enough to make 27 states declare the English language as official according to the U.S. ENGLISH website consulted in early 2020 (U.S. ENGLISH, 2000) .

The movement has also been in the spotlight for their influence in driving the passing of Proposition 187 in California and Act SB 1070 in Arizona back in the 1990s. Their involvement in lobbying this type of legislation confirms that the rejection towards non-English speakers is closely connected to immigration policy (Macgregor-Mendoza, 1996), with Spanish-speaking Latinos as the center of attention as they become the largest minority in the U.S. In a nutshell, this movement is regarded by many scholars as the promotor of *Hispanophobia* (Zentella, 1997b, p. 74) as it places Spanish as "the language of the savage, of the "wetback" illegally crossing the Rio Grande hoping to steal American jobs. It is the language of the brown-skinned […]" (Hartman, 2003).

2.2.3 Schools as tools for linguistic assimilation

Language is a central element in school, not only as a subject of study but as the vehicle for the acquisition of knowledge and interaction. The importance of language in school is strongly linked to the policies and ideologies of the nation-state (Farr & Song, 2011). There is a general belief that a State equals one language (Ex. Japan = Japanese, France = French, etc.). In fact, "[a] nation-state is a mental construct made up of affinities such as language with imagined people" (García, 2009a, p. 25; Howard, 2011). From this perspective, the State promotes the use of a particular language drawing on myriad institutions and delivery methods including schools. In the case of the U.S., like in many other nations, the public education system has been "seen as the most efficient tool by which to foster cultural and linguistic assimilation" (Macgregor-Mendoza, 1996, p. 59). In turn, the process of socialization inside schools stimulates "nationalism and wider social conformity to prevailing norms and hierarchies" (Windle, 2015, p. 90). Consequently, an environment of exclusion gestates in the school context and it is manifested not only at the level of student interactions, but also at the core of institutional processes and policies that systematize exclusion (Farr & Song, 2011;

Víctor Zúñiga, 2011). The complexity of these synergies inside schools leads to the emergence of tensions as students and teachers from different social, cultural, ethnic and/or linguistic backgrounds co-exist and navigate institutional visions and requirements that favor monocultural and monolingual ideologies.

As a result, these tensions often lead to the segregation and punishment of 'otherness'. Even though this scenario is common in various school contexts around the world (Kristen, 2005; Murillo, 2016; Stanley, 2011; Windle, 2015), we focus here on the context of the U.S., where the systematic exclusion and harassment towards non-English speakers have been a common practice particularly addressed to Latino students "on the basis of race and language" (B. M. Arias, 1986; Macgregor-Mendoza, 2000, p. 356). Many times, Latino students —regardless of their bilingualism— are classified as English learners and confined to English Learning programs leaving them outside mainstream classrooms and with limited interaction with their Anglo peers (Gándara & Aldana, 2014; García, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008). Moreover, research has found that these practices obscure students background and skills as bilingual learners and they are portrayed as deficient or unintelligent (García, 2010). These conclusions are often reached based on results of standardized examinations or instruments that are conducted in English only and framed around White-mainstream cultural knowledge (Flores & Schissel, 2014; García, 2009b; Skerrett, 2012).

2.2.4 Gloria Anzaldúa and "linguistic terrorism"

The struggle around language use for Latin-American Spanish-speakers and Chicanos[6] in the U.S. has been documented for years in academia and literature. One of the most influential writers dealing with Chicano identity, feminist and queer theory is Gloria Anzaldúa, who coined the term *linguistic terrorism* in her famous bilingual book *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* first published in 1987. Through this concept Anzaldúa captures the harassment that both the Anglo-culture and Chicanos themselves have performed against Mexican-origin communities on the basis of their discourse practices, accents and their command of linguistic varieties emerging on the Mexico-U.S. border. The notion of linguistic terrorism allows Anzaldúa to explain how the oppression around language use in the U.S. and in the border-areas has led Chicanos to develop and internalize a sense of insecurity and inferiority regarding their discourse

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[6] The term *Chicano* comes from the word *Mexicano.* It is commonly used by Mexican-Americans in the U.S. to identify themselves as "the people of Mexico" (Trejo, 1979, p. xvii).

practices. Thus, Anzaldúa strongly advocates for the legitimization of free languaging practices that portray the identities and journeys of speakers "wild tongues" (Anzaldúa, 2012, p. 75). The concept of linguistic terrorism became highly influential for this dissertation, and it will be adopted throughout the analysis and concluding sections of this document.

2.2.5 English in Mexico

A superficial search online about the languages spoken in Mexico would show information about Spanish and the 68 indigenous languages spoken across the country (INALI, 2008). Although English is listed in Wikipedia as one of the languages spoken in Mexico, there are no official figures informing on the number of speakers of this language, their proficiency level or origin. Non-official data about the percentage of English-speakers in Mexico estimate that between 2% to 11.6% of the population over 18 years old speaks, reads or understands English to some degree (ICMS, 2015). However, research conducted in Mexican schools with transnational or returnee students from the U.S. demonstrate that there are thousands of children and teenagers who speak English or are bilingual (Hamann et al., 2008). Therefore, it is difficult to draw conclusions as different unofficial surveys use various measures and criteria to make these calculations, and it is evident that transnational or returnee children are not being included in the surveys available so far outside academic research.

English has been positioned as a global language, which has led to its popularity and hegemony worldwide. It is not only the language of capitalism (Hartman, 2003), it has also become the language of international communications and it has a major impact in academic and scientific spheres too (Jenkins, 2015; Pennycook, 2017; Windle & Nogueira, 2015). In Mexico, the English language has also gained importance considering the geographical closeness to the U.S., but particularly due to the commercial relationship between Mexico and the U.S., which has been intensified by the signing of the NAFTA agreement. Within this context, English has also acquired a commercial value in Mexico that is reflected in domains such as: entertainment, marketing, language use (word loans), shopping, education and certification (Ex. TOEFL exam) and in the labor market as a desirable asset in employees (Despagne, 2010).

The limited information available has found some positive and negative perceptions that Mexicans have towards English. In this regard, Despagne (2010) found

that there is a general perception that Mexicans who have a high English-proficiency are part of the elite. By consequence, English has acquired an 'aspirational character' for those located in the less privileged layers of society[7]. Despagne's findings also showed that English is commonly linked to U.S. imperialism. She explains that in the case of migrants English represents in most cases access to better incomes and survival, which is regarded as a positive aspect. However, it is also associated with "abandonment, loneliness, exploitation, discrimination and hard work" (p. 67). It is interesting to see how even when Mexican returnees or transnationals might have high-English proficiency, general perceptions do not place them within the aspirational framework given to elite groups. This phenomenon has been described by Heller and Pavlenko (2010) as a "double standard approach", which has been characteristic of European and North American societies throughout the 19th and 20th centuries (p.71-72). The lack of information around English speakers in Mexico, their perceptions and backgrounds call for research that can provide a clearer picture of the role that the English language plays in Mexico.

2.3 Main factors characterizing Zacatecas as the research site

The state of Zacatecas belongs to the historic region of migration in Mexico. Therefore, the phenomenon of migration to the U.S. has been an important aspect of the state's landscape and people's economic and social life across different *municipios* (municipalities). According to census information the state of Zacatecas has a "very high" migration index. This is affirmed by the amount of economic remittances received, number of emigrants, circular migrants and return migrants (CONAPO, 2010a). The map below shows the intensity level of migration by state:

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[7] A similar context has been described by Windle and Nogueira (2015) for the role of English in Brazil. Taken together the findings of these studies allow to draw connections that illuminate the dynamics of language and power within the Latin American context (for more on elite bilingualism and education in Latin America see Ziegler, 2004; Ziegler, Gessaghi, & Fuentes, 2018)
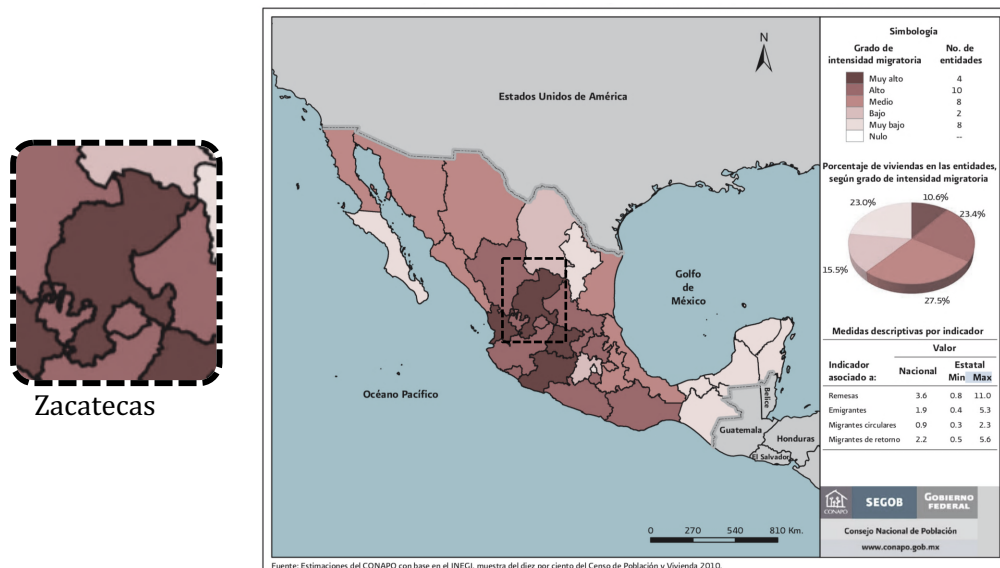
Fig. 11. Mexico: state intensity level of migration to the United States, 2010 (CONAPO, 2010a).

As explained in CONAPO's website, the darkest color in the scale for the map indicates the states in Mexico with the highest migration intensity. Zacatecas along with Nayarit, Guanajuato and Michoacán have the highest indicators. These four states belong to the historic region of migration. In addition to these features, research conducted over the last decade has found that there is an important presence of transnational children in schools in the state. Therefore, it is imperative to look at the characteristics of the state in order to gain further understanding of the impact that the migration phenomenon has had in Zacatecas.

2.3.1 Overview of the geographical and demographic context of Zacatecas

The state of Zacatecas is located in the central plateau of Mexico. According to the most recent census it has an estimated population of 1.5 million people divided in 48.8% men and 51.2% women (INEGI). Zacatecas occupies 3.8% of the national territory and it has 58 municipalities and 7,431 urban and rural communities. The most important economic activity is mining (gold, silver, zinc and lead) and 97 out of 100 people are employed in the areas of commerce/services (53%), institutions (65%) and micro-enterprises (37%) (INEGI, 2017).

The flow of migrants from Zacatecas to the U.S. has been active for over a century. The geographical location of the state has played a fundamental role in the phenomenon as it connects with multiple surrounding states in Mexico through motorways, and it is part of the cargo-railway network connecting to the U.S.

Additionally, Zacatecas and the historic region connects via airways with various cities in the U.S (Durand, 2017) such as: Dallas, TX, Los Angeles, CA, San Jose, CA, San Francisco, CA, Chicago, IL, Cincinnati, Oh, Denver, CO and Las Vegas, NV making it an important point of transit and departure to the U.S. Since the first phases of migration to the U.S. people from Zacatecas became part of the migration flows, and this situation allowed them to create strong connections with communities on both sides of the border. This eventually led to the emergence of a culture of migration that became deeper and more intricated over time. Consequently, Zacatecas has been qualified as a "binational" state (Thompson, 2005; Weeks & Weeks, 2013) given the historic flows of migrants that have led to the establishment of strong networks between the U.S. and their places of origin in Zacatecas.

2.3.2 The profile of Zacatecan migrants in the U.S.

Current official data around the number of Zacatecans living in the U.S. is limited, as it is based on procedures such as the registration of Mexican nationals living abroad known as *Matricula Consular* (Consular Identification Card). Since not all migrants register, the data available only provides an approximation to the actual figures. For instance, from 2008 to 2016 the CIC has been given to an average of 30,000 Zacatecans each year (SRE, 2020), which suggest that approximately 270,000[8] migrants from Zacatecas living in the U.S. registered only during this eight-year period.

Year	Number of Consular Identification Cards issued
2008	34, 423
2009	32,922
2010	31,414
2011-2014	30,000 (average estimated per year)
2015	40,898
2016	29,608
Total	169,265

Table 3. Number of CIC issued per year (Based on SRE, 2020).

Calculations indicate that by 2015 there were around 650,000 Zacatecans living in the U.S. However, other estimations considering migrants' links with Zacatecas calculate that there are around 2.1 million U.S. residents of Zacatecan-descent living in the U.S. (Delgado Wise, Márquez Covarrubias, & Rodríguez Ramírez, 2004).

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[8] This number considers an average of 30,000 CICs issued for the years 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 not shown in the table as they were not available in the website.

Moreover, in 2017 the population of those born in the U.S. to Mexican parents and living in Zacatecas was calculated at 17,037 (BBVA, 2017).

Regarding the origin of Zacatecan migrants, CONAPO offered a report in 2010 enlisting the municipalities with the highest migration levels. These correspond to the darkest areas in the map below:
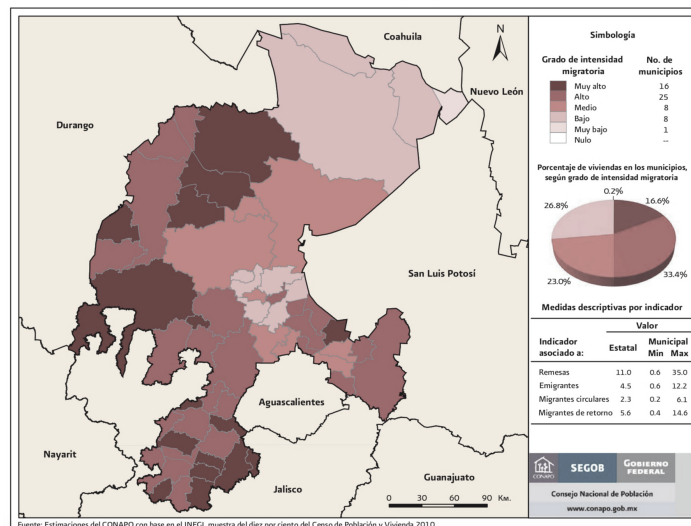
Fig. 12. Zacatecas: intensity level of migration to the United States by municipality, 2010 (CONAPO, 2010c).

Zacatecas has a total of 58 municipalities and according to this report there are 16 with a "very high migration index" and 25 with a "high migration index", meaning that around 70% of the municipalities have heavily engaged in the migration phenomenon. A more recent report has identified five municipalities with the highest number of migrants by birth:
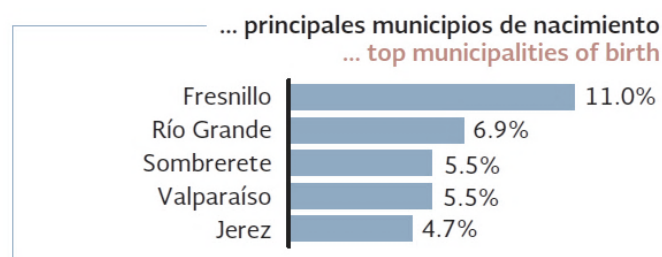
Fig. 13. Migrant top municipalities of birth in Zacatecas (BBVA, 2017, p. 177)

As for the main destinations of Zacatecan migrants in the U.S., the same report indicates that they are located mainly in five U.S. states shown in the following graph:

... principales estados de residencia
... top states of residence

Texas 28.4%
California 27.9%
Illinois 8.1%
Colorado 5.3%
Oklahoma 4.5%
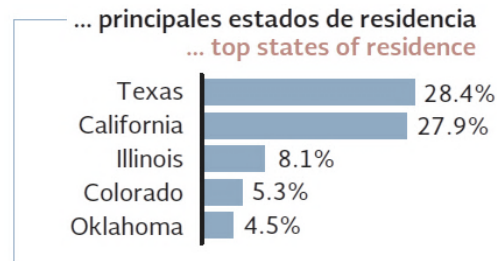
Fig 14. Top states of residence of Zacatecan migrants in the U.S. (BBVA, 2017, p. 177)

The presence of Zacatecan migrants is overwhelmingly evident in the states of Texas and California with more than half of the total share. These destinations coincide with the before mentioned airway-connections between Zacatecas and the main cities across these five U.S. states.

2.3.3 Migrant associations and networks

The long tradition and culture of migration that has emerged in Zacatecas by belonging to the historical region of migration to the U.S. has led migrants to develop strong connections with their communities of origin in Mexico and their communities of destination in the U.S. These ties are known in transnational theory as migrant circuits (Goldring, 1990; Rouse, 1991), and they have been studied and described from various perspectives aiming at understanding how migrants form the networks, their political and economic engagement and the role of migrant generations in these networks (Levitt & Glick-Schiller, 2004). Moreover, the capacity of organization that migrants have developed over the years has resulted in the creation of associations or clubs with various objectives and a significant economic, social and political impact on both sides of the border.

According to Moctezuma Longoria (2011b), the oldest evidence of migrant-association organization dates back to 1962, the year when Zacatecan migrants in Los Angeles founded the first social club. Since then, hundreds of associations and clubs have continued to appear and develop. These associations comprise various generations of migrants and they are formed to address the interests of their communities of origin around aspects such as religion, politics, sports, culture or social aspects of what has been called "Chicano society" (Lanly & Valenzuela V, 2004, p. 11). The associations are run by migrants themselves making them autonomous, and their members join voluntarily. In addition to strengthening ties with their communities of origin, migrants conceive these associations as vehicles for the mobilization of funds aimed at improving

social infrastructure in their places of origin at the time that they promote a sense of community through the events organized (Lanly & Valenzuela V, 2004).

The foundation of the first club in Los Angeles triggered the creation of more associations particularly during the decade of the 1960s in Chicago and various cities in Texas (Lanly & Valenzuela V, 2004). Over the years, migrants from Zacatecas have actively participated in the foundation of these kind of associations across the U.S. territory. To date it is estimated that Zacatecas has around 300 migrant clubs (Moctezuma Longoria, 2003, 2011a), therefore the state is recognized as a pioneer in this topic. To date, there is no other state in Mexico that has this level of networks and organizational operations linking migrants to their places of origin in Mexico and destination in the U.S. (Delgado Wise & Rodríguez Ramírez, 2000). The active engagement of migrants in these associations raises its significance regarding the culture of migration, as these practices might indicate migrants' particular desire to maintain strong links with the places of origin and destination they connect in order to keep the cycles of migration active as it was discussed previously in section 2.1.8. The map below shows the distribution of associations across the republic, Zacatecas stands out with the largest proportion:
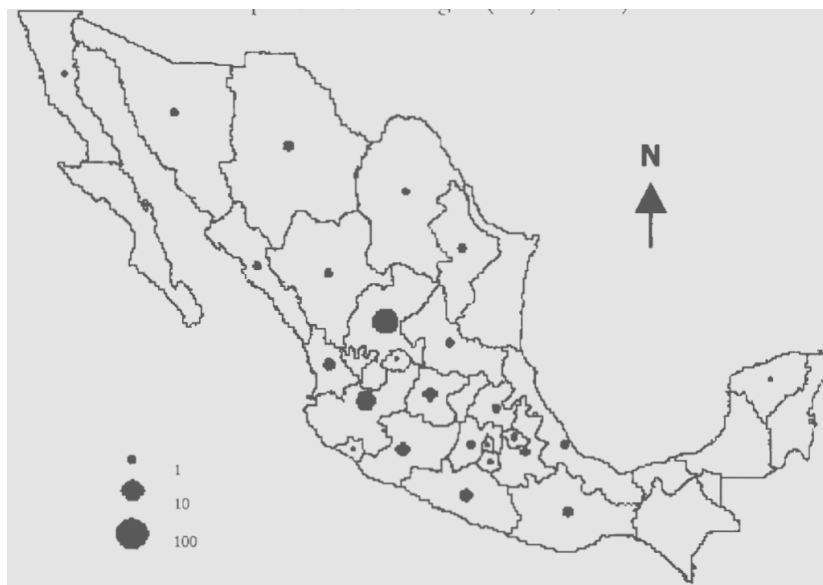
Fig. 15. Distribution of Mexican migrant clubs per state of origin in Mexico. The size of the circles indicates the proportion of clubs per state (1, 10, 100) (Lanly & Valenzuela V, 2004, p. 16).

The U.S. states with the largest presence of Zacatecan migrant clubs are: California, Nevada, Illinois, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Arizona, Colorado,

Florida, Michigan and Georgia (Delgado Wise et al., 2004, p. 174). Similar to the previous map, we can now see the distribution of clubs in the U.S., where the cities of Los Angeles, California and Chicago, Illinois feature as the main locations of these clubs:
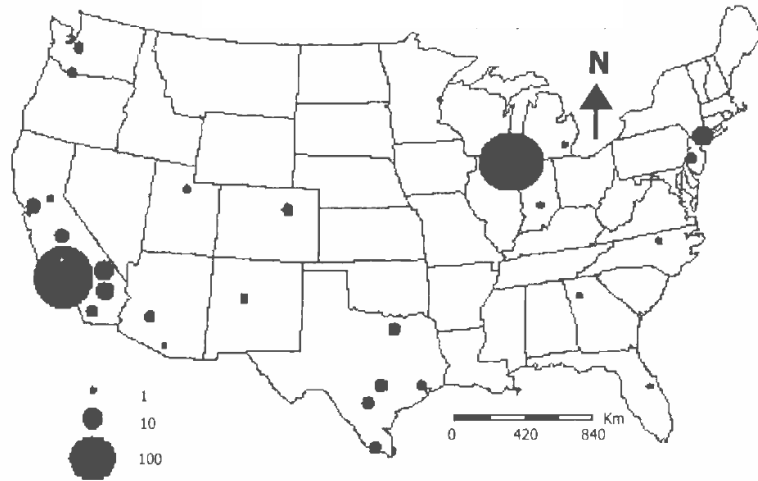
Fig. 16. Distribution of Mexican migrant clubs per state in the U.S. The size of the circles indicates the proportion of clubs (1, 10, 100) (Lanly & Valenzuela V, 2004, p. 17).

Since the emergence of migrant associations in the 1960s there has been an active participation of migrants in sending economic remittances to their hometowns in Zacatecas. However, this practice gained strength over the years until it became something official and institutionalized through the involvement of various government levels (Moctezuma Longoria, 2011b). The maturity and well-established organization of the Zacatecan clubs and associations has led to the labeling of the state as *transnational* (Delgado Wise et al., 2004) or *binational* (Thompson, 2005; Weeks & Weeks, 2013). Consequently, this long-standing complex system of associations and government collaboration has resulted in the emergence of social programs aimed at collaborating with these groups to administer remittances and match funds "to be spent on social development projects" (Weeks & Weeks, 2013, p. 129). An example of this is the 3x1 program[9], which according to its website aims at supporting migrants' projects for the improvement of their communities in Mexico. The program supports proposals for projects related to social infrastructure, community services (culture, sports, among others), education and productivity. Each one of these areas is allocated a maximum

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[9] Programa 3x1 https://www.gob.mx/bienestar/acciones-y-programas/programa-3x1-para-migrantes

amount of money ranging from 250,000 MXN to 1,000,000 MXN (10,000 to 40,000 EUR approximately) and each participating party (federal government, state or local government and the migrant associations) provides a percentage of the total amount depending on the project.

2.3.4 Return migration in Zacatecas

Being part of the historic region of migration, Zacatecas has also become a destination for the increasing flows of migrant-returns from the U.S. to Mexico. In 2015, Zacatecas ranked second at national level in the percentage of households that had returnees with 2.4% or 10, 191 returnees as shown in the map below:
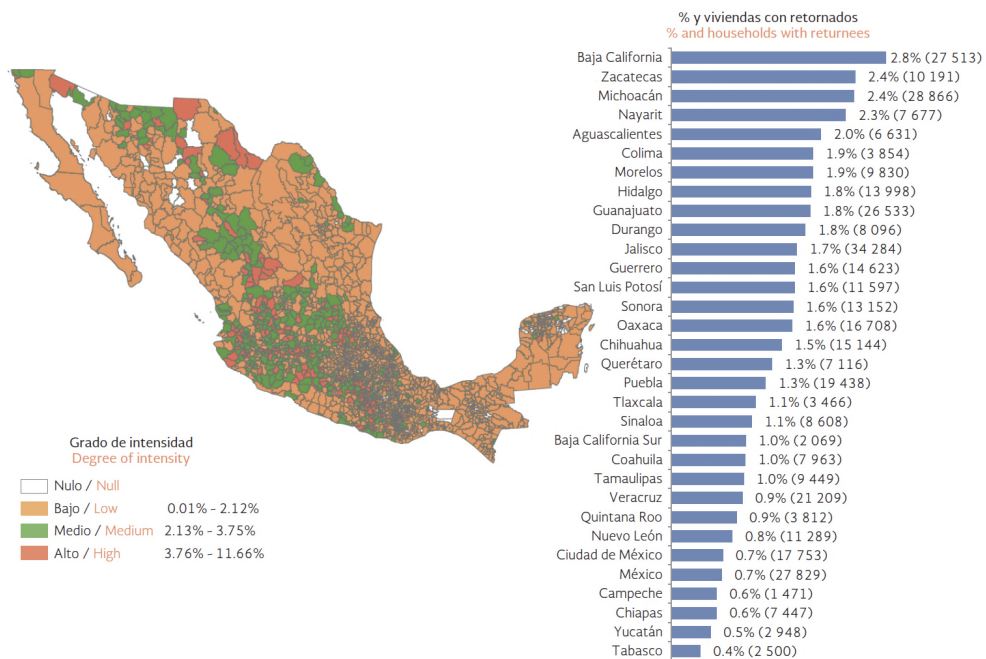
Fig. 17. Percentage of households with migrant returnees by state and municipality, 2015 (BBVA, 2018)

In terms of the demographic profiles of returnees, the graph below indicates that for the period of 2010 to 2015 there was a total of 12,588 returnees. From them 70% were male and 30% were women between 36-38 years old:
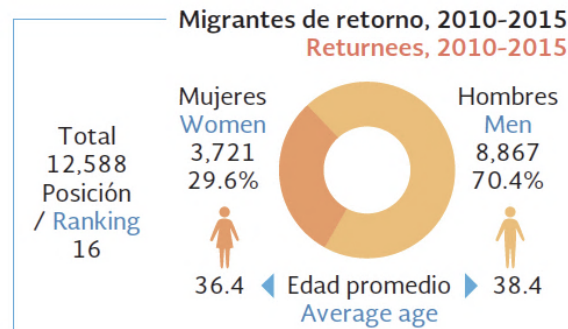
Fig. 18. Returnees, 2010-2015 (BBVA, 2017).

As established in previous sections, return migration has been mainly triggered by the tightening of the immigration policy in the U.S. or by migrants' desire to return to their hometowns. A recent study featuring interviews with returnees in Zacatecas found that 60% of the respondents attributed their return to family reunification. However, the interviews revealed that due to the stigma around being deported or losing their job in the U.S. migrants preferred to say that reuniting with the family left in Mexico was their main reason to return (García Zamora & Del Valle Martínez, 2016).

Moctezuma Longoria (2010) observed that in the majority of cases migrants return to Mexico with their family, that is with their spouse and children, and they tend to relocate in households occupied by extended family members or friends. Consequently, this reconfiguration of families and households comes with the emergence of conflicts that add to the already complex process of relocation. Considering the average age of return, it is also important to highlight that in many cases these families bring their children, who are first-time migrants in Mexico, as they were born in the U.S. Therefore, issues of socialization and language use around these "binational children" (p. 173) are part of the tensions emerging in the communities of relocation.

In addition to the previous, the return of migrants also poses challenges in areas such as health and education services. García Zamora, Ambríz Nava, and Herrera Castro (2015) point at the pressing need for extending coverage of general health and psychological services in areas of returnee-relocation. Additionally, they highlight the demands in terms of educational policy as Zacatecas receives a large number of binational children, who have specific linguistic and pedagogical needs. In 2015, the study by these authors revealed the presence of 9,500 returnee-children across the state. As a result, García Zamora et al. (2015) propose the implementation of programs that

promote collaboration with migrant clubs and associations to address the needs of returnees in Zacatecas.

2.3.5 An overview of transnational youths in Zacatecas

Despite the massive scale of Mexico-U.S. migration, and the importance of Zacatecas as part of the historic region of migration, there are no official statistics on the number of youths who live transnational lives between these countries. However, as we saw above, approximations can be calculated based on the research conducted in recent years. These figures come from varied sources such as: fieldwork where researchers have surveyed children in sample schools or data triangulation from the census (INEGI, CONAPO), local schools' records and the binational education program (PROBEM)[10]. The literature consulted reported the number of students in basic education with some kind of transnational profile for some school years in the state of Zacatecas as follows:

School year	No. of children	Observations on children's profiles	Reference
2005-2006	7,500 5,000 (out of the 7,500)	U.S. schooling experience Binational	Victor Zúñiga and Hamann (2009)
2012-2013	8,000	Bilingual needs registered in PROBEM	García Zamora et al. (2015)
2013-2014	9,536	Born in the U.S.	Moctezuma Longoria (2015)

Table 4. Summary of studies quantifying transnational children in basic education in Zacatecas, Mexico.

Although research is still limited, over the last two decades Víctor Zúñiga and Hamann (2019) have conducted groundbreaking research aiming to quantify and collect schooling experiences from transnational children. In 2009, their seminal study on this topic reported that in elementary and secondary schools in Zacatecas for the school year 2005-2006 there were approximately 7,500 students who had schooling experiences in the U.S. and from them about 5,000 were classified as binational[11]. In other words, "almost a third of Zacatecas schools (32 percent) […] had a significant transnational presence" (Victor Zúñiga & Hamann, 2009, p. 339). They also found that these students

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[10] PROBEM is an exchange program for Mexican and U.S. teachers to be trained and informed on the needs of binational students in Mexico and in the U.S. Teachers apply when the call is open and participate in training and activities in the neighboring country.
[11] These authors define binational students as those who were born in the U.S. therefore, they have both the American and Mexican nationalities.

had mainly attended school in the U.S. states of California (33%) and Texas (14%), while the rest of the participants had attended school in 18 different states across the U.S. (p.229). Other researchers such as García Zamora et al. (2015) and Moctezuma Longoria (2015) have also reported the number of transnational or binational children according to their research findings. These authors have highlighted the difficulties in accessing the information as the registration formats used in schools do not ask details of students' migration journeys or their language proficiency or bilingualism. Additionally, the children and their family's constant mobility due to their seasonal stays in the U.S. and Mexico also impacts the calculations. However, from the findings reported in the studies consulted it is possible to see a trend that points at the presence of an average of 8,000 transnational children just in basic education every school year. These trends of course are dependent on the general emigration and return migration flows in Zacatecas, therefore fluctuations are common.

Another significant finding is the percentage of children who lived separate from their parents due to the migration dynamics of their families. Víctor Zúñiga and Hamann (2019) found that by December 2005, 82% of the surveyed children in the municipality of Jerez (central region of Zacatecas)[12] were separated from their father, while 7.5% were separated from their mother. In the municipality of Mazapil (northern region of Zacatecas), 6.3% of the children were separated from their father, while none of them was separated from their mother (p.231). The disparity in the percentages of parental separation between these municipalities might be linked to the longer tradition of migration in Jerez, where more family members might opt for migration causing family separation as we see in the cases of these municipalities. These findings support the previous discussion around the culture of migration that has emerged in the historic region of migration in Mexico, where a large percentage of households have international migrants. Although migration is a common practice in this region, it cannot be denied that it comes with high costs at an emotional level as families are fragmented and reconfigured (Asakura, 2017). Moreover, as discussed in section 2.1.8, the migration practices present inside families are normalized as children witness and experience their effects, in turn preserving the notion of migration as a potential life choice.

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[12] Jerez, Zacatecas is one of the municipalities with a long tradition of migration to the U.S., and by 2017 it was the second largest receptor of economic remittances sent from the U.S. by migrants.

The information presented so far illuminates some of the intricacies derived from the engagement of Zacatecan families in transnational migration. Aspects such as family fragmentation and the incorporation of transnational children to schools in Zacatecas are indicators of the processes that youths have to navigate as part of their everyday lives from an early age. Duff (2015) explains how for transnationals "these processes naturally affect identity issues such as who they are, who they seem to be, and which languages they are able to use" (p.59). Therefore, I now turn to a brief discussion of the role that language and identity play within the particular context of Zacatecas.

The growing body of research about transnational children in Zacatecas has begun to explore issues of identity and language use. These issues become highly significant as they entail processes of socialization that are particularly observable in the school context where transnational youths and their monocultural/monolingual peers coexist. As we saw in section 2.2.3, the school context is commonly characterized by the tensions emerging from the convergence of students, teachers and institutional policies coming from a diversity of sociocultural backgrounds and informed by distinct ideologies. The perceivable differences within the school context are linked to various aspects of students with language being one of the major markers of identity and 'otherness' (Kae Kral & Solano Carrillo, 2013; Víctor Zúñiga & Hamann, 2006).

The research available on transnational children in Zacatecas has found that a portion of transnational children in Zacatecas have manifested aspects related to their identity construction in relation to their nationality/ies. For instance, children "who identified as "Mexican-American" or "American" had spent just more than half of their lives in the U.S., compared to those identifying as "Mexican" having spent just a quarter of their lives, on average, in the U.S." (E. Hamann & Víctor Zúñiga, 2011, p. 65). These notions illuminate the prevalence of the migration practices in the region, and they also provide an account of the transnational profile of migrants from this area. Having spent a considerable amount of time living in the U.S. or circulating between both countries implies that the children's contact with English has become an important aspect of their socialization, which is manifested in their linguistic performance and repertoires.

As discussed in section 2.3.4, in most cases transnational children are socialized differently to their monolingual and monocultural non-migrant Mexican peers. The different cultural and literacy frameworks of children co-existing in schools opens spaces for conflict based on perceptions. For instance, research by E. Hamann and Victor Zúñiga (2011) has shown that transnational children are perceived as "different"

(p.156) in aspects regarding language use, attitudes, cultural traits, apparent defects and faults and ethnic characteristics. However, the findings also show an important proportion of positive differences highlighting transnational children's bilingualism, school orientation and dedication. Consequently, these results provide a snapshot of the complex dynamics of school interactions in this context and the tensions around "the construction of otherness" (p.156).

The studies presented here provide a robust framework to locate the main issues and aspects present in the context of a transnational state such as Zacatecas. Although the findings and contributions are highly significant, there are still limitations in terms of the access to transnational/binational children quantification, the diversity of age-population, as research has focused mainly on the basic education cohort, and the investigation and description of the linguistic dimension of transnational youths in this geographical context. Most authors identify the need to address transnational children's linguistic needs in schools in Zacatecas, as well as across other regions in Mexico. With the exception of the study by Panait and Zúñiga (2016) looking at the main "linguistic ruptures" faced by young children in sample schools in Nuevo León (northeast Mexico), to my knowledge there are still no studies looking specifically at or describing the translanguaging practices of transnational youths at any level. Therefore, this doctoral study contributes significantly in this aspect to understand how transnational youths with particular profiles communicate in their everyday interactions.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a general description of the main aspects that distinguish the Mexico-U.S. migration. The dimension of this phenomenon has been attributed to multiple factors starting with the historic relationship of these countries, which is grounded in their geographical closeness and their deep economic disparities. The flow of migrants from Mexico to the U.S. has been active for over two centuries, with migrants coming from different regions across Mexico. However, the center-north region of the country has become known as the historic region of migration, as over half the migrants going to the U.S. have left from this area since migration flows started in the late 1800s. The places of destination of Mexican migrants in the U.S. have also been identified, with the southwest region having the largest percentage of Mexican migrants.

Regarding the historicity of the phenomenon, this chapter has outlined the six main phases of Mexican migration to the U.S. These phases have been framed by a series of economic and political events that have directly impacted the migration policy on both sides of the border, such as the signing of the NAFTA agreement or the passing of the IRCA law. The prevalent lack of agreements between Mexico and the U.S. in terms of migrant-mobility at given points in history have set the grounds for the adoption of a *schizophrenic* migration policy in the U.S. On the one hand this policy 'tolerates' migrants as a response to the labor needs that are satisfied by employing cheap-Mexican labor-force; and on the other it 'disposes' of migrants in the context of political platforms that blame Mexican migration for the labor and cultural instability in the U.S. In turn, the omissive approach that Mexico has followed in terms of migration policy has only guaranteed 'consular protection' to migrants abroad.

The profile of Mexican migrants has also been addressed throughout this chapter. Although the majority of Mexican migrants continue to occupy low-skill jobs in the U.S., their insertion in other economic sectors has increased over the years as a result of their higher level of education and the regularization of their migratory status. Moreover, and contrary to common belief the feminization of migration to the U.S. has also increased over the last decades resulting in almost an equal number of female and male migrants. The long history and evolution of Mexico-U.S. migration and Mexican migrants have also contributed to the emergence of a culture of migration particularly in the historic region of migration in Mexico. This chapter has discussed how the migration practices inside families contribute to the perpetuation of the phenomenon in addition to the strong cultural ties that migrants abroad have with their communities of origin by means of replicating traditions in the U.S. and participating actively in their hometown-lives through seasonal visits and the exchange of economic and sociocultural remittances.

Another aspect that has been presented in this chapter is the role that language has played in the tensions around the phenomenon of migration. The preservation of some cultural aspects and the use of Spanish in the U.S. are distinct markers of the identity of many Mexican migrants. These differences have been used in connection to immigration policy as fuel to the spread of an anti-immigrant sentiment that has significantly impacted migrants' access to basic services such as health and education. Moreover, there are organizations dedicated to promoting laws against the use Spanish in the U.S. and the implementation of bilingual education. I have argued that these

actions have added to the terrorizing campaign against Mexican migrants and Latin-American migrant communities by extension. Language tensions have also emerged in Mexican territory as perceptions around the use of the English language tend to be negative and commonly associated with elite groups and a sense of imperialism.

Finally, the closing section of this chapter has provided a description of the research site. As part of the historic region of migration in Mexico, Zacatecas has particular features that have contributed to the transnational profile of the state and its population. One of the most significant characteristics is the widespread presence of migrant clubs or associations run by Zacatecan migrants in the U.S. The operation of this complex system of nearly 300 clubs has led to an institutionalized participation of migrants that is manifested in the governmental programs aimed at collaborating with migrants in projects that benefit their communities in Mexico. Additionally, this chapter has discussed the impact of return migration across the state. It has highlighted the increase in the number of family returns to Zacatecas as this phenomenon poses challenges at many levels, particularly considering the welfare of children who have been socialized in the context of transnationalism.

CHAPTER 3

Theoretical Framework

As we move into the second decade of the 21st century it is impossible to overlook the influence that globalization has had in the configuration of the world as we know it today. Globalization has permeated people's lives in an unprecedented manner, in turn stimulating and normalizing multiculturalism and multilingualism (Horner & Weber, 2018; King & Carson, 2016). In light of this context, the dynamics of communication have adapted and are in constant change as individuals and societies around the globe engage in what Canagarajah (2013) terms transnationalism[13] and interact in a variety of physical and virtual contexts (Appadurai, 1996). Although "language contact" (Li Wei, 2007a, p. 3) as well as the use of various languages in society or by individuals is nothing new, what has changed is the way in which the dynamic use of language and the construction of intricate linguistic repertoires and identities is performed and investigated (Hall & Nilep, 2018). In order to locate the present study within these contemporary perspectives, this chapter will provide some background on the field of bilingualism. This brief background discussion sets the context to present the general understandings of a paradigm shift in the study of language practices, which had in turn led to the emergence of the notion of translanguaging. I then offer an overview of the origins of translanguaging, its contributions as a pedagogical strategy and its latest developments as a practical theory of applied linguistics, which is the guiding lens adopted for the analysis and contributions of this dissertation. Finally, I highlight the links that transnationalism and translanguaging offer in order to explore the identity construction of the mobile and bilingual youths through the study of their languaging practices.

3.1 Bilingualism

The study of bilingualism has a long reputation in linguistics scholarship. Early approaches to its study presented bilingualism as a phenomenon, as a "marginal

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[13] Canagarajah (2013) explains that "Transnational contact in diverse cultural, economic, and social domains has increased the interaction between languages and language groups" (p.2).

problem"[14] (W. F. Mackey, 1967, p. 11) or as "the fundamental problem of linguistics" (Jakobson, 1953, cited in Romaine, 1995, p. 1). Over the decades, this conception of bilingualism as a problem has evolved. Myriad researchers across a variety of disciplines have undertaken research in order to try to break down the causes, manifestations, circumstances, types, advantages, disadvantages and dimensions of bilingualism. Drawing on the technologies, information and conceptualizations available at particular stages of the investigation of bilingualism over the years, researchers have tried to understand it and explain it. Although many of the studies and experiments carried out have been questioned for having fundamental methodological flaws (Li Wei, 2007a), leading in turn to the widespread propagation of misconceptions around bilinguals and bilingualism, we cannot deny that they have set the foundation for the development of a more critical scholarship. The consideration of a range of factors, perspectives, contexts, research populations, methodologies and theories in the exploration of bilingualism is precisely the path that has led to the emergence of research such as the one that occupies the pages of this dissertation.

Generally, a discussion about bilingualism brings up debates and reflections about individuals and their brains, their life experiences with languages, their locations, their literacy, their competence or their identities. A discussion about bilingualism also brings up issues about nation-states; this is, the politics and the real-world mechanisms in which languages operate from macro-social spheres down to micro-social levels for the interest of the territories occupied by people. Therefore, discussing bilingualism is about discussing individuals as well as communities, societies and political institutions (Heller & Pavlenko, 2010; Pavlenko, 2006). Interactions, physical and digital contact, and borders between individuals, societies, territories and languages add up and result in a complex reality that academics aim at deconstructing. Researchers such as Grosjean (2010), Li Wei (2007b) or Baker and Jones (1998) have discussed some of the main external factors leading to these interactions and contact between people and their languages; politics, natural disasters, religion, culture, economy, education and technology. These factors are generally a common denominator informing the language issues, decisions and experiences of people all around the world.

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[14] Mackey used the label "marginal problem" in the English version of his book, while the label "phénomène marginal" is used in the French version. Additionally, the book title in English reads: *Bilingualism as a World Problem*, while the title in French reads: *Le Bilinguisme: Phénomène Mondial*.

Although many of these factors might be regarded in a positive manner as being the triggers for bi/multilingualism, adding value to the repertoires or skill-profiles of people, they can also —depending on the socio-political context— represent acts of transgression that lead to the emergence of tensions, fractures, and reconfigurations of peoples' relationships within nation-states and with other users of the languages in contact. In the diagram below I outline Li Wei's factors of language contact and examples of each one:

Politics	Economy	Culture
Example:	Example:	Example:
Colonization, annexation or resettlement.	Labor migration.	Identification with an ethnic, or social group.
Religion	**Natural disaster**	**Technology**
Example:	Example:	Example:
Living in or Leaving a place for religious reasons.	Displacements / resettlements due to famine, floods, etc.	Availability of information /communication in a 'foreign' language

Education

Example:

Learning a language to access knowledge

Fig. 19. Diagram of external factors of language contact, based on Li Wei (2007, p. 3-4)

While the factors above have always been present at various degrees of societal and individual interactions, the synergies originated by contemporary politico-economic systems and patterns of migration have led to a dynamism of the above-mentioned factors. Consequently, new paradigms aiming at capturing the complexity in the convergence of such factors have emerged. For instance, the notion of superdiversity, which according to Blommaert and Rampton (2016) has been described by the intensification "in the categories of migrants, not only in terms of nationality, ethnicity, language, and religion, but also in terms of motives, patterns and itineraries of migration, processes of insertion into the labour and housing markets of the host societies" (p. 22). In turn, this has normalized states of transnationalism and these new ways of conceptualizing the fluid reality of today open new windows to conceive the

sociocultural and discursive practices of individuals within the ecosystems they occupy and that are constantly modified by the effects of globalization.

Given the myriad layers and angles comprising and intersecting when discussing bilingualism, the literature available has addressed them from multiple disciplines within linguistics and other fields of inquiry. For instance, a review by Wald (1974) discussed the developments of research on bilingualism in the areas of: 1) Linguistic structure, 2) Sociological aspects, and 3) Psychological aspects. However, in recent years, as more disciplines add to the study of bilingualism, the majority of the literature specialized in gathering research on this topic (Baker & Wright, 2017; Bhatia & Ritchie, 2013; De Houwer & Ortega, 2019; Li Wei, 2007b; Myers-Scotton, 2006; Romaine, 1995) tends to classify it in themes, which mostly correspond to the following fields of inquiry:

- Linguistics
- Sociolinguistics
- Psycholinguistics
- Neurolinguistics
- Psychology
- Education

This rich body of literature has added many more definitions to conceptualize bilingualism as a feature of territories, societies and individuals. In this regard, Baker and Wright (2017, pp. 3-4) identify "eight dimensions of bilingualism": 1) Ability, 2) Use, 3) Balance, 4) Age, 5) Development, 6) Culture, 7) Contexts and 8) Choice. According to these authors, the investigation of bilingualism revolves around these eight dimensions, which can be associated with the vast number of terms and definitions of bilingualism and bilinguals that have emerged over the years. The next subsections will offer a summary of some definitions, which can be taken as signposts in helping us get a broad picture of the development of the concept particularly applied to individuals. In this context, I will also present the definition of bilingualism that served as the guiding axis for the analysis of the data in this study.

3.1.1 Defining bilingualism

Bloomfield's (1933) definition of bilingualism as the "native control of two languages" (p.56) is perhaps one of the best known definitions of this concept. Additionally, this delineation of bilingualism and bilinguals in terms of 'full command of languages', is still a deeply rooted belief among people worldwide. Interestingly, Bloomfield also pointed out at the difficulty in measuring the "degree of perfection" (p.56) implied by the idea of having native control of a language or two of them in the case of bilinguals. Moreover, he was critical of what he called "the fanciful doctrine of the eighteen-century "grammarians"" (Bloomfield, 1933, p. 496) and their emphasis on qualifying language use within the binary *correct-incorrect*. However, following the model of the 'balanced bilingual', early studies on bilingualism dedicated significant efforts to try to demonstrate the disadvantages of bilinguals in comparison to monolinguals as the model of 'language control and correctness'. Examples of these studies include Saer (1922, 1923) or F. Smith (1923), whose conclusions revolved around the superior level of intelligence of monolingual youths in comparison to their bilingual peers. Critics of these studies pointed at their methodological limitations, particularly in terms of the tests conducted and the inconsistencies in the participant recruitment criteria (Li Wei, 2007a).

Later understandings of bilingualism signaled the development of its conceptualization in wider terms. For instance, Weinreich (1966) defines bilingualism as "the practice of alternatively using two languages" (p.1). In this same line, W. F. Mackey (1967) presents bilingualism as "no longer identified with equilingualism —the equal knowledge of two languages—" (p.12) while at the same time highlighting that breaking apart from this notion opened scope for a number of research opportunities. These include, scientific study, a reassessment of the field of inquiry and the positioning of bilingualism as a "world problem" (p.12). Although there seems to be a move toward a broader approach to study this concept, the label of 'problem' still lingered. Consequently, as emphasized by Romaine (1995) notions about *ideal*, *balanced* or *full* bilinguals have promoted an image of bilingualism and bilinguals from the perspective of an "ideal monolingual", which perpetuate the image of this phenomenon as being "inherently problematic" (p.6). Therefore, if bilingualism is presented and approached as a 'problem' then it is logical to fall back into the trap of thinking of it in terms of the 'balanced' architype.

Following Romaine's claims, it is worth emphasizing that there have been significant efforts to debunk the myths and misconceptions that surround bilinguals. Many scholars have provided evidence pointing at the cognitive advantages of bilingualism (Barac & Bialystok, 2011; Grosjean, 2001b; Peal & Lambert, 1962). According to a recent review by Antoniou (2019) so far this research has been concentrated on three main areas: a) behavioral measures of cognitive abilities, b) cognitive aging outcomes and c) neuroscientific studies. Antoniou explains that the debate around the advantages or disadvantages of bilingualism at brain level will continue as the methodological, technological and theoretical developments are refined and applied to diverse populations in different contexts and conditions. After all, Antoniou argues, "[b]ilingual advantages are unlikely to extend to all bilinguals under all circumstances" (p.408), extending the need for further research on various areas of bilingualism.

Despite the wide-ranging developments in the study of bilingualism, the myths around bilinguals and their use of language(s) are still at the center of controversies and stereotypes. In this regard, it is worth underlining the words of François Grosjean, who emphasizes how "[m]onolinguals have been the models of the "normal" speaker-hearer, and the methods of investigation developed to study monolingual speech and language have been used with little, if any, modification to study bilinguals" (Grosjean, 1989, p. 4). As more scholars become aware of the biases and limitations of traditional views of bilingualism, Grosjean's work (1985, 1989, 2001a, 2010) has become highly influential. In contrast to the traditional views, one of Grosjean's greatest contributions is found in the proposal of what he calls a *wholistic view* (1985, p. 24) of bilingualism, which he explains in the following terms:

> The bilingual or wholistic view of bilingualism proposes that the bilingual is an integrated whole which cannot easily be decomposed into two separate parts. The bilingual is NOT the sum of two complete or incomplete monolinguals; rather, he or she has a unique and specific linguistic configuration. The co-existence and constant interaction of the two languages in the bilingual has produced a different, but complete language system.

In line with Grosjean's perspective, contemporary descriptions of bilingualism have added to this standpoint of understanding bilinguals as an organic and undivided whole. In this regard, García (2009a) posits that "[b]ilingualism is not about 1+1=2, but

about a plural, mixing different aspects or fractions of language behavior as they are needed, to be socially meaningful" (p.48). Therefore, García proposes the term *dynamic bilingualism* and highlights its capacity to capture "language use in the twenty-first century" (p.54)[15]. In agreement with García's proposal, Creese and Blackledge (2011) use the label "flexible bilingualism" in describing the "use of a range of linguistic resources" (p.1206). Finally, we see how these new descriptors also find echo in the way Hall and Nilep (2018) perceive an emerging focus of scholarship that sees "language mixing" in terms of *hybridity* as a result of "accelerated globalization" in the millennium (p.598).

3.1.2 A definition of bilingualism for this study

In adopting the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of translanguaging in this dissertation it is very clear that the definition of bilingualism at the core of this study is found in the perspective of dynamic bilingualism (García, 2009a; García & Li We, 2014). Additionally, I align with Grosjean's (2010) understanding of bilinguals as "those who use two or more languages (or dialects) in their everyday lives" (p.4). Therefore, in this study, the participants and their languaging practices are seen and explored from this standpoint. It is also important to mention that when referring to the participants in this dissertation particularly in Chapter 5, I will use the terms *bilingual* and *translanguager* interchangeably. In the context of this study and the data analysis both terms were seen as appropriate descriptors based on the definition of dynamic bilingualism and translanguaging (see sections 3.1.1 and 3.2).

3.1.3 Language practices

Language is a fundamental dimension of people's lives and a central element that has identified individuals, communities and nations throughout history. Being so relevant, the study of how bilingual individuals and communities use 'language' to communicate has been subject of study in many fields. Hall and Nilep (2018) refer to this *language use* as "discursive practices" (p.597). In this regard, the linguistic aspects of bilingualism have occupied a significant place in research. Many academics have devoted time and efforts towards the observation and theorization of the structural manifestations of the discursive practices of bilinguals. Derived from this, one of the

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[15] A further development of the principles underpinning this view came later in García and Li Wei's (2014) book on *translanguaging*, and it will be discussed in section 3.2.2

features of bilingualism, which has received a great deal of scholarly attention is *code-switching*. This is not surprising, as code-switching is perhaps one of the most tangible exhibitions of bilingual speech in various contexts. It is also a feature that most people would recognize as representative of 'a bilingual'. In a recent review by Hall and Nilep (2018), they identify four research traditions in the study of discursive practices related to code-switching and its link with identity. Their review covers research since the 1920s up to the 2000s. In looking at the evolution in the study of code-switching as a feature of bilingualism we can gain deep insights not only into the understandings of this concept and the definitions of bilingualism, but we can also find the rationale at the core of what has come to be referred to as *language practices* and the contemporary debate around them. As explained throughout this section, the debate on language practices not only includes aspects of their study; it also engenders aspects of terminology and researchers' translation of the terms of study.

According to Hall and Nilep (2018) the study of discursive practices linked to code-switching can be divided into the following four traditions:

Tradition 1	Tradition 2
1920s-1970s	1980s
Code-switching was regarded as a product of local speech community identities.	Code-switching represented the practices in reference to the contrastive nation-state identities.
Example: Gumperz (1982), Blom and Gumperz (1972), Myers-Scotton (1983, 1993)	Example: Hill (1985), Woolard (1985)
Tradition 3	**Tradition 4**
1990s	2000s
Code-switching is seen as a resource in urban minority communities for the performance of multicultural and interethnic identities.	Code-switching is understood as a marker of hybrid identities as the corollary to the language mixing brought about through accelerated globalization.
Example: Bucholtz and Hall (2004), Rampton (1995), Zentella (1997a)	Example: Blommaert and Rampton (2011), Blommaert (2013), Blommaert (2013); Jacquement (2005), Nilep (2009)

Table 5. Four traditions in the study of discursive practices (based on Hall and Nilep, 2018).

From the table above, we see how early research traditions had a focus on research localized within the scope of speech communities and identities that were defined by nation-states with language systems being a core element of this construct. Later research traditions emerging in the 1990s and 2000s focus(ed) on language as a flexible resource of individuals' repertoires and communities beyond the borders of

nation-states. This 'new' approach rather considers the experiences of individuals as they connect with phenomena triggered by globalization. Breaking free from the structural tradition in the investigation of language as it has happened since the 1990s resonates with a reflection by Mendoza-Denton (2008) who highlights the emphasis that has been put on language alone "often turning away when it's time to look past the structural level and to introduce cultural interpretation" (p.3). Thus, she advises on the direction that future (now contemporary) research should take. Adding other dimensions to the study of language use has therefore opened the gate for new analytic perspectives that not only challenge traditional structural approaches, but that now places greater importance on the processes and meanings behind the structures and the practices. By moving away from traditional approaches in the study of discursive practices, research has also been able to look more critically at what Silverstein (2015) calls the "ideological investments" of the nation-states (p.8), which have led to the notion of language "as a kind of psychic patrimony of ethnolinguistic identity" (p.15). This idea as it can be seen in table 5 was also a fundamental element of the research tradition in the 1980s, and it still holds influence in the context of current geopolitics as nationalistic discourses gain momentum. After all, as proposed by Makoni and Pennycook (2007b) languages could be regarded as *inventions* aimed at supporting colonization projects by means of having the "effects of creating, and at times accentuating, social differences" (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007a, p. 14). Bearing in mind the evolution and turns that research on code-switching has taken over the decades it is clear that discursive practices must be observed and explored from perspectives that consider how individuals and communities are impacted by macro processes. For instance, the study presented in this dissertation observes micro processes of language use that are heavily influenced by a macro process of transnational migration. This link, therefore, allows us to understand identity construction not only at the micro level, but also at a level where individuals are interconnected in the context of globalization where discourses and discursive practices acquire new and changing values and meanings.

In undertaking research on discursive or language practices it is also worth reflecting on the words of Ager (2001), who argues that language behavior is not only about language *per se* as an isolated 'object'. Rather language is "something about which people, communities and states have opinions and feelings" (p.2). These understandings of language and the political machinery behind languages have led to the emergence of the idea of languages as isolated 'named objects' (Makoni &

Pennycook, 2007a) or "linguistic items with a name ("English", "German", "Zulu")" (Blommaert, 2006b, p. 242). Languages from this perspective are seen as systems of rules and structures that generate expectations of how individuals or *language communities* (Silverstein, 1998) must use and think about said separate languages. This general order of things represents what many scholars call the monolingual perspective (Baker & Wright, 2017; Blommaert, 2006a; Canagarajah, 2013; Grosjean, 1989), and it has been mainly and critically explored in work on language ideologies (Kroskrity, 2004; Lippi-Green, 2012; Milroy, 2001; Schieffelin, Woolard, & Kroskrity, 1998; Silverstein, 1979).

A recent paper by Léglise (2018) continues the discussion on the research traditions that have guided the study of discursive practices, or as she calls them in French: *pratiques langagières plurilingues*. In line with Hall and Nilep (2018), Léglise emphasizes how these practices were first observed as an exception to what was regarded as "normal monolingual situations" (p.1), and therefore mostly studied from the perspective of codeswitching. In her discussion, Léglise brings to light the fact that the *pratiques langagières* are social practices, and she highlights the limitations of the English language to capture this essence with an appropriate term other than *linguistic practices* (which seems restricted to the structural aspects of the language) or *language practices + social practices*. For Léglise the *pratiques langagières* are 1) heterogenous and 2) pluri-accented, in that they are produced by plurilingual speakers that may have different competences and *repertoires*. In this sense, the *pratiques langagières* include and go beyond codeswitching to form a *bricolage* that allows *social actors* to use all these elements to produce *new meanings,* such as fluid identities. Léglise's perspective is further supported by the contemporary notion of linguistic repertoire coming from Horner and Weber (2018), who conceptualize it as the "dynamic" compound of "linguistic varieties, registers, styles, genres and accents" (p. 3). For them, the dynamism of the linguistic repertoires consists in the malleability and constant reconfiguration that modifies people's repertoires over time. As it will be seen in the next sections, these perspectives resonate with the rationale behind translanguaging and other related terms emerged from the latest and current research tradition on discursive practices and multilingualism.

In line with the context set above, despite what Canagarajah (2013) calls "the power of the monolingual orientation" (p.1), alternative forms of communication have always been present, manifested and acknowledged. In fact, Bakhtin's concept of

heteroglossia dating back to the 1930s describes linguistic diversity and implies the convergence of *diversity in speechness*, *diversity in languageness* and *diversity in voicedness* (Madsen, 2014). Bakhtin's influential ideas have served as the basis for the development of research aimed at grasping "the diversity of linguistic practice in late modern societies" (Blackledge & Creese, 2014, p. 3), which lines up with Hall and Nilep's description of the fourth tradition.

The study of language practices has seen the development of myriad concepts that describe the ways in which language(s) and other semiotic elements serve users to communicate. These concepts have been documented and assembled by scholars working in the field of language practices (García & Li Wei, 2014; Lewis et al., 2012). A general, classification comes from Canagarajah (2013, p.9) and I have supplemented it with information from Hall and Nilep (2018), Horner and Weber (2018) and Léglise (2018) in the table below:

In composition:	In new literacy studies:
• Translingual writing • Code meshing • Transcultural literacy	• Multiliteracies • Continua of biliteracy • Hetero-graphy
In sociolinguistics:	**In applied linguistics:**
• Fused lects • Ludic Englishes and metrolinguistics • Metrolingualism • Poly-lingual languaging • Fragmented multilingualism or truncated multilingualism	• Translanguaging • Dynamic bilingualism and pluriliteracy • Plurilingualism • Third spaces • Interlingualism • Multiplurilingualism

Table 6. Classification of emerging terms around language practices.

Although at first sight it seems like many of these terms overlap or substitute one another, they provide us with strong evidence pointing to the fact that a vast number of researchers are coming across similar phenomena. Additionally, this collection of terms allows us to have a panoramic view of the complexities encountered by researchers, which, as seen in the table above, have led to a diverse mosaic of concepts that capture unique features of the discursive practices of multiple populations of bilinguals in specific contexts. This diversity of labels is representative of what Li Wei (2018a) calls the *linguistic landscape of the 21ˢᵗ century*. Moreover, faced with this scenario Li Wei notes that "we are therefore entering a post-multilingualism era" (p.22). According to

him, this notion implies that individual and societal use of language(s) is transforming and challenging traditional ideas about communication and institutions such as the State. Nowadays, the flexibility of language use in myriad domains and the incorporation of language varieties and modalities is becoming the norm, leading to a scenario where "[n]o single nation or community can claim the sole ownership, authority and responsibility for any particular language, and no individual can claim to know an entire language, rather bits of many different languages" (p.22). Within this context the study of language practices faces new challenges and possibilities to explore and describe the organic forms of language, where a process of metamorphosis takes place allowing the emergence of new and ever-changing meanings and identities.

3.1.4 The preferred terms for this study

As shown through the discussion above, capturing the multiple dimensions comprising the study of discursive or language practices is complex, as the number of terms emerged to describe them. Many of these terms are better suited to describing particular populations in given contexts or situations, as intended by each term's advocates. As we have seen, some of these terms are also available to make precise distinctions or appreciations when there are not 'fair' translations into other languages, as in the case of *pratiques langagières*. Therefore, it is worth outlining the preferred terms used in this document, in order to avoid confusion and to ratify the alignment with the theoretical and conceptual frameworks underpinning this study.

The majority of the terminology used in this study comes from the theoretical framework of translanguaging. This term originated in the field of bilingual education and it has been proposed as a theory of applied linguistics. *Translanguaging* is used to describe either a pedagogical strategy in bilingual classrooms or the particular discursive practices among bilinguals to navigate their bilingual lives. The work of Li Wei (Li Wei, 2011; Li Wei & Zhu Hua, 2013) has been particularly influential for the study described in this dissertation as it has undertaken the analysis of the discursive practices of transnational youths, which is also the scope of my study. Further details on the origins of translanguaging and how it has theoretically unfolded will be provided in section 3.2 in this chapter.

In adopting translanguaging as the guiding framework for this study, it has been fundamental to emphasize the notion of 'practice(s)' when referring to the participants' particular ways of using their linguistic repertoires. Therefore, in adherence to the

importance on the notion of *practices* in translanguaging I have adopted the use of the terms *languaging* or *translanguaging practices* to refer to the particular speech, discourse or language use of the participants in this study, who might include additional semiotic elements in their communication practices. I prefer the use of these terms in most cases in order to avoid the conflict of using the label 'linguistic' to describe the discursive practices of the participants. In avoiding the label 'linguistic' or the use of the singular and/or plural noun language(s) in the study's descriptions it is clearer that the observed practices are not restricted to the structural features of one or two separate languages or dialects only. Moreover, in using the terms *languaging* and *translanguaging practices* it is my intention to also signal the emphasis on the process of communication and performance at the same time that I make reference to the sense of creativeness and criticality explored in Li Wei's translanguaging moment analysis.

Following the conceptual framework coming from translanguaging this study draws on moment analysis as a key element when exploring the data. A more detailed description of how this was done will be given in Chapter 4, section 4.2. The findings and examples of this study are in practice *moments* in which the participants' use of their linguistic repertoires becomes relevant for the analysis. This is because these moments are regarded as a display of the creativity and criticality of the participants, who in consequence become *translanguagers*. Rather than calling participants 'speakers' or 'language(s) users' I often adopt and use the term *translanguagers* in the writing of this document as a practical way to acknowledge the characteristics of their discursive practices as being marked by translanguaging. Once again, the use of the term translanguagers gave me a theoretically coherent route to avoid terms that include the label 'language' and its derived forms. While available options such as the term multilingual speakers or multilinguals could also be employed, Horner and Weber (2018) warn on the potentially problematic dilemma of using the label *multilingual* "because of this underlying assumption of languages as bounded entities which are countable" (p.4). It is hoped that the use of the term translanguagers succeeds in giving the reader a different perspective of the characteristics of participants and their particular discursive practices.

Finally, another recurrent term in this study is transnational youth(s), which has been adopted in adherence to the notion of transnationalism described by Duff (2015) as the crossing of multiple types of boundaries that include geographical and linguistic borders (see section 3.3). Therefore, the use of term *transnationalism* is not only

adopted here as a descriptor of the migration practices and profiles of the participants and their families, but also includes the crossing of linguistic boundaries through the practice of translanguaging. This understanding of transnationalism is regarded as coherent with that of translanguaging as a three-dimensional element that is dynamic and signals an ongoing process of performing, locating, moving and creating (see section 3.2.2 on the use of the particle 'trans'), characteristics that are always present in the particular ways in which the participants of the study live their lives across the geographical borders that have marked their migration journey.

In the following sections (3.2-3.4) I turn to a detailed description of the terms outlined in this section to further frame the study and to set the conceptual foundation used as the basis for the data analysis presented in Chapters 4 and 5.

3.2 Translanguaging

Over the last decade there has been an increasing body of scholarship about translanguaging. Consequently, the research and debate in this growing field has also gained great attention worldwide. However, translanguaging is not a new concept. According to Lewis et al. (2012) the origins of the term go back to the 1980s when it was first used and implemented in Welsh classrooms as a strategy to approach the learning process of bilingual pupils. The increasing popularity of the term over the years has been mainly due to new conceptualizations and changes in how "bilingual and multilingual education, bilingualism and multilingualism have developed not only among academics but also amid changing politics and public understandings" of these issues (Lewis et al., 2012, p. 642). Given this paradigm change around bi/multilingualism, translanguaging has been further developed not only as a pedagogical strategy but it has been refined and extended to become a "practical theory" (García & Li Wei, 2014) in the field of applied linguistics.

In the following portion of this section, I turn to a discussion of the impact of translanguaging in education. In addition, I outline some of the main contributions from work in this field. Considering that the participants in this study described school experiences, and that some of them are involved in language teaching a brief description of the role that translanguaging has played in the field of education seemed appropriate.

3.2.1 Translanguaging and bilingual education

The term translanguaging is well known for its roots in the field of education, and more specifically in bilingual education. Although first popularized in Europe, many scholars around the world have embraced the term and expanded the notions and applications of translanguaging in and outside the field of pedagogy (Nielsen Niño, 2018). As widely documented (Baker & Wright, 2017; García & Li Wei, 2014; Mazzaferro, 2018; Mertin, 2018; Mon Thomas & Mennen, 2014) translanguaging comes from the Welsh word *trawsieithu* coined by Cen Williams (1994, 1996). According to Lewis et al. (2012) this term was used to designate a "pedagogical practice"(p.643) in which English and Welsh played different roles in the classroom: the first as a content-delivery language and the second as a processing resource that was used as a support to foster the understanding of the information delivered in English. Lewis et al. explain that Williams' proposal came within the context of "a reaction against the historical separation" (p.642) of English and Welsh, which led to the prevailing conviction that English held a higher level of prestige than Welsh. Although at the time the aim was to help pupils achieve equilibrium in both languages, the idea of having two 'politically competing' languages coexist inside classrooms can be regarded as a marker of the symbolic essence of translanguaging as a form of resistance. This 'revolutionary' notion has contributed to a great extent to efforts in the reassessment of contemporary understandings about the role and significance of language across general education and bi/multilingual education in particular moving away from monolingual ideologies as the norm.

One of the most influential voices working with translanguaging in the field of bilingual education is that of Ofelia García. She has made an enormous contribution to the detailed understanding of what translanguaging entails and how it could be extended to further benefit bilingual individuals and communities across myriad contexts, but especially in educational contexts. Building on the first notions of the concept, García (2009a) defined translanguaging as the "*multiple discursive practices* in which bilinguals engage in order to *make sense of their bilingual worlds*" (p.45, emphasis in original). Although this definition does not specify details on the type of discursive practices or how they are performed, it captures the principles at the core of a paradigm shift that centers attention on the speakers of multiple languages and the general features characterizing their linguistic performances, repertoires, and domains. A revised definition by García (2012) concretely states that "Translanguaging refers to the

language practices of bilingual people" (p.1, emphasis in original). This understanding of the term is not limited to the previous 'discursive practices' only, but it opens the scope to embrace 'language practices' in general. From this broader perspective, Mazzaferro (2018) posits that translanguaging sees language as "practice and action performed by individuals" (p.2) rather than as a delimited set of descriptive norms.

The increasing relevance that translanguaging has gained as a pedagogical strategy over the last decade has led to the emergence of a vast body of classroom research and guidelines informing educational policies around the world (Cenoz & Gorter, 2015; Fu, Hadjioannou, & Zhou, 2019; Mertin, 2018; Paulsrud, Rosén, Straszer, & Wedin, 2017). These actions have also contributed to the refinement of the definition of translanguaging, the strengthening of its theoretical principles and evidence around the benefits of translanguaging for individuals and communities. There are two remarkable examples of projects aiming at incorporating translanguaging as a common practice in schools and classrooms. In the United States the ongoing CUNY-NYSIEB Project[16] directed by Ricardo Otheguy has launched a series of guides and workshops with activities and information to help teachers, trainees and parents working with and/or raising bilingual students in multilingual communities. In addition to the teaching resources the guides also offer accessible theoretical information about translanguaging. The other example comes from Oaxaca, Mexico, where the Critical-Ethnographic-Action-Research project (CEAR Project) "teaches English in order to (re)negotiate the indigenous children's identities and to challenge historical and societal ideologies that position the children as deficient learners and their translanguaging and multiliteracies practices as inappropriate for school" (López-Gopar et al., 2013, p. 274).

Research investigating the role and impact of translanguaging in educational contexts with what García (2009a, 2009b) identifies as *emergent bilinguals* includes myriad examples, contexts and student-populations. This body of research has therefore illuminated a variety of themes depending on the context and characteristics of the studies conducted. For instance, in the United States, research has mainly focused on the translanguaging practices of *transfronterizo,* immigrant and minority children and high school students within dual-language programs or inside ESL/TESOL programs in schools across the country (i.e. Esquinca et al., 2014; Li Shuzhan & Luo Wenjing, 2017; Sayer, 2013; Velasco & García, 2014). There is a prevalence of studies located within

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[16] CUNY- NYSIEB Project: https://www.cuny-nysieb.org

this particular educational context in the U.S. This may be explained by the procedures that, as described by Mendoza-Denton (2008) and García (2009a), U.S. schools follow in order to classify students on the basis of their ethnic background or home-language dynamics as proficient or non-proficient English speakers. Therefore, such profiling procedures have led to the frequent placement of emergent bilingual students in language learning programs where their language practices are flexible. These programs and their classrooms then become a rich source of data to understand the translanguaging practices of bilingual children, their families and communities. However, despite the limiting school policies around language or the macro-political agenda permeating these settings, the research conducted has helped not only to understand the cognitive processes of bilingual students, but to allow their opinions to be heard. Additionally, it has illuminated the work of teachers aimed at developing strategies of translanguaging in order to help bilinguals navigate the monolingual expectations of the school's system (Flores & Schissel, 2014).

Within the context of higher education, research incorporating the notion of translanguaging is scarce. Nonetheless this developing body of studies has provided some results that help to set the background for understanding the prevalent practices of bilingual students and educators in this context. In their research within the Puerto Rican context, Mazak and Herbas-Donoso (2014, 2015) have conducted case studies that describe the interactions, practices and ideologies inside university science classrooms where Spanish and English co-exist. Their findings have revealed the prevalence of monolingual ideologies that place "English as the language of science" (p.27). However, they have also observed the creative practices that teachers and students implement to present, discuss and process academic content. Through the observation of the translanguaging spaces created inside classrooms, the researchers have found that "[i]n this back and forth of both languages, students develop a positive sense of self as bilingual individuals because they see their bilingualism as a resource" (p.712).

In the European context, recent research on translanguaging in higher and basic education settings has looked at academic writing practices (Kaufhold, 2018) or the use of alternative strategies such as rapping to teach Irish (Moriarty, 2017). Authors in the European context continue to emphasize the importance of developing new assessment tools and teaching approaches that allow minority —therefore emergent bilingual— language speakers to benefit from their existent linguistic and cultural capital.

Finally, a global perspective provided by Mazak and Carroll (2017) displays a collection of works that give evidence on how translanguaging has been investigated and implemented so far in higher education settings in various countries. Their contributions point at the benefits that translanguaging has brought at the micro-level inside higher education institutions. They argue that "creating spaces for translanguaging practices" should eventually lead to "equity and access" (p.184) to education and welfare.

3.2.2 Translanguaging and applied linguistics

The path to the theorizing of translanguaging has been constructed to a great extent on the basis of the role that it has played in bi/multilingual education. García & Li Wei's book: *Translanguaging: Language, Bilingualism and Education* (2014) marked a major contribution to understand the theoretical guiding principles of translanguaging and to clarify its boundaries with related terms such as those outlined in table 6 (section 3.1.3). For García and Li Wei (2014) translanguaging:

> […] offers a transdisciplinary lens that combines sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic perspectives to study the complex multimodal practices of multilingual interactions as social and cognitive acts able to transform not only semiotic systems and speaker subjectivities, but also sociopolitical structures. Translanguaging works by generating trans-systems of semiosis, and creating trans-spaces where new language practices, meaning-making multimodal practices, subjectivities and social structures are dynamically generated in response to the complex interactions of the 21st century (pp.42-43)

Based on extensive research with bilinguals and anchored in Grosjean's (1989) call for the study of "the bilingual [individual] as a whole" instead of in "comparison to the monolingual" (p.13-14), translanguaging is directly associated with the Dynamic Bilingual Model, which "posits that there is but one linguistic system[…]with features that are integrated throughout" (García & Li Wei, 2014, pp. 14-15). The figure below shows the evolution of bilingual models:
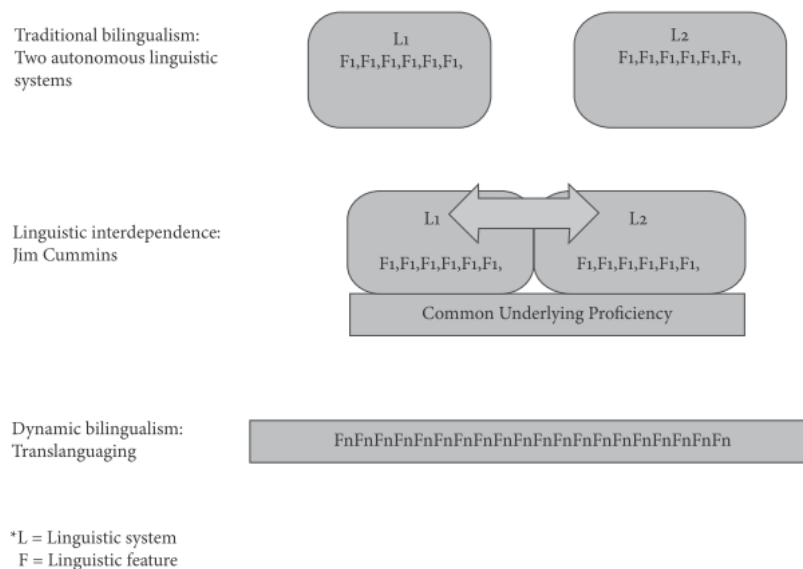
Fig. 20. Bilingual Models (García & Li Wei, 2014, p.14)

According to Li Wei and Zhu Hua (2013) the linguistic practices located within this dynamic understanding of bilingualism are captured by translanguaging through the use of the particle 'trans'. This element signals three dimensions of translanguaging: 1) trans-system/structure/space, 2) transformative and 3) transdisciplinary. The first dimension comprises the "full range of linguistic performances of multilingual language users", which includes multimodality, language alternation, etc. The second dimension conceives translanguaging as "transformative in nature". This engenders a process by which multilingual speakers build on their existing "linguistic, cognitive and social skills, their knowledge and experience of the social world and their attitudes and beliefs" in order to develop 'new identities'. Li Wei explains that this creates a 'translanguaging space', which he defines as "a space for the act of translanguaging as well as a space created through translanguaging" (p.1223). In fact, a recent study on academic writing practices conducted by Kaufhold (2018) provides evidence of translanguaging spaces being "collaboratively created" (p.8). Finally, the third dimension corresponds to the idea that by exploring "the structural, cognitive and sociocultural dimensions of multilingual practices" the *creativity* and *criticality* of the multilingual speakers (pp.519-520) is revealed.

As the notion of translanguaging gained momentum, Li Wei (2018b) proposed the adoption and application of translanguaging as a "Practical Theory" (p.10) for the field of applied linguistics. Li Wei's proposal is grounded in Maoist and Marxist philosophies and it claims that knowledge construction begins with descriptive adequacy, which is described as "the observer-analyst's subjective understanding and interpretation of the practice or phenomenon that they are observing" (p.11). Furthermore, Li Wei emphasizes that a theory of this nature is centered around interpretations and is not concerned with prescribing solutions or making predictions. Translanguaging according to Li Wei (2018a) is rather focused on discursive practice and process. Translanguaging looks at practice when discourse involves the use of multiple language varieties, and it emphasizes the process in terms of "knowledge construction" that transcends individual languages. Thus, translanguaging "concerns effective communication, function rather than form, cognitive activity as well as language production" (p.25).

3.3 Transnationalism

The term transnationalism has been used across myriad disciplines to describe a variety of phenomena (Levitt & Waters, 2002; Vertovec, 2009). It has captured academic interest in great part because it has been regarded both "as an approach to empirical analysis" and as a descriptor for "migrant behaviours, social actions, institutions and migrants themselves" (Robertson, 2013, p. 73). Moreover, the contemporary developments in the conceptualization of transnationalism have led scholars to take this lens as an opportunity to move away from the traditional *assimilationist* takes on migration studies and adopt a more flexible and broader approach that embraces multiculturalism and a dynamic mobility that is not firmly attached to a particular territory (Robertson, 2013). This change of approach in studies of migration aligns with the newest perspectives in the field of linguistics (De Fina, 2016; Li Wei, 2018a; Morales, 2019; Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2018), which emphasize the increasing dynamism of language practices that incorporate various languages and varieties as a result of migrants "taking their heritage languages to new locales and developing repertoires that were not traditionally part of their community" (Canagarajah, 2013, p. 2).

The synergies emerging from international migration flows and other inherent issues characteristic of the 21st century so far, provide the grounds for what Canagarajah (2013) identifies as a paradigm shift in current language studies away from "the dominant monolingual orientation" (p.6). Therefore, the transnational dimension becomes highly significant to understand the reconfiguration of people's linguistic repertoires and identities in connection with the dynamic, complex and particular language practices of individuals and communities such as those in this study.

Similarly to the rest of the terms presented throughout this chapter, the conceptualization of transnationalism has evolved over the last forty years, particularly within the field of the social sciences (Clavin, 2005; Vertovec, 2009). The seminal work of the anthropologists Glick-Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton (1992) marked what was regarded at the time as a novel perspective by advocating for the use of the term 'transmigrants' as a way to identify a 'new type' of migrants, who engaged in the process of building "social fields that [linked] together their country of origin and their country of settlement" (p.1). Although, their initial definitions and takes on transnationalism have been disputed, their work is commonly taken as a reference point to understand the phenomenon of cross-border practices in studies of migration.

The developments in the conceptualization of transnationalism eventually led to the emergence of what Itzigsohn and Giorguli Saucedo (2002) call a 'new paradigm' in which "immigrants redefine, but do not break their ties to their country of origin" (p. 766). Therefore, this new paradigm challenges the idea that immigrants had to assimilate into the host society as their ultimate goal of adaptation. Following this line, Levitt (2010) argues that transnational membership must not be attached to 'host' or 'home' countries only, but it must be regarded in terms of how people connect to "co-ethnics, co-professionals and co-religionists around the world"(p.43) and I would also add co-translanguagers. This resonates with the definition provided by Duff (2015), who understands transnationalism as: "the crossing of cultural, ideological, linguistic and geopolitical borders and boundaries of all types but especially those of national states" (p.57). Taken together, these conceptualizations move transnationalism as a theoretical lens away from the assimilationist tradition to a "multicultural, multidirectional and deterritorialized" standpoint (Robertson, 2013, p. 73). Even though there has been a paradigm change that embraces and explores diversity in transnationalism, Dahinden (2009) warns on the significant weight that issues around race and ethnicity have, particularly when investigating membership and identity. In this

regard, I would also add the significant role that language plays particularly when it is added to issues of race and ethnicity. In fact, the emergence of studies on raciolinguistics (Samy Alim, Rickford, & Ball, 2016) also point out at the importance of these issues particularly when dealing with transnationalism and migration in general.

3.3.1 Defining transnational youths

Despite the aforementioned pluralization of academic practices, those bound up in contexts of transnationalism often face challenging issues in their day to day lives. Within the context of transnationalism, myriad issues impact the lives of the individuals, families and communities that are suspended in-between borders and linked to at least two geographical places. One aspect that deserves attention is that of transnational youths. The term 'transnational youth' describes a population with particular characteristics within the framework of international migration. Skerrett (2015) distinguishes transnational youths from immigrant youths in that the latter are "firmly planted in their new homeland", while the former engage with "significant ties to two or more nation states" (p.2). Transnational youths have unique trajectories. These youths become transnational for a variety of reasons and they develop specific profiles and skills as a result of their migration history and circumstances. The particular migration journeys of transnational youths have a significant influence in their process of socialization and identity construction because their experiences constantly involve at least two places of residence, they use at least two languages, and at least two different cultural and literacy frameworks (Moctezuma Longoria, 2017; Skerrett, 2015; Victor Zúñiga & Hamann, 2009).

Even though transnational migration is a major phenomenon in the 21st century, information about transnational youths is still limited. According to Skerrett (2015) transnational youths can be found worldwide, but there are no official reports on their numbers. For instance, researchers who have undertaken research on transnational students in schools report figures going from hundreds of thousands to millions (Skerrett, 2015, pp. 2-3). In addition, the derogatory vocabulary[17] around children and families engaging in migration makes it even more difficult to pursue the task of investigating transnational youths, their languaging practices and identities. As emphasized by Duff (2015) "[o]ften these transnationals are viewed as one massive,

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[17] Examples of these terms include *parachute children, astronaut families, unaccompanied minors,* among others. See Duff (2015) for details.

undifferentiated category (or problem) —*English language learners*— obscuring tremendous differences in their backgrounds, resources, goals, abilities and trajectories" (p.66). Moreover, beyond the quantification of transnational youths internationally and in particular contexts, obscurity over their stories, needs, cultural and languaging practices makes it harder to develop mechanisms to cater to their necessities in the broader sense of the word. Therefore, research illuminating all these dimensions of their lives calls for immediate attention.

The accurate description of transnational youths' journeys is a fundamental dimension to understand their practices, needs and identities. Based on this, Hamann et al. (2008) have contributed with a description of transnational youths' profiles. The profiles they identified come from research conducted in Mexico with children in basic education. The table below summarizes the three profiles they found:

Profile A	Profile B	Profile C
Students born in the U.S., who started school in the U.S. and then moved to Mexico.	Students born in Mexico, who went to school in the U.S. at some point and then returned to Mexico.	Students who have moved various times between Mexico and the U.S.

Table 7. Profiles of transnational children in elementary and secondary schools in Mexico (based on Hamann et al., 2008)

Moreover, Víctor Zúñiga and Hamann (2019) emphasize that based on the children's profiles they are "to a great or less extent bilingual, bicultural and a growing percentage of them are binational"(p. 234, my translation). Zúñiga and Hamann explain that these features are therefore key to understanding the difficulties that children face in transitioning to different schools across the U.S. and Mexico, where expectations around these children are commonly based on monolingual and mononationalist ideologies. At the same time, the characteristics of these children are also at the core of the challenges that schools on both sides of the border face in terms of their educational policies and teacher training.

In addition to the previous, other research looking at the experiences of transnational and returned children in Mexico include, for example, the work of Borjian et al. (2016) reporting the varied experiences of Mexican-descent U.S. born children. The findings of the study revealed the complexities faced at the economic, linguistic and educational levels, calling for further research on the range of "sociocultural and linguistic resources" that transnational youths draw on to "navigate their new

environment" (p.52). A study by Avilés and Mora Pablo (2014) with returnee children and their teachers contributes to the understanding of the impact that language, the social relations and the cultural environment have in their identity formation. Panait and Zúñiga (2016) offer one of the most recent works looking specifically at the linguistic aspects impacting children who transit between Mexico and the U.S. Their findings provide an insight into the monolingual expectations of U.S. and Mexican schools regarding the language use of migrant children without considering their transnational lives and contact with at least two languages. In analyzing the children's performance in writing and reading tasks Panait and Zúñiga provide an account of the children's perceptions, and some of the main difficulties they have revolving around: vocabulary recognition, accentuation, spelling, punctuation, and comprehension, among others. Although the authors emphasize the bilingual skills of the children and they show awareness of translanguaging and the complexity of bilingual repertoires their analysis is mainly based on structural perspectives of language. This body of research contributes significantly to the understanding of the phenomena around transnational youth including issues related to language, an aspect that has not yet been largely explored.

The migration experiences and the language skills of transnational youths relocated in Mexico have also been researched in connection with their training as English language teachers and their identity formation. This body of work has been mainly conducted in the central region of Mexico. Some of the most relevant work includes for instance, exploring the identity construction of transnationals within the context of ELT or TESOL programs where they can interact with other transnationals and where their English command is valued (Rivas Rivas, 2013). The work of Mora Pablo et al. (2015), who discuss the role that experiences of language brokering has had in transnational youth to become English teachers. In the same line, Serna-Gutiérrez and Mora-Pablo (2017) investigated the critical incidents leading transnational youth to engage in teaching. Their findings show that transnationals' experiences of learning English in the U.S., their language knowledge validation from their teachers and their impulse to help others learn English were the main factors in becoming English teachers. Christiansen, Trejo Guzmán, and Mora-Pablo (2018) discuss the advantages of transnational youths in becoming English teachers in Mexico based on being perceived as native speakers. This study also presents the tensions and implications of issues

around on the prevailing language ideologies favoring language separation, native-speaker teachers, and language purism and imperialism.

3.4 Towards the exploration of identity: connecting the theoretical strands

Recent approaches to migration see the movement of people across borders as resulting in the increasing diversification of places and spaces by "localizing the global" and planting the seed of multilingualism (Appadurai, 1996; Morawska, 2009; Nederveen Pieterse, 2003; M. Suárez-Orozco, M & Qin-Hilliard, 2004). Therefore, as we transition into the era of multiculturalism, it is now more than ever the case that diversity plays a leading role in many aspects of the social and political arenas worldwide with implications for language practices and education (Windle & O'Brien, 2019). The diversification of places and spaces comes with a series of advantages, but it also brings to light significant issues as 'the local' and 'the global' collide, provoking identity transformations that challenge traditional perspectives and expectations. For instance, it cannot be denied that there is still an imminent emergence and lingering persistence of differences among 'groups' cohabiting in some places and spaces. However, there also seems to be a growing awareness and a "social context that is much more tolerant of ethnic diversity and long-term transnational connections compared to the past when assimilation was demanded more strenuously" (Levitt, DeWind, & Vertovec, 2003, p. 569).

According to Abendroth-Timmer and Hennig (2014) "[i]n times of multiculturalism and plurilingualism, the notion of identity is becoming fuzzier" (p.27). The 21st century seems to be indeed marked by a discourse around these concepts as we see an increasing flow of people moving in multiple directions and with different purposes promoting a sense of diversification in different contexts and aspects of social life. These synergies therefore lead to the emergence of new forms of expressing identity that reflect the clashes, journeys and experiences of mobile and non-mobile subjects. In some cases, identity is conceived as a compound of multiple 'fragments', dynamic and subject to constant change. This conception of identity in the light of multiculturalism gains momentum considering that "[m]igration as well as educational and professional mobility contribute to the multiplication of possible social experiences" (Abendroth-Timmer & Hennig, 2014, p. 27). This idea is echoed by

Baynham, who acknowledges the importance of (im)migration experiences in the construction or reconfiguration of identity, from this perspective: "for the person living this journey, the immigration story becomes a source of defining, and understanding the self, prior to, during, and after the immigration experience" (Baynham cited in Danzak, 2011, p. 188). Although there seems to be an awareness about the impact of the links that connect multiculturalism and plurilingualism with migration or more specifically immigration, we must acknowledge the dynamism that transnationalism brings to the discussion of identity as the number of transnational migrants increases worldwide.

Over the years, research on migration and identity has provided valuable evidence of the ruptures and reconfigurations that migrants experience. For instance, there has been an increasing scholarly interest in the notion of hybrid identities (Esteban-Guitart & Vila, 2015; Migge, 2016; Nederveen Pieterse, 2003; Ralph, 2014). However, most of this work has been conducted with immigrants or returnees who settled in 'traditionally' immigrant receiving countries such as the U.S. (De Fina, 2003; Flores-González, 2017; Ghorashi, 2004; C. Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2001). The earlier work of Gloria Anzaldúa in the 1980s addressed the issue of identity and the border culture, which included discussions around *mestizaje* and language. Her reflections and ideas about life in the borderlands have been highly influential in illuminating aspects of the phenomenon of migration and 'hybridity' or 'duality' that are many times obscured by discourses of assimilation within the tradition of migration theory studies. In highlighting important aspects of life in the border, Anzaldúa brings us closer to the possibility of exploring identity through language use in a more flexible and critical fashion given by the sense of mixing embedded in the concept of *mestizaje*. In considering Anzaldúa's open and organic approach to the exploration of identity it is possible to find a bridge that connects with transnationalism in Levitt's conceptualization that "[a] transnational lens breaks open what some have called 'groupism' or 'methodological ethnicity' by acknowledging that people construct identities in reference to family, friends, and 'others' living all over the social fields they inhabit" (Levitt, 2010, p. 42). Therefore, the experience of transnationalism becomes an important dimension in the study of language practices that allows to conceive new ways of constructing identity.

The relevance of focusing on language practices in order to explore identity comes according to De Fina (2016) from the fact that "[i]dentities are conveyed, negotiated and regimented through linguistic and discursive means (p.163). De Fina

points to the findings of studies conducted with youths in multilingual and multicultural settings, which provide evidence of how these subjects "convey and negotiate identities in extremely innovative ways through the creative use of resources that leads to varieties that are not easily separable into distinct languages or easy to categorise as such" (p.168). In fact, recent developments of translanguaging as a theory have led to its implementation in the investigation of language practices in the context of international migration with transnational individuals. So far this research has been mainly conducted in the U.S. (Robinson, Hall, & Navarro, 2020) and in the UK with families or individuals from an Asian background (i.e. Creese & Blackledge, 2015; Li Wei & Zhu Hua, 2013; Zhu Hua & Li Wei, 2016). These studies have sought to illuminate the common and particular language practices of individuals engaged in transnationalism. In addition to describing the language practices of the participants, these studies have also highlighted the potential of translanguaging to "show how everyday practices and identities are profoundly rooted in the developmental trajectories of the communities to which individuals belong, and how they constantly shift, develop and transform" (Li Wei & Zhu Hua, 2013, p. 520).

By bringing together the perspectives of transnationalism and translanguaging this study aims to go beyond research to date by exploring the organic discursive practices of bilinguals who have experienced unique journeys of migration. Moreover, these strands are regarded as guiding paths to approach the concept of identity with flexibility, as the reality of transnationals is marked by constant movement, fragmentation, re-construction, duality and diversity. In writing about identity, the work of Anzaldúa (2012) reminds us that:

> The struggle of identities continues, the struggle of border is our reality still. One day the inner struggle will cease and a true integration take place. In the meantime, *tenemos que dar la lucha* (we must resist) (translation added p.85).

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a general overview of the developments in the study of bilingualism. The conceptual changes in the definitions of bilingualism and bilinguals has consequently led to the investigation of language practices from the perspective of multiple factors that interact in complex ways leading people to construct malleable identities. Moreover, this chapter has presented the notions of translanguaging from its

origins within the field of education as a pedagogical strategy to its development as a practical theory of applied linguistics. This chapter has also emphasized the importance of making a link between translanguaging and transnationalism to better understand emerging phenomena around identity construction in the context of migration flows and globalization. Finally, the review of the literature presented throughout the chapter provides a framework to locate the pertinence and contribution of the present study. The following chapter will present the methodological procedures involved in the design and implementation of the study.

CHAPTER 4
METHODOLOGY

This chapter introduces and discusses the rationale for the methodological approach and procedures taken in the design of this study. Anchored in a qualitative research approach and using Translanguaging as the theoretical lens I rely on the notion of 'translanguaging moments' as the main tool for data analysis. A definition of 'moment' in this context will be outlined in one of the sections. Additionally, this chapter describes the methodological and instrumental adjustments implemented to the data collection methods in order to create translanguaging spaces that acted as sources of translanguaging occurrences and translanguaging commentaries. This chapter also outlines the steps taken in the transcription, coding and preparation of the data for analysis, and finally, it addresses the main limitations encountered in the process of conducting this study.

4.1 Research process and design

In this section I describe the methodological procedures undertaken in order to design the research project. The decisions and procedures followed in designing and conducting this study were influenced by the methodological guidelines of Translanguaging as a practical theory (Li Wei, 2018b). In addition to this I also provide a brief description of my personal and professional identity and how it informs this study. Considering that this research looks at the languaging practices of participants located in Mexico, specifically in a region that is not a geographical border zone, I offer a brief description of the setting where the research took place with the aim of providing further details that can help readers become more familiar with the particular context of the participants in this study. Following this, I present the participants' transnational profiles identified for this study along with a description of how they were recruited, and the ethical considerations undertaken to protect their identity and the information they provided.

4.1.1 A Qualitative research approach

Qualitative research is described by Denzin and Lincoln (2011) as a "set of interpretive activities, [that] privileges no single methodological practice over another.

As a site of discussion or discourse, qualitative research is difficult to define clearly" (p.6). Although, in contrast to other types of research, qualitative investigation aims at exploring research phenomena without imposing strict and standard measures that are normally referred to as 'objective' (Flick, von Kardorff, & Steinke, 2004). Thus, the main characteristics of qualitative research according to John W Creswell (2009) include that it is carried out in the natural setting, it relies on the researcher for data collection and that it incorporates various data collection methods. Additionally, Creswell emphasizes that qualitative research "is inductive, is based on participants' meanings, is emergent, often involves the use of a theoretical lens, is interpretive, and is holistic." (p.201). Due to the capacity of qualitative researchers to provide thorough accounts of people's or communities' practices this type of research has gained significant "value and prestige" across various fields (Marshall & Rossman, 2016, p. 100). Adhering to a qualitative paradigm through the use of its inquiry strategies gives the researcher the freedom and responsibility to make sense and interpret the worlds of participants. Therefore, these strategies act as windows to explain phenomena of the real world.

4.1.2 Instant ethnography as a research strategy

When embarking on the task of investigating the translanguaging practices of transnational youths I was faced with the challenge of finding appropriate data collection strategies and instruments. I needed to capture not only a narrative account of participants' transnational journeys and metalinguistic commentaries of their linguistic performance, but also to provide the conditions to gather 'naturally occurring' translanguaging data. The long distance that geographically separated me from the research setting and consequently the brevity of the stays I could afford for fieldwork also played a determinant role in finding an efficient strategy for data collection. As explained by Peräkylää and Ruusuvuori (2011) there are certain "types of research materials" (p.529) that manage to efficiently gather descriptions of people's practices at the time that they act as "specimens" (p. 529) of the phenomenon under investigation. Therefore, I turned to instant ethnography as it offered a practical and fruitful way to collect the data. With origins in phenomenology and ethnomethodology, instant ethnography focuses on the principle that it is "important to look at ephemeral, fleeting actions and interactions" (Deumert, 2018, p. 153). This immediately resonated and

reminded me of 'Moment Analysis' in translanguaging, which is the analytic tool employed to explore the data in this study. By anchoring the data collection of this study in instant ethnography I was able to visualize the interviews in terms of Li's (2011) concept of Translanguaging space. Therefore, the interviews operated in two ways: as 'descriptors' and as 'specimens' allowing for the compilation of the data strands needed for the analysis.

4.1.3 Researcher's positionality

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the main motivation to conduct this study came from the observations and experiences I had working as a teacher-trainer and linguistics lecturer in a dual-language[18] B.A. program in Mexico. In fact, it was my professional persona that granted me access to the research site and most of the data collection process. Having taught for five years at LILEX before coming to Dublin, I was well known by students from all cohorts as I taught seven modules in the program both in English and Spanish, in addition to offering mentoring sessions at the school's Language Self-Access Center (CALEX)[19] and acting as an academic tutor for some cohorts.

My initial interest aimed at exploring identity construction and language use in the context of this program. However, on a more personal level I have always had a fascination with language learning and 'Spanglish'[20]. The combination of my professional and personal identities and interests have led me several times to look for opportunities to study abroad and immerse myself in new academic and linguistic *endroits*. The experience of being a temporal transnational migrant in Ireland in combination with my growing knowledge on transnationalism and translanguaging soon unveiled myriad phenomena that became highly influential in informing and shaping this doctoral research. One of the most salient experiences I had was the high level of awareness of my use of Spanish (my *mother tongue*) in two specific domains: 1) as I found my way around using social media and technology to maintain close contact with my family and friends in Mexico, and 2) as I discovered how to continuously

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[18] I call the program 'dual' on the grounds that the main languages to deliver content are Spanish and English. However, multiple European and national languages are part of the curriculum either as mandatory or optional subjects.

[19] Translated from the original in Spanish: Centro de Autoaprendizaje de Lenguas Extranjeras (CALEX).

[20] According to Fought (2003) Spanglish describes a particular way of speaking known as code-switching, in which English and Spanish are mixed in speech. It is commonly labeled as a "sloppy, inaccurate or leading to the degeneration of one or both languages"(p.5). Although it is seen as characteristic of the speech of Mexican-Americans in the U.S., it is also used by other Spanish-speaking communities in the U.S.

accommodate the way I spoke in order to communicate with my Latin-American community of friends in Dublin. I have also experienced constant challenges and reflections on my ability to use English in the academic context and while navigating daily-life situations surrounded by different types of *Englishes*. My transnational experience led me to use various resources in my linguistic repertoire, such as my knowledge of French and other semiotic elements that were not obvious to me prior to 'the PhD episode' in my life in Mexico. Thus, multilingualism and also the subtle but constant racialization that I have experienced in Ireland became crucial factors in the way I have lived my life between Mexico and Dublin for the past four years. These experiences not only increased my sensitivity and motivation towards my research, but they have also opened my eyes and ears to listen to and explore my participants' stories and language practices from the perspective of me as a bilingual researcher, lecturer and as a Mexican transnational student. The diagram below provides a representation of how I perceive these elements and perspectives interacting:
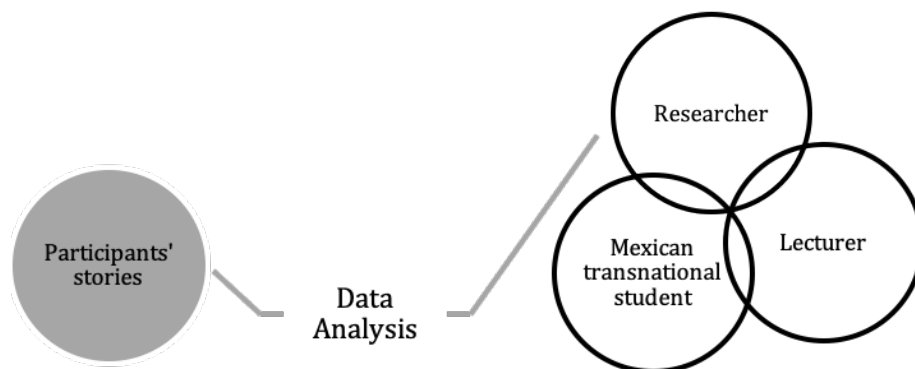
Fig. 21. The researcher's three perspectives informing the data analysis.

4.1.4 Research setting

This study sought the participation of transnational students located in the state of Zacatecas, Mexico. Due to my professional affiliation with the Autonomous University of Zacatecas (UAZ)[21], I was able to recruit the majority of the participants (19 out of 23) in this setting. The UAZ is the largest tertiary education institution in the state. The main University campus is located approximately 10km from the capital's city center. The majority of the student body comprises students from different communities across the state and neighbor states. However, there is also a significant portion of

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[21] The name of the institution was translated from the original in Spanish: Universidad Autónoma de Zacatecas "Francisco García Salinas" (UAZ).

'international students' and 'transnational' (Mexico-U.S.) students. All of them attend myriad programs in this institution. The socioeconomic and cultural background of the students is diverse given that it is a public University.

Additionally, the UAZ offers a variety of language courses to students and the general public[22]. It features both institutional and extension general English programs, and it is one of the few institutions in Mexico to offer a B.A program in Foreign Languages[23] (LILEX) that teaches content classes in Spanish and English. The B.A in Foreign Languages began operating in 2011, offering minor degrees in: a) language teaching, b) enterprise services and c) translation. Since the program opened, I was able to notice a systematic and significant presence of students who have experienced international migration particularly between Mexico and the United States. However, the presence of students with a history of migration is significant across programs in the University, consistent with the high migration intensity level of the state. To the best of my knowledge, LILEX is the only undergraduate program at the UAZ, which requires candidates to have at least an A2[24] level of 'General English' competence at the moment of application. In addition to the general institutional admittance process, LILEX's admission process includes having candidates complete a mock TOEFL exam (Test Of English as a Foreign Language), a writing test designed by the school's faculty, and an interview with an academic committee. These requirements are the same for any national or international candidates applying for registration in the program.

4.1.5 Participants

As stated above, my professional relationship with the UAZ was key to gaining access to the participant population. The final research sample consisted of 23 transnational students between 19-32 years old. The number of participants in this study aligns with the standard for qualitative and phenomenological research, which recommends and average of 10 participants to "reach saturation" and up to 10 people for studies involving "long interviews" (J. W Creswell & Poth, 2018; Groenewald, 2004, p. 46; Mason, 2010). By means of coordinated work with the gatekeeper I was

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[22] Known as the University Extension Language Program or Programa de Extensión Universitario de Lenguas (PEUL)

[23] The name of the program was translated from the original in Spanish: Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras (LILEX)

[24] Nomenclature based on the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR, 2001).

able to contact and recruit 19 students from the UAZ (LILEX and Physics majors), and 4 additional participants (working in public or private institutions) who were personal contacts of the gatekeeper volunteered to take part in the study. Following Creswell & Plano Clark's (2011) conceptualization of "purposeful sampling", the participants included in the study adhered to the principles that emphasize the importance of having "participants who have experienced the central phenomenon or the key concept being explored in the study" (John W Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 173; Groenewald, 2004).

The recruitment process was initiated after gaining approval from the *Research Ethics Committee (REC) of the School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences*. In addition to this, the head of school and the LILEX program coordinator in Zacatecas, Mexico were sent a letter informing of the research and asking for permission to contact potential participants through the gatekeeper (Appendix 1). The participants were invited to take part in the study through contact with the gatekeeper via personal communication, email and informative posters in English and Spanish displayed on social media and on-site. The response of the participants who volunteered to take part in the study was overwhelmingly positive in terms of their attitudes towards the research topic and the researcher. They showed interest and excitement to share their stories with me, as affirmed in the vibrant interviews recorded and captured through personal emphatic comments made during or after the interviews.

4.1.6 Ethical considerations

Ethical integrity is imperative when conducting research, especially when it entails direct work and interaction with people (Dörnyei, 2007; A. Mackey & Gass, 2016). Additionally, since this study aimed at obtaining narratives revolving around experiences of international migration, an important portion of the sample population qualifies as potentially vulnerable. Hence, clear ethical protocols were established and adhered to ensuring that both the participants and the information they provided were treated with care, respect and confidentiality. Institutional ethical protocols are commonly used in order to anticipate potential situations in which participants can be at risk or those that might be positive for them (Duff, 2012; Ivankova & Greer, 2015). In line with this, I followed the protocols established by the *Trinity College Dublin* through the *Research Ethics Committee of the School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences* by implementing the following elements:

- *The use of a consent form (CF) and a participant information leaflet (PIL) in English and Spanish:* before collecting the data, participants were individually given a PIL (Appendix 2) stating the objectives of the study, and the terms of participation. Participants were allowed sufficient time to read the information. The participants who expressed their voluntary interest to participate in the study were asked to sign a consent form, and they were given a copy for their records.

- *The use of pseudonyms and anonymity:* protecting the identity of all participants was a major concern regarding ethical procedures in this study. Therefore, each one of the participants, who completed the writing task and had an interview, was assigned a random pseudonym by the researcher. These pseudonyms were systematically used throughout the study in order to identify and quote the data provided by each participant.

- *Digital data and hardcopy records*: Safe storing of digital data and hardcopy records was another aspect considered in the data collection processing and analysis. All the files containing digital data and hardcopy records obtained from interviews, scanned versions of the writing samples, consent forms, participant information leaflets, and documents generated as part of the study were kept in a password-locked computer. Finally, it is important to mention that these files were only available to the researcher and the research supervisor. The archives originated from this study shall only exist for a period of five years as stated in the *Research Ethics Application Form* (Appendix 3) authorized for this study.

My previous experience conducting qualitative research (at master's level) gave me insight into the meanings and forms of research consent. As a student-researcher in European universities (UK and Ireland) I am aware of the importance of outlining an ethical protocol and informing participants of the aims and procedures of the research. However, my cultural and lived knowledge of the research site came into play as having participants sign papers can be perceived as suspicious or unsafe in our cultural context. According to Marshall and Rossman (2016) the clash of Eurocentric informed consent practices and demands with the perceptions and practices of a non-European research context, such as Mexico in this case, can cause important dilemmas and pressures for the researcher to try to balance both realities. As a researcher, I take

the responsibility of being transparent and ethical with participants very seriously. Therefore, relying on my professional image at the university in Mexico and my association with the gatekeeper, I was able to establish rapport with participants to explain the institutional procedures requested by Trinity College Dublin. Additionally, I made myself available to participants on-site and through text messages to answer their questions as many times as it was necessary, and I made sure to sign the consent form at the same time as them as a sign of fairness.

In the following section of this chapter I will provide a detailed description of the conceptual framework used for the data exploration and coding process.

4.2 Li Wei's "moment analysis"

Conducting an empirical study on translanguaging practices implies the use of a particular methodology. The methodological procedures aimed at exploring and understanding the *translanguaging space* have been outlined in the analytic framework called *Moment Analysis* (Li Wei, 2011). According to its proponent, "the Translanguaging perspective invites us to reflect on the need to pay more attention to what may appear to be mundane, every day, fleeting moments in the era of big data" (Li Wei, 2018a, p. 25). Therefore, moment analysis offers the possibility to focus on the "spontaneous, impromptu, and momentary actions and performances of the individual" (Li Wei, 2011, p. 1224). This focus on the organic nature of 'moments' allows the researcher to find and interpret the creativity and criticality characterizing the languaging practices taking place within the translanguaging space studied. The notion of 'moment' is at the core of translanguaging in that it is exactly the immediate actions and reactions which provide evidence of the creativity and criticality emerging in an individual's mind (García & Li Wei, 2014). Once these moments occur, they "become patterns" in the sense that they are acknowledged, used and integrated to a person's performance (Li Wei, 2011, p. 1224). Another key element in the relevance of a 'moment' is the effect caused on those individuals who witness or notice it. According to Li Wei, individuals who notice the 'moments' recognize their significance to then make an interpretation of the situation and accommodate their behavior accordingly.

Moment analysis as originally proposed is conducted on data gathered through various specific sources: 1) observation, 2) naturally occurring interaction and 3) metalanguaging data (Li Wei, 2011, p. 1224). The last source of data is particularly

relevant as it refers to the speaker's commentaries and self-reflections on their languaging practices, performance and recalled experiences (Zhu Hua & Li Wei, 2016). The value of these self-reflections hinges on the principle that translanguaging investigates how language users become aware of, and how they process their linguistic repertoire and performance. In other words, how they "articulate and position themselves in their metalanguaging" (Li Wei, 2011, p. 1224). Grounded in the significance of the metalanguaging data, this study favored the use of interviews as a narrative platform. This methodological decision seemed appropriate considering the qualitative approach to the data analysis, which would allow for the emergence of information around participants' processes, positionalities and performances. Additionally, I see these commentaries as a fundamental element to initiate the data coding process leading to a solid analysis of the data. The reflections and explanations offered in many cases allow participants to 'put a name' or 'a label' on their common practices. This process of organic emergence of labels becomes highly useful and meaningful in the stage of analysis.

4.2.1 Defining 'a moment'

A moment is the central unit of inquiry in moment analysis. According to Li Wei and Zhu Hua (2013), a moment has two main features, it is 1) mundane and 2) noticeable. *Mundanity* here refers to the organic appearance of an event in communicative interaction that calls the attention of those engaged in the exchange due to its creativity. The relevance of a moment becomes evident when the participants comment on or signal the 'moment' by pausing the exchange and acknowledging the fact that 'something' linguistically creative or salient has happened. On the other hand, *noticeability* refers to the analyst's evaluation of the potential influence or consequences that "the context or setting" (Li Wei & Zhu Hua, 2013, p. 523) has in determining the particularities of interaction between speakers. It is precisely through the identification of such 'moments' or "events" (Mazak & Herbas-Donoso, 2015, p. 704) that translanguaging practices emerge in the analysis of the data. The following is an example of a translanguaging moment that emerged in a study conducted by Li Wei (2011, p. 1226) looking at natural interactions among Chinese youths living in London:

Chris: *以后工作就当"白领狗"，给人公司打工！*
            (In future (I will) work as a "white-collar dog", working for someone's company.)
Lawson and Roland both laugh.
Roland: You are already bilingual*!*
Lawson: Good one.
Chris: That's what I mean.

The example above illustrates the creativity of the speakers when using their linguistic repertoires. Li Wei explains that the expression "white-collar-dog" is pronounced *bai ling gou* in Chinese, which is very close to the pronunciation of the English word *bilingual*. According to Li Wei this extract is a translanguaging moment marked by the creation of a spontaneous pun by one of the speakers. The pun in fact has multiple layers as it plays around with the sounds of the interacting elements of these youths' linguistic repertoires, but it also makes reference to cultural understandings of the concept of 'dog' in Chinese as a hard-working person or as someone else's employee. The various elements interacting in this 'small' exchange offer an insight into the complexity, creativity and criticality of the speaker's languaging practices leading to new meanings.

4.3 Data collection through translanguaging spaces

The design of this study was based on the creation of translanguaging spaces that would act as the main data sources. The design of this study and the data collection protocol featured the use of a narrative platform that incorporated two instruments: 1) semi-structured interviews and 2) writing compositions. The process by which participants engaged with the instruments allowed the creation of 'translanguaging spaces', where I was able to capture samples of natural translanguaging moments in addition to metalinguistic commentaries that were drawn from the participants' vivid descriptions of their own translanguaging practices. Within the context of these 'spaces', both the participants and the researcher were allowed to make flexible use of multiple elements pertaining to their linguistic repertoires. The flexibility of the exchanges can be attested in the participants' creative and dynamic use of linguistic features coming from: varieties of English, Northern Mexican Spanish, (E)spanglish, "broken German"[25], and myriad local dialectal forms of the Spanish spoken in the

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[25] This expression is used here in adherence to participants' labels given to their own languaging practices.

central-north region of Mexico, among others. Although the aim of the study is not to identify nor describe the language varieties used by participants, I considered it important to mention this briefly in order to give the reader a general idea of the rich features that characterized the narratives.

The relevance of the translanguaging spaces that emerged with each interview and writing task process was increased by the common elements shared by the participants and the researcher. In addition to having a shared Mexican-cultural background, communal knowledge and command of different varieties of English and Mexican Spanish, plus additional languages and local dialects, some of the participants had also language teaching experience or basic knowledge of applied linguistics. Having these elements as common ground was, I believe, a major factor in gaining the confidence of the participants to share such descriptive and emotive stories. Therefore, these features allowed for a more organic exploration of the translanguaging spaces' geography, and deeper accounts of metalinguistic commentaries that described and explained the translanguaging practices of this group of participants.

Prior to carrying out the particular coding process for each of the instruments in the study I conducted a general exploration of the data. This first step consisted of correlating the general information of participants found in each instrument in order to extract the elements that characterized their individual profile, for example: their place of birth, age, years spent living in the U.S. or Mexico, languages spoken, migration history, etc. In fact, this first step taken is considered part of the coding process, known as "attribute coding" (Saldaña, 2016, p. 83), that leads to a detailed description of potential variables to consider. This general information was then summarized in table 5 (Chapter 5, section 5.1), and it proved to be of great value in order to contextualize the data in later stages of the analysis.

4.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

The recognition of the semi-structured interview as a useful research instrument across disciplines in the social sciences, including applied linguistics and migration studies, provides a strong foundation to favor its use in this study (Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2014; Curtis, Murphy, & Shields, 2014; Holstein & Gubrium, 2000; Vila, 1999). Additionally, the flexibility of this type of interview allows for "participants to add their own thoughts" (Curtis et al., 2014, p. 115) about the topic, which aligned particularly well with the methodological task of obtaining metalinguistic commentaries

from the participants. When conducting data collection through semi-structured interviews it is recommended to start with a list of questions that operates as a "guide" (A. Mackey & Gass, 2016, p. 225) to begin conversation with the participants. It was particularly important for this study to provide the conditions for participants to describe their transnational journeys at the time that they were given a space for the emergence of naturally occurring translanguaging practices, and to help participants in the process of reflection to elicit metalinguistic commentaries. Therefore, on the one hand I tried to incorporate general elements of "Animating interview" to gather "narratives of experience" (Holstein & Gubrium, 2011, pp. 156-157) and to capture the transnational journey of each participant. On the other hand, as the interviews unfolded, I asked questions that aimed at eliciting explanations, examples and further details of participants' translanguaging practices. The guidelines for the interview (Appendix 4) were based on instruments used by Skerrett (2012) and De Fina (2003) in their studies on transnational youths and immigrant identity respectively.

The semi-structured interviews for this study were collected between May-June 2017 and January 2019. The first set of interviews took place in the classrooms made available by the LILEX's administration in the school facilities located at Campus UAZ Siglo XXI in Zacatecas, Mexico. Flexible schedules were made available to all participants, who selected a time and date of their preference. Although all the interviews were held onsite, participants were also offered the option to have the interview online. The rest of the interviews took place in public places in the city of Zacatecas, such as coffee shops or restaurants chosen by the participants. Samples of the interviews are presented in the appendices section for reference. The pictures below show the site and set up used for the interviews held at LILEX:

Fig. 22. Front entrance of the building housing the
   B.A. in Foreign Languages. Campus UAZ
   Siglo XXI. Zacatecas, Mexico.
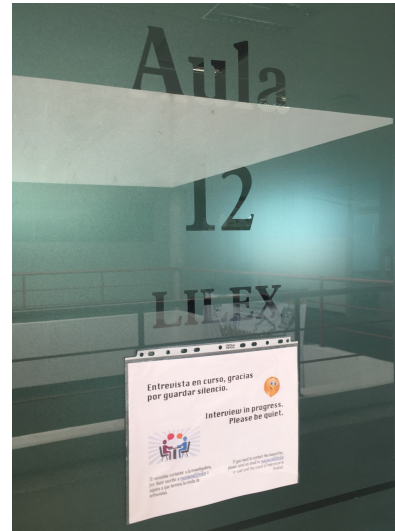
Fig.23. Classroom 12. Interview set up 1:
   "Interviews in progress".

Fig. 24. Classroom 12. Interview set up 2:
   "Furniture arrangement for interviews".

Fig. 25. Classroom 12. Interview set up 3:
   "Refreshments and thank you tokens for
   interviewees".

4.3.2 Transcribing the semi-structured interviews

The interviews were designed to last a maximum of 60 minutes with an optional 10-minute break halfway through the exchange. I was able to collect an overall 11 hours of oral data with an average time of 26:55 minutes per interview, with the longest interview lasting 51:38 minutes and the shortest interview lasting 11:29 minutes. The interviews were transcribed using the software Transana©, which provides support for organizing, coding and analyzing qualitative data (Woods & Fassnacht, 2017). Using the software allowed me to access the data with more control by using different organization and visualization tools such as keywords, collections and graphic reports. Each interview was transcribed exactly as it was originally recorded, following the

principle that analyzing the narratives in their original language is seen as an advantage to further understand "cultural meanings" (López-Bonilla, 2011, p. 55). It was crucial for this study to adhere to the linguistic choices of participants throughout the interview. Doing a study on translanguaging must be built on linguistic flexibility, as it would be very difficult to capture and understand the creative nature of translanguaging moments if the analysis was done from a version different to the original. However, for the purposes of presenting the findings in the next chapter, I provide translations and explanations in English that can help the readers follow the exchanges. Long interview-extracts are presented in charts. If the original extract is in English it will be displayed as one column, if the original extract is in Spanish the column on the right will feature the translation into English. Finally, for shorter in-text quotes in Spanish an adaptation into English will be provided in parentheses immediately after.

4.3.3 Coding the interviews' data

Once the interviews were transcribed, I initiated a process of preparation to code and analyze the oral data from the interviews. As explained earlier, the interviews were treated as translanguaging spaces and as such, sources of 1) Translanguaging Natural Occurrences (TNOs) and 2) Metalinguistic Commentaries (MLCs). The process to identify and categorize the TNOs consisted of reading each transcript carefully to manually identify and underline extracts in which participants used different elements of their linguistic repertoire. Then, using the technique of open coding in combination with *in vivo coding* each of those events were assigned a keyword that summarized or represented the context in which the TNOs occurred. In vivo coding according to Saldaña (2016) consists of assigning the data a code referring "to a word or short phrase from the actual language found in the qualitative data record" (p. 105). These keywords were written on the margins of each transcript next to the corresponding TNO underlined in the original transcript. Once this process was completed, the codes were fed to Transana where they were turned into 'keywords' and then linked to a 'collection' of TNOs in the form of 'quotes' that were drawn from the transcripts using the software. This procedure was therefore used to classify the data and develop a graphic representation of the findings. The figure below shows the thirteen keywords that were created and used to classify a total of 250 TNO elements extracted from the interview transcripts:
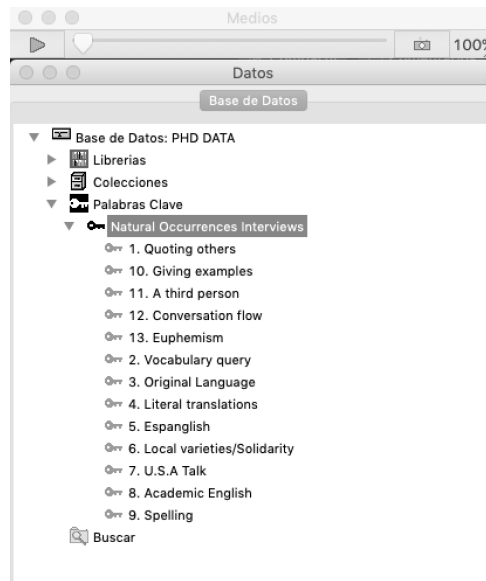
Fig. 26. List of keywords (1-13) in Transana used to classify the TNOs.

On the other hand, in order to code the data corresponding to the MLCs, I also implemented the use of open coding by reading each transcript and assigning a keyword that represented or summarized the words of each participant. These keywords were written down on the margins of the transcripts and then listed individually for each participant and transcript. The process of organizing the data into categories and subcategories was carried out with the help of the software, which looked as follows:
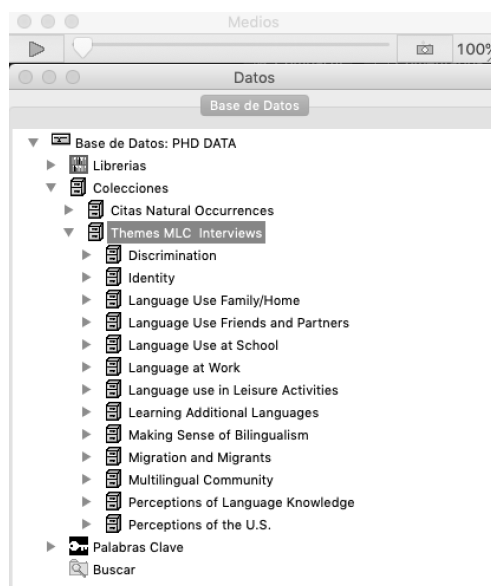
Fig. 27. List of categories to classify the data from MLCs

The complete report of the findings and their discussion will be presented in chapter 5.

4.3.4 Coding the writing compositions' data

In addition to the oral data obtained from the interviews with the participants, the design of this study incorporated a writing composition task that acted as supplementary data. The writing task consisted of producing a 500 to 1000-word composition in which participants described their experiences of studying in the U.S. and in Mexico. Participants were given a worksheet with instructions (Appendix 5) and they were asked to complete this task before having the interview. They were provided a flexible time slot to produce the text, and they were encouraged to write through their language of preference (English or Spanish). The reason to have participants complete the writing task before the interview was rooted in the principles of "cyclical data analysis" (A. Mackey & Gass, 2016, p. 230). By completing this task first, the aim was to allow participants time to become familiar with the general topic of the interviews. This would allow them to explore and remember general ideas about their schooling experiences, and it would allow the researcher to have an extra source of data where translanguaging moments could be spotted in the context of written text. A total of 13 texts were obtained from participants. Samples of the writing compositions have been included in the appendices section. The first step in preparing these data consisted of scanning and printing the original versions of the compositions. I then proceeded to read each composition carefully and I made notes of potential themes and links that connected the writing composition data to the interview-data. The codes used to annotate the MLCs were also used to annotate the data from the writing compositions. Written texts were subsequently compared with oral interviews, satisfying the convergent parallel design.

4.3.5 Researcher's notes and diary

Throughout the process of conducting this study I constantly found myself reflecting on the different aspects and elements that emerged throughout the journey. I tried to keep a record of my thoughts, memorable moments of my teaching practice and research experience, ideas, questions related to the research topic, the participants, the data and my own experience as a transnational bilingual speaker. I drew from models of self-reflection by (Bassot, 2020; Brookfield, 2002, 2017; Moon, 1999, 2018) to guide this stage of the research. Some of these notes have been included in the data analysis

and discussion as a supplement to the findings. The research notes and diary entries additionally provide evidence of my own translanguaging practices, as I have used different elements of my linguistic repertoire in order to write them and make sense of them.

4.4 Limitations of the study

There were a number of limitations encountered during the course of this study. The fist limitation I faced was the geographical distance I had with the research site, as I was based in Dublin, Ireland. It required careful planning, clear communication and coordination with the gatekeeper in order to carry out the recruitment process. Considering that I had taught at the University for a significant number of years prior to my stay in Dublin many of the potential participants knew me and recognized me. However, I thought it was important and ethical to show them the 'face behind the study'. Therefore, I made a short informative video displaying my picture, the research topic and the recruitment criteria. The gatekeeper distributed the video in the LILEX's Facebook group with permission of the school's administration, action that triggered interest and helped to increase the number of volunteer-participants at the time. During the two stages of the fieldwork I made myself available by visiting the University or answering messages to participants who requested further information or an informal chat about my experience abroad and the research topic.

The second limitation of the study was the representativeness of gender in the sample. The study was based on voluntary participation, therefore having a clear-cut sample of participants according to gender proved very challenging to reach. From the beginning, participants who self-identified as females majorly comprised the sample. This was consistent with the population of students at LILEX, which is mostly composed of female students. During the second fieldwork stay in Zacatecas, there was an increasing interest of participants who self-identified as male to take part in the study. However, only two of them agreed to give me an interview for a total of 4 males in the final interview sample of the study.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an account of the elements and procedures embedded in the design of the study. Anchored in Li's (2011) Moment Analysis' conceptual and

methodological outlines, this chapter showed the procedures followed to adjust the data collection instruments and procedures in such a way that they acted as a two-fold source of information for the study. The fact that the researcher and the participants shared common knowledge of myriad linguistic and cultural elements was a fundamental condition for the appropriateness of the proposed adaptations. The next chapter presents the findings and discussion of the results of the study.

CHAPTER 5

Findings and discussion

This chapter presents and discusses the results obtained from the study's semi-structured interviews and the writing compositions. The chapter is divided into three main sections that aim at presenting the data visually and then providing a robust discussion of the analysis and interpretation of the results. In order to contextualize the presentation of the results, the first part of the chapter is dedicated to outlining the profiles of the participants, including key biographical notes. Following the contextual part, this chapter presents the results emanating from the software analysis by presenting a collection of examples corresponding to the translanguaging-types found in the narratives of the participants, which have been identified as Translanguaging Natural Occurrences (TNOs). Finally, this chapter presents an in-depth discussion of the Metalinguistic Commentaries (MLCs) provided by participants and classified into themes. The discussion of the MLCs includes some of the examples from the TNOs and other quotes taken from the data instruments. The discussion and interpretation of the results is grounded in theoretical aspects of translanguaging, transnationalism and identity, which have been woven in order to answer the research questions. A summary of the results will be provided at the end of the chapter, along with the final remarks.

5.1 Participants' common features and traits

As established in chapter 2, the center-north region of Mexico has been historically marked by the phenomenon of migration. A 'culture of migration' (Moctezuma Longoria, 2011b) thus emerged and became intrinsic to the social context of people across generations in this geographical area. The configuration of this social reality and its complexities became clear as I listened to the stories of participants. All have something to say about transnationalism and all work to make sense of their translanguaging practices. It is important to highlight that although all the participants have engaged in international migration, their trajectories, experiences and perceptions of the phenomenon are both varied and unique. This section aims at presenting participants by locating them within groups (profiles A-F) that share certain features and experiences of migration. At the same time, it aims at providing portraits that

present the individual participants with their own life experiences, choices and transnational migration journeys.

One of the first tasks in conducting the analysis of the results involved understanding the profiles and history of migration of each participant. It is extremely important for me to allocate a space in this work to present the 'person' behind each one of the pseudonyms used to protect participant's identity. In introducing some of the biographical information that they shared with me it is my intention to honor their existence and uniqueness, and to remind the readers that this study is above all about genuine human beings describing their worlds and practices. In addition to presenting the participants as distinctive individuals with their own voice, trajectory, background and personality, this task was fundamental in order to contextualize the information around the language practices gathered in the data collection instruments.

Based on the profiles identified by Hamann et al. (2008) in previous research with transnational children in Mexico, (as discussed in Chapter 3, section 3.3.1) I was able to identify key features of participants' migration journeys and family dynamics. The exercise of correlating the demographic data and conducting extensive reading sessions of each interview transcript at different stages of the data processing led me to see the common denominators in participants' narratives. This procedure allowed me to identify six transnational profiles. The profiles are presented in the table below, and they provide information of participants' country of birth, their age, the average amount of time spent living in Mexico, the U.S. or abroad and the type and frequency of cross-border mobility that they reported throughout the data collection process:

Profile	Description	Participant's pseudonym (Age)
A	Participants born in Mexico, who lived in the U.S. for 1-4 years before relocating in Mexico.	Carlos (27) Elzi (24) Yvonne (22)
B	Participants born and raised in Mexico with seasonal or occasional stays abroad.	Adriana (22) Isaac (21) Paco (22)
C	Participants born in the U.S. and brought to Mexico soon after birth with occasional stays in the U.S.	Emily (19) Jane (21) Regina (27)

D	Participants born in Mexico or in the U.S who moved various times between both countries.	Becky (23) Laura (22) Renata (-) Sasha (22)
E	Participants born in the U.S. who lived in the U.S. for 5+ years before relocating in Mexico.	Betina (-) Julie (20) Moni (32) Romina (23)
F	Participants born in Mexico who lived in the U.S. for 5+ years before relocating in Mexico.	Daisy (19) Farah (24) Fernando (22) Javier (25) Maggie (21) Nely (-)

Table 8. Summary of participants transnational profiles and ages.

In addition to the general description of the profiles above, it is worth looking at the biographical particularities of each participant in order to further capture the uniqueness of their transnational experience and the findings emanating from their narratives. The diagram below, (figure 28) shows a summary of the key biographical elements of participants' lives such as: the main reason(s) triggering their migration journey, their family networks in the U.S. and Mexico, their current academic or professional paths and their future plans. Having this panoramic and more descriptive view of the profiles of participants will help in the process of contextualizing the findings around their translanguaging practices and world views. This will be particularly evident in the section that presents participants' Metalinguistic Commentaries (MLCs). The following section provides a general and visual understanding of the translanguaging events that emerged in the data. This will set the basis to further capture the content in the commentaries in section 5.3.

Profile A
Participants born in Mexico, who lived in the U.S. for 1-4 years before relocating in Mexico.

Yvonne (22)
- At age 4 she migrated with her mother and siblings to the U.S to join her father.
- She was granted a scholarship for a summer Teaching course in the U.S. around the time of the interview.
- She studies the B.A. in Foreign Languages (LILEX).
- She teaches English in Zacatecas.

Carlos (27)
- He has family members living in the U.S.
- His parents granted him permission to study high school in the U.S. and he lived with his U.S. family network.
- He's currently a PhD student in Physics.
- He teaches physics in English.

Elzi (24)
- As a teenager she migrated with her nuclear family to the U.S.
- They lived in various cities in the U.S. for nearly 2 years.
- She studies the B.A. in Foreign Languages (LILEX).

Profile B
Participants born and raised in Mexico, with migration and seasonal or occasional stays abroad.

Paco (22)
- His parents and other family members have migrated to the U.S. He visits them occasionally.
- He has worked and studied in the U.S for short seasons.
- He studies the B.A in Foreign Languages.
- He teaches English in Zacatecas.

Adriana (22)
- Migration to the U.S. has been part of her family for generations.
- Her mom is a U.S. citizen and Adriana has a U.S. resident status.
- She visits the U.S. frequently for work and holidays.
- She studies a B.A in Foreign Languages (LILEX) and wants to go abroad for a Master's degree.

Isaac (21)
- He started learning English from his mom.
- He did a summer stay in Canada and he visits the U.S occasionally for holidays.
- He has build a multicultural and multilingual group of friends and colleagues from around the world.
- He teaches English in Zacatecas.
- He studies the B.A. in Physics, and to go abroad for a postgrad.

Profile C
Participants born in the U.S. and brought to Mexico soon after birth. They have occasional stays in the U.S.

Emily (19)
- She has family members living in the U.S.
- She occasionally travels to visit family and take English courses.
- She studies the B.A in Foreign Languages (LILEX).

Jane (21)
- She has family members living in the U.S.
- She occasionally travels to visit family.
- She studies the B.A in foreign Languages (LILEX).
- She speaks English and Spanish with different groups of friends.

Regina (27)
- She has family members living in the U.S.
- She has occasionally traveled to the U.S.
- She graduated from the B.A. in Foreign Languages (LILEX).
- She teaches English.

Becky (23)
- She was born in the U.S. She's Betina's sister.
- She has moved between Mex-U.S. with her parents and brother at least twice.
- Her longer stay in the U.S. was of 9 years.
- She studies the B.A in Foreign Languages (LILEX).

Betina (-)
- She was born in the U.S She's Becky's sister.
- She moved to Mexico with her family at age 10 and relocated permanently.
- She has family members in the U.S.
- She has seen her nuclear family migrate at different stages.

Renata (-)
- She was born Mexico. and has lived with her nuclear family in Mexico and the U.S. at different stages.
- She's an English teacher.
- She has family members living in the U.S.
- She's doing a Master's in ELT

Sasha (22)
- She was born in Mexico and lived with her mom between Mexico and the U.S. at different stages.
- She studies the B.A. in Foreign Languages.

Profile D
Participants born in the U.S. or Mexico who moved various times between both countries.

Laura (22)
- She was born in the U.S. and decided to move to Mexico on her own to start high school.
- She keeps close contact with her nuclear and extended family in the U.S.
- She studies the B.A. in Foreign Languages

Profile E
Participants born in the U.S. who lived in the U.S for 5+ years before relocating in Mexico.

Julie (20)
- She was born in the U.S. and lived there for 12 years.
- She has family members in the U.S. and she visits them frequently.
- Her father works in the U.S.

Moni (32)
- She was born in the U.S. and came to Mexico at age 12.
- She has family members in the U.S. and has seen her oldest brother migrate to work.
- She works as an English teacher.

Romina (23)
- She was born in the U.S. and came to Mexico at age 12.
- She studies the B.A. in Foreign Languages (LILEX)
- She is an English teacher.

Profile F
Participants born in Mexico who lived in the U.S. for 5+ years before relocating in Mexico.

Maggie (21)
- She was born in Mexico and migrated with her nuclear family at age 2.
- She moved on her own to Mexico to study at University (LILEX).
- Her nuclear and extended family live in the U.S.

Nely (-)
- She was born in Mexico and migrated with her family to the U.S. at age 4.
- She has family members in the U.S.
- She started teaching English at age 18.

Fernando (22)
- He was born in Mexico and migrated with his family to the U.S. at age 2.
- He lived in the U.S. for 13 years, and has family members in the U.S.
- He studies the B.A in Foreign Languages (LILEX)

Daisy (19)
- She was born in Mexico and at age 8, she migrated with her mom and sister to join her father in the U.S.
- She has family members living in the U.S.
- Her father has migrated to work in the U.S. and Canada at different stages.
- She studies the B.A. in Foreign Languages (LILEX), and she's interested in research.

Farah (24)
- She was born in Mexico and migrated with her parents to the U.S. at age 4.
- She returned to Mexico at age 14.
- She studies the B.A. in Foreign Languages (LILEX).

Javier (25)
- He was born in Mexico and migrated at age 7 to follow his older brothers who live in the U.S.
- He returned to Mexico to go to University. He studies the B.A in Foreign Languages (LILEX)
- He is an English teacher and has an alternative job in the catering services. In Zacatecas.

Fig. 28. Summary of participants' key biographical information.

5.2 Translanguaging Natural Occurrences (TNOs)

The interviews conducted with the participants were conceived in terms of the theoretical framework as translanguaging spaces, where two strands of data emerged. This section offers an account of the first strand, corresponding to the *Translanguaging Natural Occurrences* found throughout the interviews. The process of data coding consisted of identifying the occurrences or translanguaging events, which are defined by Mazak and Herbas-Donoso (2015) as "contextualized moments where translanguaging occurred" (p.704). Through a process of careful reading sessions of each interview transcript, all the instances where each participant used their linguistic repertoires flexibly and/or creatively were identified. There was a total of 250 elements (quotes) identified as natural translanguaging occurrences or events. Once these elements were processed, they were classified resulting in 13 main types of TNOs. These main translanguaging occurrences were given a name that represented the situations in which they occurred during the interview with the participants, and they were assigned a specific color in order to facilitate the data coding. The table below shows the list of the 13 main translanguaging event types found, their descriptions and color codes:

Translanguaging Natural Occurrence	Color	Description
1. Quoting others		Passages where participants tell a story or anecdote and they quote the words of characters in a language other than the one mainly used throughout the interview.
2. Vocabulary query		Extracts where participants ask the researcher for a translation of a word or expression.
3. Original language		Passages where participants use the original language of proper nouns, brands or acronyms.
4. Phraseological calques (literal translations)		Passages where participants incorporate words or phrases that seem to be translated literally from one language into another without interfering with communication.
5. Espanglish		Words or expressions identified by participants themselves as coming from what they call Espanglish/Spanglish.
6. Local varieties		Extracts where participants use words or expressions in local varieties of the Spanish spoken in the center-north region of Mexico.
7. U.S.A talk		Passages where participants use words or expressions in English to talk about something related to the U.S. In some cases, participants use a particular language to refer to a specific country mentioned in their narrative.
8. Academic English		Passages where participants use words in English to refer to academic terms learned at school in this language.
9. Spelling		Extracts where participants explain features in the spelling of a particular language by means of using words or pronunciation in another language in order to contrast such features.
10. Giving examples		Passages where participants give examples of expressions or words using a language other than the one mainly used in the interview.
11. A third person		Extracts where participants change the language, tone, attitude and other features to impersonate or refer to a specific person in their narrative.
12. Conversation flow		Passages where participants use a word or expression in a language other than the one mainly used throughout the interview and go with the flow of the story or conversation.
13. Euphemism		Extracts where participants use a word or expression in a particular language as a euphemism.

Table 9. Keywords, color codes and descriptions of the TNOs.

The 250 quotes identified and classified represent the translanguaging practices that naturally occurred during the interviews with the participants. The TNOs can therefore be regarded as a sample of the translanguaging practices that occur in their everyday discourse. This will be further explored and explained in section 5.3 where the Metalinguistic Commentaries of participants are analyzed and discussed in detail. Figure 29 below, shows the entire collection of TNOs, and table 10 provides a summary of each of the occurrences or events present in the collection graph along with the number of quotes that were grouped under the corresponding 13 main TNOs found:
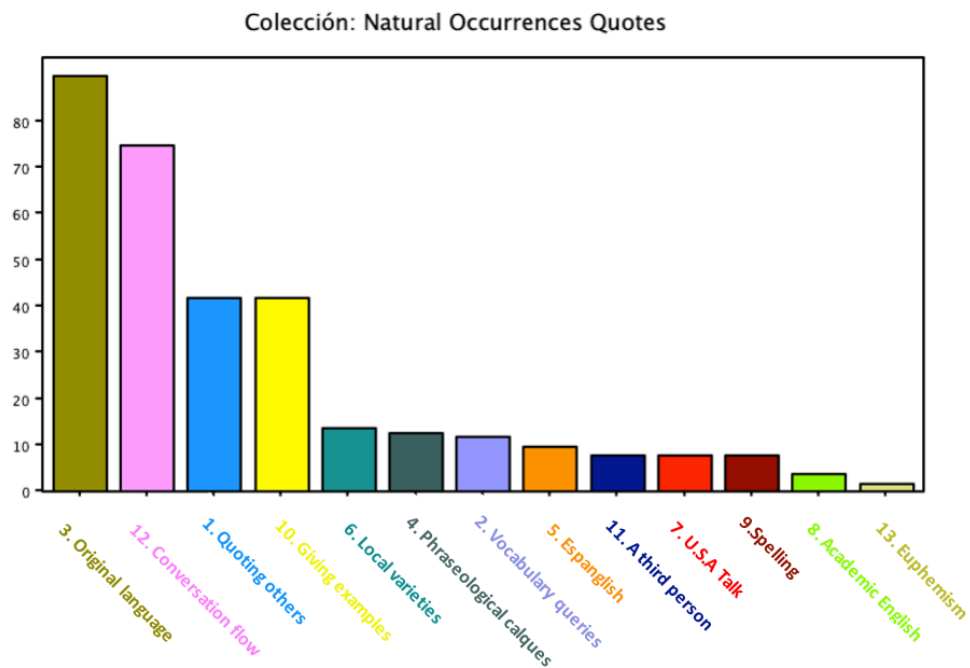
Fig. 29. General collection of Translanguaging Natural Occurrences color coded.

Translanguaging Natural Ocurrences	Number of quotes found per TNO
1. Quoting others	41
2. Vocabulary query	11
3. Original language	89
4. Phraseological calques	12
5. Espanglish	9
6. Local varieties	13
7. U.S.A talk	7
8. Academic English	3
9. Spelling	7
10. Giving examples	41
11. A third person	7
12. Conversation flow	74
13. Euphemism	1
Total number of quotes classified	250

Table 10. Summary of TNOs classified by keyword

Figure 29 and table 10 show all the translanguaging events that were identified when analyzing the interview transcripts. For purposes of convenience in looking at the data in the collection of TNOs, the graph was broken down into four sections according to the shared visual prominence of the bars. This prominence in fact, is given by the frequency of occurrence of the event-types. However, since this is not a quantitative study, the numerical differences have not been statistically analyzed. Therefore, the graph sectioning here has been used only as a practical strategy to look at the data in smaller portions that facilitate a more systematic observation and analysis.

The first section comprises the first four bars in the collection graph. As can be seen, there were four TNOs that obtained the highest number of quotes. The most recurrent translanguaging event was *Original language*, which was present in 89 quotes, the second most frequent event was *Conversation flow*, present in 74 quotes, and finally, in third place two events *Quoting others* and *Giving examples* were equally present in 41 quotes each. The second group of TNOs is represented by the next three bars in the graph, and it includes *Local varieties* with 13 quotes, *Phraseological calques* present in 12 quotes, and *Vocabulary query* with 11 quotes. The third section of the collection graph contains the next four bars showing the events *Espanglish* with 9 quotes, *A third person* present in 7 quotes, *U.S.A talk* found in 7 quotes and *Spelling* also present in 7 quotes. The final section of the collection contains the last two bars

corresponding to the TNOs *Academic English* found in 3 quotes and *Euphemism* present in only 1 quote.
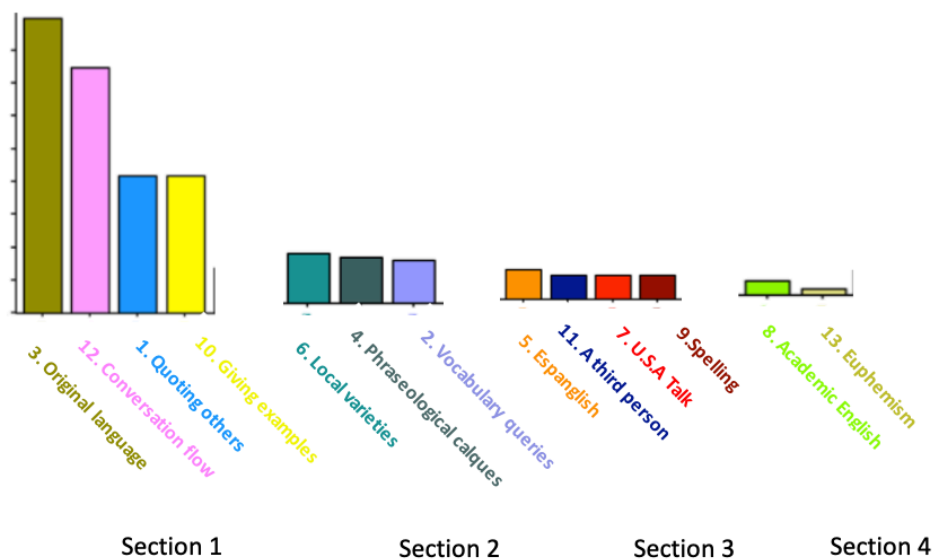
Fig. 30. Collection of translanguaging types by section

Visible from these figures the collection of TNOs includes a significant number of translanguaging events (13) compared to those found in other comparative studies. For instance, the study by Mazak and Herbas-Donoso (2015, p. 704) found five translanguaging events, located within the classroom context of an undergraduate science classroom in Puerto Rico. The events found in Mazak and Herbas-Donoso's study were:

1) using English key terminology in discussion of scientific content in Spanish
2) reading text in English and talking about it in Spanish
3) using Spanish cognates while referring to English text
4) talking about figures labeled in English using Spanish
5) pronouncing English acronyms in Spanish.

In addition to the larger number of translanguaging events that I found in the data corpus, it is worth mentioning that these events incorporated various degrees in the use of multiple languages such as: standard and non-standard American English, standard Mexican Spanish (+ local varieties), German and Italian. It is also interesting to see that when the collection is separated into sections, the number of quotes for each translanguaging event had a similar number of quotes, with the exception of section 1,

which is the one that showed a more varied number of quotes. This is clearly seen in the difference between the first two bars and the following two, which in fact where the only two events that were present in the same number of quotes. The number of quotes contained in the rest of the events appears to have a 'steadier presence' particularly in sections 2, 3 and 4 of the TNOs collection graph. The 'steadier presence' of quotes could be interpreted here as a signal of the undeniable presence of translanguaging in the speech of the participants regardless of the particularities of the events found, which will be discussed below.

During the process of analysis of the TNOs'-collection graph I conducted a series of exploratory tasks to determine if the TNOs found were in any way strongly attributable to or dependent on some specific criteria. I observed three aspects in particular acting as potential criteria for the presence of the translanguaging events found. The aspects observed were: 1) the TNOs present in relation to each of the participants' profiles (A-F), 2) the TNOs present when participants were grouped according to the language they chose to use throughout the interview, and 3) the participants, who shared the same colors (TNOs) despite the number of quotes produced for those TNOs. When considering the data visualization of the collection graph it became more evident that the presence of TNOs in the discourse of the participants is distributed in a very heterogeneous manner. Therefore, throughout the exploration of the results by observing the collection graph as a whole or when considering the participant's profiles, language choice or TNOs types used per participant strongly confirm a marked heterogeneity. The diagram below shows the individual graphs for the TNOs of each participant. The diagram has been arranged by profile (A-F) following figure 28, in order to be able to observe each individual participant's information and also the dynamics of the TNOs presence according to the transnational profiles identified:

Profile A — Yvonne, Carlos, Elzi

Profile B — Paco, Adriana, Isaac

Profile C — Emily, Jane, Regina

1.Quoting others	2.Vocabulary query	3.Original language	4.Literal translation	5.Espanglish/ Spanglish	6.Local varieties	7.U.S.A Talk	8.Academic English	9.Spelling	10.Giving examples	11.A third person	12.Conversation flow	13.Euphemism

Profile D — Becky, Renata, Sasha, Laura

Profile E — Betina, Julie, Moni, Romina

Profile F — Maggie, Nely, Fernando, Daisy, Farah, Javier

Fig. 31. Diagram of participant's TNO by profile

According to the diagram above, although some profiles share the presence of certain TNOs, this first aspect is not significantly homogeneous enough to draw a strong link between the profile of participants and the TNOs found in their interviews. For the second aspect that would have been potentially linked to the TNOs found in the interviews, the language (Spanish/English) that participants chose to speak throughout the exchange, showed no significant patterns either. For instance, just by looking at the most frequent TNOs of these two groups of participants we observe that similar to the previous criteria, the heterogeneity of their practices is confirmed and reinforced:

Interview in English	Most frequent TNO found in interview	Interview in Spanish	Most frequent TNO found in interview
Adriana	Original language	Becky	Phraseological calques
Betina	Vocabulary query	Carlos	Original language
Daisy	Conversation flow	Elzi	Conversation flow
Farah	Original language	Emily	Academic English
Fernando	Original language	Jane	Conversation flow
Isaac	Original language	Javier	Original language
Julie	Original language	Laura	Original language
Moni	Conversation flow	Maggie	Conversation flow
Renata	Giving examples	Nely	Conversation flow
Yvonne	Original language	Paco	Quoting others
		Regina	Conversation flow
		Romina	Conversation flow
		Sasha	Giving examples
Total of participants sharing a most frequent TNO	6/10 original language 1/10 vocabulary query 2/10 conversation flow 1/10 giving examples 10/10		1/13 phraseological calques 3/13 original language 6/13 conversation flow 1/13 academic English 1/13 quoting others 1/13 giving examples 13/13

Table 11. Participants grouped by interview language choice and most frequent TNOs

The same pattern of heterogeneity is found if we look at the diagram in figure 31 focusing on the third aspect of participants sharing the same TNOs despite the number of quotes produced. Therefore, for the sample population in this study neither the background of participants (according to their profile (A-F)) nor their language choice during the interview nor the TNOs that participants had in common were factors determining the emergence of specific translanguaging events.

Although this study does not aim to quantify the translanguaging practices of participants nor to measure their linguistic variation, the basic numerical information that emerged in this preliminary analysis is a good starting point to visualize the synergies, heterogeneities and dynamism of the translanguaging practices found in the

interviews. Furthermore, this information will help us to contextualize the discussion in the following sections. Having the panoramic, segmental and basic numerical perspectives of the collection of the translanguaging events allows us to see the complexity and diversity characterizing the languaging practices of these participants. The following subsections (5.2.1-5.2.4) will provide a sample of the most significant examples which illustrate the translanguaging events found in the quotes extracted from the interviews[26]. The subsections are organized to represent the four sections in the collection graph on figure 30. A full and detailed discussion of some of these examples located in the context of the Metalinguistic comments (MLCs) made by participants will be conducted later in section 5.3, where they will be analyzed through the lens of translanguaging.

5.2.1 TNOs collection graph, section 1

When observing the collection graph, figure 29, the first section displays the most recurrent TNOs found in the interviews with the participants. Therefore, this subsection presents examples of the quotes that were classified as belonging to the TNOs: *1) Original language, 2) Conversation flow, 3) Quoting others* and *4) Giving examples.* For the first TNO, the flexible use of participants linguistic repertoire was manifested in their use of a) proper nouns, b) brands or c) acronyms. All the instances where participants used this type of translanguaging strategy were classified as *Original language*, comprising for a total of 89 quotes. Out of the 23 participants, 19 of them used this strategy. Some of the key examples are:

1a) Original language, proper nouns

Example 1: Laura talking about her activities in the U.S.

*L: Uhm ... no, deportes no hacía, pero si atendíamos a una organización que se llama **'The club house'** y ... íbamos ahí para, para hacer tareas [...]* (Uhm … no, I didn't practice sports, but we attended an organization called 'The club house' and … we went there to do homework).

Example 2: Jane describing her parents' arrival to the U.S.

*J: Mmm, ellos llegaron a **Riverside, California.** Ahí estuvieron viviendo 8 años. Allá se casaron y allá nacimos nosotras, este y hasta que decidieron venirse otra vez.* (They arrived in Riverside, California. They lived there for 8 years. They got married there and then we were born, until they decided to come back again).

1b) Original language, brands

Example 3: Nely describing activities where she uses English

*[…] cotidianamente pues podría ser como para leer, uhm, leer noticias, que uno está ahí en el **Facebook o en Instagram** […]* (Everyday, like it could be used for Reading, uhm, Reading the news, when one checks out Facebook or Instagram).

Example 4: Regina describing activities where she uses English

*[…] hago videos de un canal de **YouTube que se llama fitness blender** que está en inglés totalmente […]* (I follow the videos from a YouTube channel called fitness blender that is completely in English).

1c) Original language, acronyms

Example 5: Carlos explaining how he took a teaching exam

*[…] Incluso en, en ese año **yo tomo el TKT** y … recuerdo que mi generación ya no continua con el tercer o segundo modulo.* (Though, in that year I took the TKT and … I remember that my generation didn't take the third or second module.)

Example 6: Yvonne sharing her future professional plans

*[…] so as soon as I come back, I want to join the **PRONI program** (National English Program)**,** which is the **'Programa Nacional de Inglés'** (National English Program)**,** yeah [...]*

The second most frequent TNO found in the data was *Conversation flow.* When using this strategy*,* participants used a word or expression in a language other than the one mainly used throughout the interview and they went on with the flow of the story or conversation. This TNO was present in 74 quotes, and 21 out of the 23 participants used it during the interviews. The following two quotes are examples of it:

2) Conversation flow

Example 7: Elzi talking about language use in her family

*E: En … bueno con mis hermanos, ya en, ya ellos también, estábamos en, íbamos en la misma **high school**, entonces cuando estábamos en casa […]* (In … well, with my siblings, in, they also, we were in, we were in the same high school, so when we were at home).

Example 8: Julie taking about people in Mexico

*J: I feel more comfortable in Mexico because **people are, like, more 'cariñosos'.** And they give you like a special feel […]* (I feel more comfortable in Mexico because people are, like, more 'loving'. And they give you a special feel).

The third most frequent TNO was identified as *Quoting others,* and it was present in 41 quotes. As I read the interviews with the participants, I noticed a significant pattern of translanguaging when they told stories or anecdotes in which there were characters. In many cases participants tended to quote the words of the characters in their stories in a language other than the one they spoke through the interview. Additionally, in some cases, they would include themselves as one of the characters in the stories they narrated. In fact, 18 out of the 23 interviews contained at least one example of participants 'quoting others'. As I sorted the quotes it also became clear that there were similarities, which allowed for a further categorization of these quotes into four subgroups:

a.   Quotes of participants' parents or family members talking to them

b.   Quotes of non-family members or external sources

c.   Quotes related to participants in their English-teacher roles

d.   Quotes of classmates or teachers in participants' school experiences

The following are remarkable examples of this TNO and the subgroups identified within it:

3a) Quoting others, parents and family members

Example 9: Adriana quotes her mother

*A: Uhm recently when I started the B.A and everything from fourth semester and on ... and so on, English is, like, everywhere. I don't know, like, I'm speaking with my little sister, we speak in English most of the time, and also with my mom but she's not used to it, and **she's always like: "—What did you say?— or —¡Dime en español!—"** (tell me in Spanish), and ... but no, my little sister she's 13 and she's really getting used to the language […]*

Example 10: Fernando quotes his friends, himself and his father

*[…]well, when I arrived in Mexico everything was in Spanish, and yeah, I spoke Spanish but not much and there's people that'd come up to me ... friends, people that I noticed that now are my friends ... [quoting friends]—"**Qué onda güey** (what's up dude)**, what you doin'?"**— and stuff like that, "güey" (dude), and **I was thinking: "that word, I've never heard of it"** ... [quoting himself]—**"Apá, they call me 'güey' (dad, they call me dude) what's that?"**— ... [quoting his father]—**"Who called you 'güey'"** (dude)— ... [quoting himself]—**"Him"**— ... —**"And, what is it?"**— ... [quoting his father]—**"It's like 'vato'"** (buddy)— ... [quoting himself]—**"And, what's 'vato'"** (buddy)—*

Example 11: Daisy quotes his father and herself

*[…]but I was like more ... like on my way to something about like medicine or something because **my dad would tell me: "What are you going to do after high school?"**, and **I was like: "I don't know"**, and he like pressured me, **he was like: "'Medicina' (Medicine) u 'Odontología'"** (Dentistry). And **I was like: "No, 'medicina' (medicine) it takes a lot of years"** @.*

Example 12: Farah quotes her daughter

*F: Yeah, like if I talk to her English, she'd answer me but in Spanish ... uhm ... or she tells me: "Oh, don't talk to me like that", but when she watches movies **she decides: "inglés, español"** (English, Spanish) and things like that. And when she listens to songs also in English, she doesn't really like to listen in Spanish. But when I talk to her, she doesn't like English, it's weird @@@.*

3b) Quoting others, non-family members and external sources

Example 13: Maggie quotes a legend on some men's jackets

*[…]pero ahora que estoy grande y que si me doy cuenta, una vez estábamos mis primas y yo en un restaurante y entraron **unos señores con unas chaquetas que decían: "Speak English, if not please leave"** y pues me dio mucha tristeza[…]* (But now that I'm older and I realize, one time my cousins and I were at a restaurant and some guys came in wearing jackets that said: "Speak English, if not please leave" and it made me very sad).

Example 14: Paco quotes a hypothetical American guy

*[…]a su novio y es completamente gringo yo comprendería que **él no, no sabe español**, quizás dice una palabra, lo clásico: **'pistola', 'sombrero'** [mocks the accent of an-American English-speaker speaking 'Mexican' Spanish] […]* (To his boyfriend who is from the U.S. I would get it that he doesn't speak Spanish, maybe a few words, the typical: 'gun', 'hat').

3c) Quoting others, participants in their English-teacher roles

Example 15: Renata quotes her students' comments

*[…]'cause sometimes **they're like: "Miss, es que no me gusta mi acento"** (Miss, I don't like my accent) o **"Es que hablo muy feo"** (I speak very badly), and **I'm like: "As long as you can communicate,** like, nobody really cares about your accent, it just goes to show that you put effort into learning something else […]*

3d) Quoting others, classmates or teachers

Example 16: Daisy quotes a teacher

*and it was 'maestra' B, and she was like: "Why did you do this?" ... and I was like: "What?" ... —"You don't do this because it has to end in a [inaudible] one"—, and I was like: "Oh my God, really?" @. [quoting teacher B]—"¿No sabías?" (you didn't know)— ... **and I was like: "No"** ... y luego ya **me dijo: "Es que viviste en Estados Unidos, ¿verdad?"** ... y yo: **"Si"** ... y me dijo: **"Pues tal vez sea por eso",** pero sí, dijo: **"Pon atención en tus clases de español este, este semestre, no el próximo semestre y vas a ver"**— (… and then she said: "You lived in the States, right?" … and I was like: "yes" … and she told me: "It might be it", but then she said: "Pay attention during Spanish class this term, no next term and you'll see").*

Example 17: Isaac quotes his friends'/classmates' jokes

*It's never with that intention it is [AN: more like 'carrilla' (joking)] **yeah ... like 'carrilla'** (joking), **like: "Ah, ahí viene el que habla inglés"** (there comes the guy that speaks English) or something like that. It's never with negative intentions.*

The last TNO in this subsection is called *Giving examples*. Similar to the foregoing, this strategy was found in 41 quotes, where 16 out of the 23 participants made use of this translanguaging strategy. The two examples below illustrate this TNO:

4) Giving examples 🟨

Example 18: Yvonne describing how her cousin taught her words

*Y: I mentioned some of them in the writing that I did, **they were like: 'reflejo'** (reflection)? ... I remember I was walking with my cousin one day **and I saw a 'reflejo'** (reflection) of the sun in the water and I told him: "How do you s- ... How do you call it when you see something in the water that's not in the water" ... and then **he told me: shadow also, uhm ... what else, 'huella'** (footprint) **o 'rastro'** (trace), those kinds of things.*

Example 19: Sasha describing a classroom conversation

*[…] porque estábamos hablando que de **REBELDE** y luego estábamos hablando de que: **THAT'S SO RAVEN, NICKELODEON, DISNEY CHANNEL** y luego estábamos hablando acá que **del CHAVO** y cosas así, o sea [...]* (We were talking about things like: THAT'S SO RAVEN, NICKELODEON, DISNEY CHANNEL and then we were talking about 'El Chavo' (Mexican TV show), and stuff like that, I mean.)

5.2.2 TNOs collection graph, section 2

The second section that can be observed in the collection graph shows three bars corresponding to the TNOs categorized as: *5) Local varieties*, *6) Literal translations* and *7) Vocabulary query*. The first TNO included manifestations of participants' use of words or expressions in local varieties of the Spanish spoken in the center-north region of Mexico or in some rural areas. There were 13 quotes classified under this TNO and 7 out of the 23 participants incorporated this strategy in their discourse during the interview. The following is an example of this:

5)   Local varieties   🟩

Example 20: Romina talking about her dream career

Y en universidad fue otra cuestión, otra cuestión, porque desde niña soné con estudiar **medecina**[27], *estaba en Aguascalientes y yo estaba feliz en Aguascalientes [...]* (And then in college it was a whole different thing because since I was a little girl, I dreamt about studying medicine, I was in Aguascalientes (a state in central Mexico) and I was happy in Aguascalientes).

The next TNO emerged in passages where participants used words or phrases that seemed to be translated literally from one language into another without interfering with communication during the interview. This TNO was found in 12 quotes, and this translanguaging strategy was manifested in the interviews of 7 out of the 23 participants. The example below is one of the cases found:

6)   Phraseological calques   ⬛

Example 21: Betina describing a school activity

I remember that, uhm, in one occasion I don't remember in what class, but they gave us like this project ... eh, **it was like all involved** *(word used as a literal translation of the Spanish 'envuelto') in some wrap paper [...]*

The last TNO found in this section corresponds to extracts where participants ask the researcher for a translation of a word or expression. There were 11 quotes classified under this TNO, and 5 out of the 23 participants used this type of translanguaging event. The following is an example:

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[27]local form used in rural areas in contrast to the standard form 'medicina'.

7)   Vocabulary query

Example 22: Betina describing school's first impressions

*[…]it was a process, totally different, I mean we had to get like in a … **how do you say, uhm, a fila, uhm** [AN: Ajá, una fila, a line] yeah, in a line so we could get to the classroom[…]*

5.2.3 TNOs collection graph, section 3

       The third section found in the collection graph comprises four TNOs, which are: *8) Espanglish*, *9) A third person*, *10) U.S.A Talk* and *4) Spelling*. The first translanguaging occurrence found in this section was present in 9 quotes where 7 out of the 23 participants used words or expressions identified by themselves as coming from what they call "Espanglish". An example can be seen in the following quote:

8)   Espanglish

Example 23: Laura describing language use in the classroom

*Ya ve que a veces en clase **usábamos el Spanglish** que: … 'your'… ¿Cómo dijo una vez B? … **agarra tus 'goats'** … así, cómo cosas así […]* (Like, you know how we sometimes used Spanglish, like: 'your' … how did B said that time? … grab your goats (phrase used to mean: grab your stuff) … like, stuff like that).

       The TNO labeled as *A third person* was manifested in extracts where participants changed the language, tone, attitude and other features in order to impersonate or refer to a specific person in their narrative. This TNO was found in 7 quotes and it was used by 4 out of the 23 participants. The following is an example:

9)   A third person

Example 24: Isaac talking about a friend

*[…] his name is L. **He's a pretty cool guy**, [uses a hip-hop hand gesture and tone to impersonate his friend] he speaks English fluently, uh, and we jokingly speak it in the class […]*

       Moving onto *U.S.A Talk*, the third TNO in this section, we find instances where participants used words or expressions in English to talk about something related to the U.S. In less frequent cases, participants use a particular language to refer to a specific country mentioned in their narrative. A total of 7 quotes were grouped under this TNO and 4 participants out of 23 used this strategy during the interview. The quote below is an example:

10)   U.S.A Talk

Example 25: Jane describing social services her family received in the U.S.

*[…]pero ya después el gobierno se encargo de todo entonces nunca nos faltó nada y luego **tuvieron el 'daily care' y todo esto** dónde les daban cupones de comida y demás […]* (but then, the government provided us with everything, we never run out of anything, then they had the 'daily care' and all of that where they gave them food coupons and stuff).

The last element in the collection's third section is the TNO called *Spelling*. Just like the previous TNOs in this section, it was also present in 7 quotes and it was found in the data from 7 participants out of 23. This TNO incorporated extracts where participants explained features in the spelling of a particular language by means of using words or pronunciation in another language in order to contrast such features. The following is an example:

11)   Spelling

Example 26: Renata describing her spelling strategies

*[…]and then when I was writing I would be like: "Oh, this is, like, uh ... this is how it sounds in Spanish", like, you pronounce it differently, like ... I don't know, like, **'project' it would be like: "pro-xekt"** (pronounced in Spanish – 'proxekt), like, I would sound it out in Spanish, so that I could write it out in English […]*

5.2.4 TNOs collection graph, section 4

This last portion of the TNOs collection graph contains the last two bars corresponding to the TNOs: *12) Academic English* and *13) Euphemism*. The first TNO in this section was only found in 3 quotes corresponding to 2 participants out of the 23. The Academic English TNO contains passages where participants used words in English to refer to academic terms learned at school in this language. Look at the example below:

12)   Academic English

Example 27: Laura explaining a concept seen in class in relation to her life

*Lo agarré así muy muy fácil y yo digo porque lo vimos en psicolingüística creo que la pla- … **algo de 'neuroplasticity', algo así** ... está muy flexible en ese tiempo, entonces yo creo que por eso la pude agarrar muy fácilmente.* (It was very easy because we had already seen that in psycholinguistics, I think it was the pla- … something like 'neuroplasticity', something like that … it was very flexible at the time so I think that was the reason why I was able to learn very easily).

Finally, the last TNO identified in the data was labeled Euphemism, and it referred to extracts where participants used a word or expression in a particular language with the intention of sounding less strong or offensive. In fact, there was only 1 quote found, and it can be seen below:

13)   Euphemism

Example 28: Moni describing class separation in the U.S.

*[…] probably all the first and second grade I remember that I had a Spanish teacher at school, when it was like time for languages, all of the kinds that were ... uh, Americans, like, uh, African-Americans, or **gringuitos** [slang used in Mexico to call someone from the U.S.] @@ they would go you one side and they would get their English class […]*

5.3 Metalinguistic commentaries (MLCs)

The participants' commentaries about their translanguaging practices and moments were fundamental in gaining an insight into their worlds, the cognitive processes entailed as they communicate and navigate the interactions with others around them, and on their identity construction. Through the conceptualization of the interviews as translanguaging spaces the narratives of the participants provided a robust collection of Metalinguistic Commentaries, where they described in detail their own understandings and experiences of transnationalism and how they use their linguistic repertoires. Therefore, the translanguaging spaces offered a framework where flexible and creative languaging became the vehicle to describe the process behind their performance and the natural occurrences present in their discourse. In addition to the foregoing, the narratives obtained from the interviews in the form of MLCs are also windows that offer a chance to look at issues beyond languaging creativity. The content of the participants' narratives also illuminates aspects of complex personal and social issues about transnationalism. The reflections and opinions of participants offer an opportunity to focus on the dynamics of migration, family relationships, school expectations and practices, discourses of identity and ideologies about languages and speakers among others. Consequently, the MLCs were coded and categorized into five themes: 1) Migration and transnationalism, 2) Making sense of bilingualism, 3) Everyday languaging, 4) Identity, and 5) Languaging and discrimination. These themes will be unpacked throughout the following sections, as the MCLs of participants are analyzed.

5.3.1 Metalinguistic Commentaries and recurrent themes

The coding process of the data containing MLCs led to the organization of all the participants' commentaries into themes. The first version of the list of themes included many overlapping topics, therefore the organization process required further revisions until the boundaries between each theme were clearer. Finally, the MLCs were classified into five broad themes, which are explained in the table below:

Theme	Description
1. Migration and transnationalism	The collection of commentaries in this theme is centered around participants' accounts of issues related to migration in general and their migration journeys and sense of transnationalism.
2. Making sense of bilingualism	This theme includes commentaries on how participants describe and define their bilingualism. Their relationship with languages and key moments where they realize and negotiate language use.
3. Everyday languaging	This theme is integrated by participants' accounts of their language use in different domains such as school, family, work, social circles, etc. It also includes descriptions of participants' interactions with other bilingual speakers.
4. Languaging and discrimination	This theme includes participants' descriptions of episodes and situations where people have questioned, mocked or offended them on the basis of the language they speak, their migratory status or the ethnic group they belong to.
5. Identity	The theme comprises labels, metaphors and explanations given by participants in relation to the role that their languaging practices have in defining their identity considering aspects such as: country of birth, heritage, language attitudes/expectations, and institutional experiences.

Table 12. Main themes and descriptions emerging from the data.

5.4 Migration and transnationalism

In order to get a sense of the research context in relation to the phenomenon of migration I offer here a brief description of some of my personal childhood memories as they intertwine with the narratives provided by the participants in this study. My notes on the research diary as I read the interviews provided the basis to develop the personal description below. The aim of presenting a personal description here is to illuminate what Moctezuma Longoria (2011b) has described as the *ordinary experiences* around transnationality, which have led to the emergence of a *culture of migration* (p.199)

across towns and communities in the state of Zacatecas and their connecting ends in the United States.

Los migrantes (migrants) and the things they do, the things they send, the things they bring, the things they left are always a topic of discussion in Zacatecas. People would frequently ask or tell stories about family or community members who are in the U.S. or who intend to go there. People in Zacatecas say *we all* have at least one family member or a friend living in the U.S. Throughout my childhood this popular belief could be attested every Sunday at the swap meet, better known as *La Fayuca*[28], where one could buy all kinds of goods brought from the U.S. by migrant-family-members of neighbors and school friends for whom selling at the market was the only means to support their family or an additional source of income. From candy to the latest Nike shoes, *Cholo*[29] outfits, baby clothes or tape recorders they had it all and they took pesos, dollars and special requests without hesitation. I vividly remember my best friend's mother had a stand there, so we would play in the back while my grandmother from Puebla (a state in the south of Mexico) walked around with my mom buying shoes because it was 'the only place' where she could find 'her right size' at an affordable price.

From my description above and as revealed in the profiles of the participants (figure 28), the phenomenon of migration and more specifically that of transnationalism represents a significant dimension of life in Zacatecas, in many cases at a very personal level. The significance of the participants' experiences is unveiled in the revelation of intricate community, family and personal networks spanning across the Mexico-U.S. border and other countries in some cases. The participants in this study are knowledgeable of the migration phenomenon around them, as they all referred to their family and friend-networks abroad during the interviews and in their writing compositions. Indeed, there were three remarkable accounts where participants explicitly made reference to their perceptions of the influence that the phenomenon of migration has in their hometowns and in the language practices of the towns they come from in Zacatecas. The first example comes from the interview with Paco. We sat at a restaurant in the city center of Zacatecas to have breakfast after he drove early that

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[28] Fayuca is the Spanish word for 'contraband'.
[29] *Cholo* is a term used to identify gang members (Lopez & O'Donnell Brummett, 2003) of Mexican-descent living in the U.S. or in border towns. *Cholos* are also considered an urban tribe found across Mexico. They are commonly characterized by their use of slang, having tattoos, and wearing flannel shirts and baggy industrial pants (Cerbino & Macaroff, 2010).

morning from his hometown to meet me for the interview. Paco was very formal and respectful in the way he greeted me, he used formal speech forms such as *usted* and called me *maestra* throughout our conversation. Despite the formality in his behavior and style, his warm and animated personality soon started to take over as he answered my questions. Once I started recording, he introduced himself by providing some biographical details and general, yet very significant information about his hometown:

Original quote	English Translation
"Ah OK, este ... pues soy un joven estudiante de 22 años, tengo procedencia de un municipio del estado de Zacatecas dónde el inglés es un idioma pues prácticamente nulo. Uhm, claro que cuando llegan los paisas —como decimos acá en México— pues si tenemos un poquito de acercamiento, pero no tan arraigado."	"Uh OK, well … I'm a young 22-year-old student, I come from a municipality in the state of Zacatecas, where English is practically not spoken. Uhm, but obviously when the 'paisas' —as we call them here in Mexico— are around, we do have a bit of contact, but [English] is not rooted."

Although at the beginning Paco describes his hometown as being a place where English is "nulo" (nonexistent), he clarifies the situation and explains that in fact, English can be heard around when *"los paisas"* visit the town. *"Los paisas"* is the short form of the word *paisanos*, which is used to refer to people who share the same place of birth but live outside of there (compatriots). The term is frequently used to refer to Mexican migrants living in the U.S. as a marker of identity linked to the place of birth that entails a sense of closeness or fraternity. In this case Paco acknowledges that link by talking about *paisanos* coming back to his hometown. Anzaldúa (2012) recognized such ascription as generated within the context of border life. 'Being Mexican' or referring to Mexicans is not meant as "a national identity, but a racial one" (p.84). In a similar manner, the forms *paisa, paisano, paisas or paisanos* have become common and they are particularly meaningful in the discourse around Mexican migrants in the U.S. and also seasonal returnees. In fact, the term has been employed to brand and publicize government or other institutional programs aimed at providing assistance to Mexicans living abroad. Two of the most well-known examples of this are: *Programa Paisano*[30], which operates all-year-round, while the program *¡Bienvenido a casa Paisano!*[31] normally runs during the holiday seasons.

Paco's use of the expression "claro que" (meaning obviously) implies a level of familiarity with the situation of seasonal migrant visits to the town. It is of general

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[30] Programa Paisano, oficial website: https://www.gob.mx/inm/acciones-y-programas/programa-paisano-del-inm
[31] Programa Bienvenido a Casa Paisano, oficial website: https://www.gob.mx/paisano/articulos/esta-semana-santa-2019-bienvenido-a-casa-paisano

understanding in Zacatecas that migrants visit their hometowns particularly over the Christmas and Easter seasons. During these times of the year there is a notable presence of 'big trucks' also called *'trocas'* traveling in convoys carrying families of *paisanos*, gifts (representing sociocultural remittances) and suitcases. The seasonal trips made by migrants from the U.S to Zacatecas and other places in Mexico have been described in research (CNDH, 2017; Hirai, 2014; Moctezuma Longoria, 2011a, 2011b), and they have also been covered in journalistic texts (Azteca Noticias, 2013; Cobián Lafont, 2018; Proceso, 2016). In his description of the town, Paco is careful to emphasize that English is "not rooted" in the town, however we both 'obviously understand' that when migrants come visit, English is 'in the air', not only as it is spoken by the *paisas*, but it is also impregnated and visible in the goods traveling along with them. Considering the broad context, Paco's narrative acquires a significant value when we observe his description of the role that language plays in this context. What Paco is describing is in essence the dynamics of the language practices in his hometown, a place where Spanish and English coexist at the margins of people's transnational mobility. His description provides an insight into the tensions between English not being "rooted", but at the same time being accepted within the social context framing the ritual of migrants returning for seasonal visits.

Another description of the manifestation of transnationalism in Zacatecas comes from Adriana. Throughout our exchange, which was conducted mostly in English and full of detailed and reflective stories, laughter and vivid expressions, Adriana described how she travels occasionally to the U.S. to visit members of her family or to work over the holiday seasons because she has her 'green card'. Adriana described how her family has been engaged in migration to the U.S. for many generations. In fact, her mother is a U.S. citizen and she references this family history to explain how she and her sister were encouraged to apply for residency in the U.S. Adriana also told me how her mom had done a few years of basic education during her time living in the U.S. before she returned to Mexico to get married to Adriana's father. Being exposed to the migration phenomenon for generations within her family, Adriana has also witnessed the effects of migration in Zacatecas and in her hometown, as she explains below:

Original quote
"[...] I grew up in Mexico in a town called Jerez from the state of Zacatecas; Spanish is my first language; however, English has always been present in my life. I live in a State were half of the population (or even more) lives at the United States, it is rare to found someone who does not have relatives somewhere across the border. I have half of my family over there [...]".

This fragment, taken from the introduction of Adriana's writing composition provides a contextualization of the social and linguistic environment that surrounds her. In contrast to Paco's perception of English being "nulo" (nonexistent) except during seasonal migrant-visits, Adriana does not neglect the role of English in her town. In fact, she qualifies it as "always present". Like Paco, Adriana attributes the presence of English to the migrant phenomenon in the region, which she seems to be well aware of and informed of, as she confidently provides an explanation that has a quantitative tone: "I live in a state where half the population (or even more) lives at the United States". Moreover, there is a reinforcement of her words, when she commented on how frequent it is to encounter people who "have relatives somewhere across the border". And finally, she brings the broad social context to the personal level by confirming "I have half of my family over there". Her statement not only denotes that she has experienced the transnational phenomenon firsthand, but it aligns with her former personal calculations.

Adriana's apparent 'informal' estimate on the percentage of migrants from Zacatecas living in the U.S. finds justification in her experience within the community she comes from and inside her family. Adriana's confidence to talk about her perception of the migration phenomenon is remarkable and it becomes highly significant considering that formal census discussions suggest that "there are more Zacatecans living in the United States than in Zacatecas" (Delgado Wise et al., 2004, p. 165; García Zamora et al., 2015, p. 4). Therefore, Adriana demonstrates to be perceptive and well informed of the mobile characteristics of her community. Finally, in framing her language background within the phenomenon of migration, Adriana implies the existence of a context in which her community and individual contact with Spanish and English are not only common but are also part of the town's routine.

During the interview with Adriana she provided further descriptions and reflections of her hometown and the migrant phenomenon. She expressed this by saying: *"I feel like there's a lot of impact of ... how do you say? Like, Chicano society in Jerez"*. In acknowledging the great influence of what she calls "Chicano society" in her hometown, Adriana paints an image of a place and context where migrants and

locals coexist in a perfect example of what has been described in anthropological and sociological research as *transnational social fields* (Fouron & Glick Schiller, 2002; Levitt & Glick-Schiller, 2004). Additionally, making reference to the notion of 'Chicano' implies that Adriana is to some degree knowledgeable of the nuances inherent to Mexican communities and/or migrants in the southwest of the United States (Anzaldúa, 2012; Chávez, 1984), which is home to the majority of Zacatecan *paisas* across the border.

Adriana's observations about her hometown and the influence of migration was also captured in the following description of a particular episode she experienced, where elements such as place, language and the sense of transnationalism converge:

Original quote
"[…] like, for example, once I noticed something really strange. Like, there was this place called … Uhm … I think it was a sports bar called 'Doggería', and I was, like … OK … That's, uhm: 'dog' from English and the other is, how do you say? A suffix?! from Spanish. And I was thinking: "It makes sense!" Of course! But you have to know English and Spanish. And that's why like … everyone knows that there are a lot of people from the outside that they don't mind. They know that people will understand, or at least the majority of people will understand. And of course, we take a lot of words from them, and they take a lot of words from us, like: 'parkeadero', 'troca'. We invent, and just, like, we do that a lot".

Adriana's commentary on how she "noticed" a relevant situation in her town reflects a moment of linguistic awareness, where she tries to make sense of what is happening. In the terms of translanguaging we can understand this episode as a significant *moment*, where Adriana critically engages with the creative element she came across. First, her linguistic repertoire allows her to perceive an element that stands out to her: "Doggería", which she critically analyzes by breaking it down into linguistic particles according to what she has learned in her formal language education in university. This approach shows her awareness of the morphological components in her linguistic repertoire, which is confirmed in how she answers her own question "how do you say? A suffix?!" to label the ending of the word *Doggería*. Her conclusion after the internal analysis that she narrates is that the word "makes sense", although she notes: "But you have to know English and Spanish". Andriana understands that being able to notice a creative element such as the fusion of two linguistic elements from different languages requires a particular background and skill.

However, given the context in which she found the word, she explains how things work in Jerez: "everyone knows that there are a lot of people from the outside that they don't mind. They know that people will understand, or at least the majority of

people will understand". On the one hand Adriana makes reference to people in Jerez by saying how they are familiar with "people from outside", referring to the migrants living in the U.S. Therefore, having these 'creative words' is not regarded as a problem by people in Jerez, or in her words: "they don't mind". On the other hand, Adriana portrays the owners of businesses like the Doggería (possibly migrants in the U.S., returnees or their families) as being aware that "people will understand, or at least the majority" because the community comprises transnational migrants, their kinship and other inhabitants who might be familiar with the migration phenomenon and the use of English. Finally, Adriana's comment reinforces the sense of linguistic creativity of the community and individuals by explaining that word-exchanges are frequent, and they manifest in linguistic fusions such as the examples: 'parkeadero' and 'troca'. These words are examples of Chicano Spanish, which as Anzaldúa (2012) explains are "words borrowed from English [that become] Tex-Mex argot, created by adding a Spanish sound at the beginning or end of an English word" (p.79). Because of the proximity with the U.S. and the influence of migrants in certain regions of Mexico, these words are commonly used in the central-north and north regions of Mexico as well as in the south and southwestern regions of the United States. These words also represent examples of what is normally referred to by some people in these regions as 'Spanglish', *parkeadero* meaning a place where people park their cars, and *troca,* meaning a large vehicle that could be a 'pickup', 'van', or 'campervan'. Regarding these examples Adriana explains: "We invent, and just, like, we do that a lot". Her words explicitly state the level of creativeness (*"we invent"*) and the usage frequency ("a lot") that she perceives in the discursive practices of her community, which is strengthened by the fact that she positions herself as part of the phenomenon by her saying "we" twice.

The last example that remarkably illustrates the transnational character of Zacatecas came from Regina. Just like Adriana, Regina is also from Jerez. As we conversed over tea in a restaurant near our neighborhoods in the city of Zacatecas, she generously shared very significant episodes from her life. She was friendly, and she spoke calmly providing vibrant and precise descriptions of multiple aspects of her life. Regina's life has been marked by a series of significant events related to transnationalism, institutional identity issues, and family unveiled truths that have shaped her perceptions through incredibly deep reflections about her life journey. In the

following extract she talked about her observations of the migrant phenomenon in the region:

Original quote	English Translation
"Ay, bueno, pues de Jerez ... @@@ Bueno, yo crecí en Jerez. Viví ahí pues desde que me trajeron mis papás a México hasta los 17 que me vine a vivir a Zacatecas para estudiar la universidad ... Y yo creo que yo, durante todos esos años nunca fui tan consciente del ambiente migrante [...] Pero bueno, ya después que lo redescubrí [a Jerez] empecé a notar eso, que incluso por ejemplo en la familia de mi novio, eh, los dos hermanos mayores viven en Estados Unidos. No tienen papeles, eh, sus hijos son nacidos allá, sus esposas son de aquí también de México ... mmm ... O sea, incluso en la familia de mis papás claro que está el fenómeno migrante. La mayoría de sus hermanos están allá, pero no había mucho contacto con ellos [...] Hoy día ¿cómo veo yo a Jerez? ... ¡pues sí, es totalmente como un pueblo migrante! [...] Incluso Zacatecas [la ciudad], también siento que tiene algo, algo de esto ... Sí, o sea, eh, todos mis amigos, sí, todos mis amigos tienen familiares en Estados Unidos. ¡Mi dentista! Tiene a su bebé ahorita allá porque están arreglando los papeles y ¡no sé qué! Entonces estoy muy en contacto con, pero yo siento que nunca lo experimenté muy para mí y que no me identifico tan fácilmente con todas esas experiencias porque ... no sé ... por la educación que tuvimos, creo que era como bastante conservadora, local-nacional ¡no sé como llamarle!"	"Uh, well, Jerez … @@@ Well, I grew up in Jerez. I lived there since my parents brought me to Mexico and until I was 17 and came to Zacatecas to go to college … I think that I, over all those years I was never aware of the migrant atmosphere […] But, well, when I rediscovered it [Jerez] I started to notice it, even for example my boyfriend's family, uh, the two oldest brothers live in the United States. They don't have papers, uh, their children were born there, their wives are also from México … uhm … I mean, even in my parents' family the migrant phenomenon is obviously there. The majority of their siblings are over there, but we didn't have much contact with them […] How do I see Jerez today? … well, yes, it is totally a migrant town! […] Even Zacatecas [the city], I feel like it has something, something like that … Yeah, I mean, uh, all of my friends have family in the Unites States. My dentist! Her baby is over there because they are getting her papers in order and I don't know what! So I'm in contact with it, but I don't feel like I ever experienced it to closely and I don't identify so easily with all those experiences because I don't know … because of how we were brought up, I think our education was quite conservative, local-national I don't know how to call it!"

When I asked Regina to share with me her impressions about Jerez, she kindly provided me with an account of events that explained the relationship that she has had with Jerez over the years. Regina is the youngest of three siblings and the only one in her nuclear family who was born in the U.S. and brought to Mexico soon after she was born. Although she lived in Jerez for around 17 years, and despite the fact that she was the daughter of a migrant family she initially recognized that she "was never aware of the migrant atmosphere" around her. Throughout other fragments of the interview and similarly to other participants, she recalled memories of her siblings speaking English and having access to books and movies brought from the U.S. something that seemed normal and natural to her household dynamics. However, as she grew up and started relating with other people, she began to make sense of the migrant synergies of Jerez and Zacatecas. Regina's description of her boyfriend's family is just another example of the *culture of migration,* which characterizes the region. In this case, it illuminates the

issue of undocumented migration, family networks and traditions linked to both sides of the Mexico-U.S. border.

Regina's contact with other people's stories of migration became meaningful as she was able to look at her family through the mirror of those around her. She realized the significance of migration in her family to the extent that she now has a concept for it, as she acknowledged later in the interview: *"[...] yo nunca estuve familiarizada con el transnational, así de voy-vengo. Y eso que mis primos yo creo que también se identificarían, así como trasnationals. Entonces es muy extraño porque siempre estuvo presente en mi vida, pero no muy cerca [...]"* (I was never familiarized with the transnational in the sense of going back and forth. Even though my cousins, I think they would identify as transnationals. So, it's weird because it was always present in my life, but not closely). Her sense of 'unawareness' about the migration phenomenon comes out as consistent given the repetition she makes of this sense of 'blurriness' at different points of her quote in this section and throughout the interview.

The second half of Regina's account is placed in the present, as she answers her own question "Hoy día ¿cómo veo yo a Jerez?" (How do I see Jerez today?) with a confident expression: "…totalmente como un pueblo migrante!" (…it is totally a migrant town!). Her vision and perception of the migrant phenomenon extends to the city of Zacatecas, and similarly to Adriana, she personalizes the experience by saying "…todos mis amigos tienen familiares en Estados Unidos" (…all of my friends have family in the United States). Moreover, she added that even her dentist and her family are deeply involved in the phenomenon. In sharing these experiences, which are rather intimate, she confirms the migrant atmosphere of the region, which coincides with the narratives of the other two participants in this section. However, Regina once again positions herself as a distant partaker in the phenomenon attributing this attitude to the type of education that she and her siblings were given, which she qualifies as "quite conservative, local-national". It is interesting to note that in this particular description of Jerez and Zacatecas Regina does not make any references to language outside her household, like Paco or Adriana did. Regina's narrative is centered on the dynamics of migration and how it has impacted her and the people around her without mentioning language as a significant aspect of the region's transnationalism or character. The only clue of the dynamics of language in the eyes of Regina was present in the quotes about her cousins. The translanguaging moment where she keeps the conversation flow by switching from Spanish into English: "con el transnational", "como transnationals", and

back to Spanish is perhaps the only indication she gives us in this particular narrative of the interaction of English and Spanish in her community.

5.5 Making sense of bilingualism

The participants in this study have unique transnational profiles, migration journeys and relationships with languages. Their particular circumstances have therefore played an important role in how they experience translanguaging in the present, and in the 'unveiling of bilingualism' at given points in their lives. For the majority of them, realizing the configuration of their linguistic repertoires emerged, for instance, upon interaction with other migrant members of their family; as a result of the process of relocation to Mexico; upon their first or constant cross-border experience(s), or as a consequence of particular schooling experiences in Mexico and/or abroad.

García and Li Wei (2014) argue that a key element of translanguaging lies in "capturing the expanded complex practices of speakers who could not avoid having *had languages inscribed in their body*, and yet live between different societal and semiotic contexts as they interact with a complex array of speakers" (p.18, italics added). This idea resonated as I read some interview fragments where participants explained how they came to realize or make sense of their bilingualism. For many of them and their families, 'waking up' to the fact that their linguistic repertoire was 'complex', 'different' and 'unique' was in some cases the trigger to the discovery of a sort of 'unknown dimension'. These realizations were for most of the participants the doorstep to the future understandings of new aspects of their identities or the initial step in a series of negotiations and reconfigurations of their individual and family dynamics, which evidently involved dynamic linguistic practices.

The majority of the participants interviewed reported having contact with languages other than English or Spanish, as well as with myriad dialects, styles and means of communication. However, a significant portion of their comments and explanations revolved around their relationship with dynamic usages of English and Spanish. Throughout the data coding process there were remarkable accounts of how participants 'discovered' or 'conceived' their bilingualism in the context of their transnational lives. In most cases, communication was for these participants and their families an organic process where the resources in their repertoire were used flexibly and creatively. This was the case in Jane's household. Prior to her sharing the anecdote

below, she explained that upon return from the U.S. to Mexico her parents "[…] traían esta onda del espanglish" (they had this thing with using Spanglish). This comment provides contextual information to confirm that Jane and her family interacted by using English and Spanish flexibly in what she labels as 'espanglish'.

The interview with Jane took place in the building housing the LILEX program. Just like I remembered her from our interactions in school when I was her teacher, Jane was light, smiley and her eyes sparkled behind her glasses. Our conversation, which was characterized by laughter and extremely vivid and candid descriptions of episodes of her family's life in the U.S. and then in Mexico, contains a very powerful example of what I conceived as the unveiling of bilingualism. In this fragment Jane describes the 'unexpected' realization that she was speaking 'two languages':

Original quote	English translation
"Este, de hecho, tengo una anécdota que me acordé de ella hace unos años, como que la había borrado de mi cabeza @@. Este, estábamos en la primaria, yo creo estaría en primero o segundo. Tendría unos 6-7 años. Mmm, y nos pidieron dibujar frutas. No recuerdo que tarea era, pero eran frutas, y yo estaba con mis compañeros dibujando, dibujando, dibujando. Y luego … "Ahora dibujen un plátano". Y yo me quedé, así como ... [AN: ¡¿qué es eso?! @@] ... "¿Qué es un plátano?" No, o sea ... pero yo creo que por el mismo hecho de que todos estábamos chiquitos y la inocencia nadie se burló de mí. Pero yo ya estaba preguntándole a todos mis compañeros: "Oigan, es que, ¿qué es un plátano?", "¿Qué es un plátano?" [AN: @@] Y todos me decían: "Pero es que mira, tiene medialuna, tiene forma de media luna, es amarillo y cuando lo dejas mucho tiempo le salen manchitas." Y yo: "¡No, no tengo idea, ¡qué es eso!". Yo estaba perdida. Y ya empiezan a dibujarlos ellos y me dicen: "¡Mira, es como esto!" Y yo: "Ah, es como UNA BANANA" [AN: @@]. Para mí no existía el concepto de un plátano, yo estaba perdida @@. Entonces es como de ... @@@ Sí, mis padres me pusieron mucho en contacto con el inglés. Yo le digo, había muchas pal- palabras que yo, para mí eran en inglés. Yo ni siquiera sabía que estaba hablando dos idiomas. Entonces, ya hasta después ... Me acuerdo que esa vez yo llegué muy intrigada a mi casa y: "Oye, papi pero ¿qué es, qué es un plátano?". Y ya era así como de, ellos: "No, es que mira, es que son la misma cosa" @@@. Y yo así @@: "¡¿Cómo?!". O sea, para mí [AN: un descubrimiento @] ... creo que ese fue el momento que yo me di cuenta que hablaba dos idiomas porque no lo sabía. Cuando todos me dicen: "Es que un plátano y una banana es lo mismo", para mi fue como que: "¡Wow!"	"In fact, a few years ago I remembered this anecdote, I had forgotten about it @@. So, we were in elementary school, I must have been in first or second grade. I was around 6 or 7 years old. Uhm, and they asked us to draw fruits. I don't remember the exact task, but it was fruits, and there I was with my classmates drawing, drawing, and drawing. And then … "Now, everyone, draw *un plátano*". And I was like … [AN: What's that?! @@] … "What's a *plátano*?" I mean, I think we were all so innocent because we were so young that no one made fun of me. But there I was asking all my classmates: "Hey guys, what's a *plátano*?", "What's a *plátano*?". [AN: @@] And everyone started explaining: "Look, it's like a half moon, it's shaped like a half moon, it's yellow and if you leave it out for a while it gets spots." And I was like: "I have no idea what that is!" I was lost. And then everyone started drawing and they showed me: "Look, this is it!" And I was like: "Oh, it's like A BANANA!" [AN: @@]. For me the concept of *plátano* did not exist, I was lost @@. So, it's like … @@@ Yeah, my parents really put me in contact with English. Like, I was telling you, there were many words that only existed in English for me. I didn't even know that I was speaking two languages. So, until later … I remember that I went home, I was very intrigued, and I asked my dad: "But daddy, what's a *plátano*?" And so, they explained: "Look, they're the same thing" @@@. And I was like @@: "What?!" I mean, for me [AN: it was a discovery @] … I think that was the moment when I realized that I was speaking two languages because I didn't know. When everyone told me: "*Un plátano* and a banana are the same thing", for me it was like: "Wow!" @@@. Yeah, I hadn't figured it out until then."

126

Jane's metalinguistic commentary in the form of an anecdote provides a clear insight into the world and cognitive processes of a 'translanguager'. For Jane the process of communication and understanding the world around was not based on the idea of 'named separate languages' (García & Li Wei, 2014; Makoni & Pennycook, 2007b). At a very young age Jane seemed to be navigating daily activities without any obstacles in relation to language(s). The tone of her anecdote portrays a situation where she was able to interact with her family, classmates and teachers effortlessly and independently of her linguistic repertoire and home or school linguistic dynamics. As she narrates her encounter with an unknown word during a classroom task, she also describes the social and translanguaging mechanisms that were triggered in order for her to work out the apparent obstacle she bumped into. She turned to her classmates to ask a metalinguistic question: "¿Qué es un plátano?" (What's a 'plátano'?). The response to the question constitutes a fascinating exhibition of a translanguaging moment. Not only did Jane's classmates tried to explain the concept in their children-terms, but they used visual resources in drawing images of the fruit when faced with her confusion upon their explanations. Finally, Jane processed the combination of semiotic elements to understand what a 'plátano' was. She was able to find a concept and a word for it in her repertoire: 'banana', which allowed her to move on with the task without really stopping to think about the specificities that in fact came later.

Jane provided further insights throughout the interview by confirming the close contact she had with English at home. However, this linguistic reality had not interfered with her daily routine or that of people around her. Jane's mention of the 'innocence' regarding her classmates' reaction to her confusion and her own naivety about not knowing that *she was speaking two languages* makes it feel unnecessary to reveal the bilingual child 'the truth'. Jane's description illustrates the conceptualization of the relationship that language and cognition have within the lens of translanguaging. Jane's account exemplifies what García and Li Wei (2014) explain as the "*creative and critical use* of linguistic resources to mediate cognitively complex activities" (p.10, emphasis in original). The revelation of Jane's parents regarding her 'languages' was accompanied by adjustments in the role that English and Spanish would play in the house. Later in the interview Jane explained that after this episode the communication

dynamics changed in her family, as her parents started asking her things such as: *"¿Quieres galletas?"* (would you like some cookies?) instead of using what she called the 'espanglish version': *"Quieres unas cookies?"*. In fact, Jane inferred what her parents were thinking as she said: *"[…] entonces como que empezaron así de: "Ay, creo que le estamos haciendo un poco de daño" @@ … Sí, pero también ellos siempre dijeron que necesitaba mucho el inglés."* (so, they started to say: "Huh, we're probably harming her" @@ … Yeah, but at the same time they always told me that English was something necessary). Jane's parents, who until then promoted flexible linguistic practices in their lives perhaps 'unintentionally', seemed cornered by the established 'monolingual' ideas and the genuine fear not to 'harm' their child by allowing the mixing of languages. Therefore, they succumbed to the idea that languages must be individual, separated and that it was time for Jane to know this and adjust accordingly. However, despite the 'shocking' revelation made to Jane based on widespread ideas of languages as independent entities, it is interesting to see that her parents left a window open to allow contact with English by telling her that this language "was something necessary". Therefore, they opened "a space for translanguaging", where language ideologies were negotiated (Flores & Schissel, 2014, p. 466) as Jane grew up.

Unlike Jane, who was relocated in Mexico at a young age, Sasha's childhood was marked by a continuous movement between Mexico and the U.S., attending bilingual schools in both countries. Sasha's interview started with her telling me she felt comfortable to speak English and Spanish. However, she 'warned' me: *"[…] a veces me detengo porque cuando estoy hablando en español también estoy pensando en inglés […]"* (sometimes I stop because when I'm speaking Spanish I'm also thinking in English). Right there, from the beginning of the interview she put into words how it feels for her to 'translanguage', meaning how she perceives her own cognitive process in leading to her performance. Sasha's interview was characterized by her straight-forward answers and detailed explanations of various episodes of her life where she highlighted the role that language has played in them.

Throughout both the writing composition and the interview, Sasha explained the intense transnational movement that she and her mom experienced together. Sasha expressed not fully understanding what was happening when they went to the U.S., but she did notice something was going on with language: *"It was not easy learning the language, I remember myself several times crying because I didn't understood the language nor the classes and as a consequence there were some times that I didn't*

wanted to attend school". Sasha was able to overcome this difficult experience as a result of a combination of her mom's pressure and encouragement in addition to the support she had at school. In fact, she highlighted her positive perceptions about school in the U.S., and the linguistic flexibility she had at home. For example, in the quote below she describes an instance of the dynamics of communication in her house:

Original quote	English translation
"Este ... en mi casa siempre hablé español, siempre hablé español, pero si yo decía cualquier cosa en inglés no había problema. No había como renstricción de que: "Ay, aquí solamente vas a hablar español". No, prácticamente mi mamá sí me decía: "Háblame español porque en inglés no te voy a entender". Este, por ella. Pero ella también a veces si yo le decía: "I wanna glass of water", me lo daba, me entendía ... o frasecitas simples me los entendía y no había problema con que utilizara el inglés en casa ... Las caricaturas y pues todo era en inglés, los libros, todo era en inglés menos como la interacción con mi mamá era prácticamente en ... como un 80 % en español".	"Well, at home I always spoke Spanish, I always spoke Spanish, but if I said anything in English there was no problem. There was no restriction on things like: "You better speak Spanish here". No, basically my mom used to say: "Talk to me in Spanish because I won't be able to understand". I mean because of her. But she also, if I sometimes said things like: "I wanna glass of water", she would understand … or small phrases she would understand and there was no problem with my using English at home … The cartoons and, well, everything was in English, the books, everything was in English except the interaction with my mom, which … was in Spanish about 80% of the time".

From her description, we can see the presence of translanguaging in Sasha's and her mother's communication dynamics. Sasha provides a general image of her home linguistic practices as being flexible. She was able to use the languages in her linguistic repertoire without problems. Although Sasha's mother favored communication in Spanish, she did not limit Sasha to use English. In fact, Sasha provides an example of the type of phrases and scenes where they would have exchanges that represent translanguaging events (using little phrases, watching TV shows and accessing books). Their family routine does not seem to have been affected, and Sasha even calculates a percentage to define her perception of the level of interaction that she and her mother had in Spanish and English. Sasha's quote not only describes her memories of the interactions at home, she actually materializes the example, by translanguaging as she tells the story. Sasha's narrative positions the characters (Sasha and her mother) in terms of their use of language by quoting her mother in Spanish: "Háblame español porque en inglés no te voy a entender" (tell me in Spanish because I won't understand if you speak English), and then quoting herself in English "I wanna glass of water" to give an example of the kinds of 'little' phrases her mom would understand. In this case, there is a double layer of translanguaging as Sasha translanguages during the interview as she explains a translanguaging moment she experienced.

There were other portions of Sasha's descriptions that emerged as remarkable because they illuminate how she negotiates 'traditional' understandings of language ownership with her lived experience. For instance, in her writing composition she explains: *"My mother tongue is Spanish, but sometimes I feel like if Spanish and English were both at the same time my mother tongue"*. This 'feeling' expressed by Sasha can clearly be understood when we look at it with the lens of translanguaging. For her the idea of two separate mother tongues or languages does not quite suit what she experiences. She actually conceives these two elements as being one at the same time according to her description. This coincides with what Otheguy et al. (2018) call "a *unitary* view" (p.2) of bilingualism in which "the mental grammars of bilinguals as structured but unitary collections of features, and the practices of bilinguals are acts of feature selection, not of grammar switch" (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015, p. 281). Throughout her narrative both in the interview and in the writing composition Sasha constantly expresses a sense of simply languaging by means of using her repertoire flexibly. Sasha's notion that Spanish and English are her mother tongue at the same time qualifies as an example that "classifications of 'first', 'second' and 'mother tongue' do not fit the sociolinguistic realities of speakers in the 21st century" (Makalela, 2017, p. 15).

As explained by Sasha, adapting to a new environment and coming into contact with another language as a consequence of migration and particularly of schooling in the U.S. is a complex process. This was also the case of Laura and Daisy. I was able to interview both of them at LILEX. Laura had been a student in many of the modules I taught in previous years, but I had never had the chance to talk in depth with her about her story. Throughout the interview she revealed to me the constant process of border-crossing that she experienced over the course of 12 years until she finally relocated on her own in Mexico while she keeps close contact with her nuclear and extended family that live in the U.S. During the interview Laura explained how she navigated the initial process of adaptation:

Original quote	English translation
"Mmm ... de principio fue muy difícil porque pues yo llegué y pues puro español y nada de inglés. Nada más sabía decir: "Hi" y era todo @@. Entonces había una ... Nuestra vecina era puertorriqueña y sus hijos pues entendían un poquito el español, y yo creo que ellos fueron los que nos ayudaron mucho como para agarrar más la lengua, salir un poquito más ... Y me acuerdo que en ... la primaria me hicieron ... me pusieron como un asesor para que me sacara de clase y me explicara lo que estaba pasando y así. Y practicábamos, y ella también me ayudó mucho. Y después de eso en middle school, ya fue cuando entré al ESL program y ahí fue donde me quedé como 2 o 3 años. Y ya yo dije: "No pues ya no lo necesito, ya me ... ya siento que pues soy nativa." Y ... Y ya dejé de usarlo."	"Uhm … at first it was very hard because, well, I got there and I had only Spanish, no English at all. I could only say: "Hi" and that was it @@. So, there was a … Our neighbor was Puerto Rican and her children knew a bit of Spanish, and I think that it was them who helped us a lot to, like, catch the language, to go out … And I remember that in … elementary school they made me … they gave me a counselor who would take me outside the class and explained to me what was going on. So, we practiced, and she also helped me a lot. And after that in middle school I joined the ESL program and I took it for 2 or 3 years. And then I said: "Well, I don't need it anymore, I feel … I feel like a native." And … And I quit the program.

Laura seems to have a high degree of consciousness of her language learning process. Although she claimed not knowing English at first, she also explained that her knowledge of English was limited to the word "Hi". At a very young age and given the migration dynamics in her family she was probably used to at least hearing words such as 'Hi' quite frequently. Using the resources she had in combination with the resources of her Puerto Rican neighbors she managed to gain confidence "para agarrar la lengua" (to catch the language). Once her formal education began, she was faced with institutional policies and mechanisms to 'learn' English until she became "nativa" (native). It is highly significant to see how although Laura uses the label "nativa", which is one of the most commonly used monolingual constructs, to demonstrate the high level of agency that she had as she makes it clear that it was her who decided what "nativa" meant and how it felt for her. Laura's self-measurement of her knowledge and competence leading to self-determining a level of linguistic proficiency is a significant account of her role in challenging a traditional monolingual and institutionalized conceptualization of 'a native speaker'. Her determination not only provides an insight to the cognitive processes leading her to a self-evaluation, but it is also an inspiring example of empowerment and resistance in the context of transnationalism.

On the other hand, there is the case of Daisy who experienced a less dynamic movement across borders as she settled in the U.S. with her family for a long period before relocating in Mexico. Although Daisy's transnational experience was different from Laura's, she had a similar experience in terms of navigating the language learning process and understanding her bilingualism. Daisy described her first day of school as follows:

Original quote
"I remember I stayed that day, that same day ... And ... uhm ... like, two girls came to me and they started to talk to me. They were really nice. [AN: Were they Mexican?] Yeah @@, yeah, they were Mexican ... and ... uhm ... I remember that they told me: "When ... — bueno me dijeron en español— "Cuando te digan: 'what's your name?' @@, vas a decir: 'Daisy' @@" ... [I: Aw, how cute!] D: Yeah ... that's the first thing I learned @ ... And ... we were ... Well, most of the time ... all the ones that spoke Spanish, that weren't American, we were separated. We were in a ... in a program, I think it was ESL ... yeah @. And, we, yeah, we stayed there like most of the ... the day because we got help to start learning English and everything. I remember they were like ... almost 25 of us in there ... and ... it took me like a year to learn, to learn English. Well ... the basic stuff @."

This quote by Daisy is remarkable as it is a twofold example of translanguaging. First of all, the extract above is in itself an instance of a *translanguaging moment*, where Daisy used her linguistic repertoire creatively in a sort of representation of the scene she described at this point in the interview. Her creativity is displayed in the way she provides the characters in the anecdote with a voice in Spanish that can be regarded as a representation of their flexible bilingualism. This is another example of the translanguaging event identified earlier in this chapter as *quoting others*, in which the characters in the extract are impersonated by speaking a particular language or variety. This strategy provides an insight into Daisy's world as a 'translanguager' interacting with other 'translanguagers' and successfully bridging communication by means of using the resources available in their repertoire. Secondly, Daisy's account illuminates the initial stage of the formation of her linguistic repertoire. That first encounter with language through the tender approach by the two girls who welcomed Daisy in school allowed her to make sense of what was happening in terms of how her linguistic repertoire was being reconfigured. The description shows how building on their common knowledge of Spanish, the girls find the resources to 'teach' Daisy a phrase in a different language at the time that they mediate the cultural clash that Daisy was undergoing. Here then translanguaging becomes a scaffolding strategy. Similarly, to the case of Laura, Daisy's narrative also provides an insight into her language learning process. Daisy calculates that it took her "a year" to learn English. Although, contrary to Laura, Daisy does not define herself as a native speaker, moreover, she places herself as a holder of 'basic knowledge'. As can be seen from these two examples, the first encounters that Laura and Daisy had with a new language and environment seem to be significantly negotiated through the resources in their linguistic repertoires in combination with other dimensions of their information processing and interaction with other bilinguals.

5.6 Everyday languaging

So far, the previous sections have provided insights to understand the particular ways in which the participants perceive the effects of transnationalism in their environment, and how they have made sense of their bilingualism. The diagram in figure 31, section 5.2 has also provided a clear representation to establish that the translanguaging practices of the participants in the study are heterogeneous. I now turn to the presentation and discussion of concrete examples of the ordinary translanguaging practices of the participants. The analysis of the data discussed in this section is framed by the understanding that "Translanguaging as a concept shifts focus from the structural analysis of language itself to what people *do* with language in their everyday lives" (Carroll & Mazak, 2017, p. 9). Therefore, we look at the descriptions of participants about their languaging and how they navigate ordinary interactions with family members or friends and with other actors within social domains such as home, school, and work. As we dive into participants narratives here, it is important to keep in mind that "[b]ilinguals use their languages differently for different purposes in different domains" (Li Wei, 2007b, p. 5). In this sense, the choices and circumstances behind their languaging across the many domains they interact in every day are informed by myriad factors that relate to a great extent to the widespread monolingual ideologies that add up to the personal, social, psychological, educational and many other aspects of their beings and journeys.

In order to understand participants' discursive performance in this study we must remind ourselves of their complex realities and active transnationalism. In most cases the families of the participants are spread between Mexico and the U.S. In some cases, they have also established connections with friends or colleagues living abroad, and another considerable number of cases have started a career as language teachers, adding a new domain for their translanguaging.

Consequently, the activities and relationships that participants carry out on a daily basis are interconnected with their languaging. As I read the interviews and writing compositions, I was able to identify particular extracts where the participants described the relations between people in their lives and their languaging. There were, for example, very interesting descriptions about how parents use language(s). Some participants explained that it was their father who would normally have a higher command of English due to the fact that father figures tend to have an active work-life

in the U.S. from an early age, while the mother figures normally remain in the house with little opportunities to learn or use English because they stay in Mexico or because they remain restricted to the domestic sphere while living in the U.S. Although the linguistic repertoires of mothers are perceived by participants to be somehow 'stable' in the sense that it tends to be mainly monolingual (only speaking Spanish), it is also interesting to see that mothers are reported to frequently encourage their children to learn English or become more educated. Furthermore, they reportedly find ways to use a variety of creative strategies to help their children achieve this goal. Examples of this can be found in Renata's interview where she describes how her mother taught her to spell words in both languages, Isaac's account of his mother introducing him to English or Adriana's mom encouraging her to study a postgraduate degree abroad. Moreover, these participants' reports contrast with the descriptions provided by Betina, Renata or Becky who portray their fathers as bilingual figures, who did not 'teach' or 'speak' English 'deliberately' to their children (see section 5.6.1 for analysis). Taken together, the varied languaging practices performed and/or encouraged by parents, in addition to the dynamics occurring inside the family domain as a whole, provide significant evidence to understand the complexity of the linguistic repertoires of members of these transnational families. In fact, García (2012) describes a bilingual family's normal day as including parents and children speaking the same or a different language to each other, listening to the radio or TV in one language while looking up information online in a different language, etc. García's description of this dynamic interaction, illustrates the ordinary essence of translanguaging, and it provides an insight to the "complex worlds" of bilingual families (García, 2012, p. 1), which I add is then projected on to other aspects of the family member's lives, especially in the relationship between mothers and children.

5.6.1 Languaging and mediation

Becky, who was born in California and has moved between the U.S. and Mexico at different points in her life, commented at the beginning of the interview that she struggles to speak only Spanish or only English, so we agreed to go with the flow as we spoke. During our conversation Becky shared with me significant details about the dynamics of communication in different aspects of her everyday life, including the family domain. For instance, she told me that she prefers watching movies in English because she considers that "translations" of movies into Spanish are not very good. She

also told me that she would sometimes speak English with her siblings, and she qualified this as speaking "Spanglish", explaining that they communicate in Spanish and English freely. Regarding her parents, Becky described that her father knows English very well, given that he went to work to the U.S. since he was 15 years old. However, Becky says: "*Nunca nos lo enseñó, eso sí, como que, cuando vamos allá cambia el switch pero con nosotros es siempre español. Como que no quiere hablar el inglés.*" (He never taught us [English] that's for sure, but when we go over there [to the U.S.], he changes the switch, but with us is always Spanish. It's like he doesn't want to speak English). When it comes to her mother, Becky said: "*Mi mamá es la que no, ella sí, no habla nada de inglés, ella puro español*" (My mom doesn't, she doesn't speak any English, she only speaks Spanish). Becky's descriptions show the individual variables that mediate communication in her daily life. These variables are also present in the lives of the rest of the participants as was signaled in section 5.6.

According to the data, the dynamics of family-interactions seem to vary depending on whether these are held among siblings or between parents and children. Though unique to each family, they tend to go into two directions, being flexible (with variations) or monolingual. Similarly, to Becky, the majority of the participants reported having a very flexible and heterogenous languaging with their siblings or other young members of their family such as cousins. Interactions with parents on the contrary seem to be determined by specific circumstances in each case, like we saw above in the case of Becky. This was confirmed when I interviewed her sister Betina, who also commented on these aspects of their lives and family's communication dynamics. For instance, Betina told me that she and her siblings normally use English to communicate, and they particularly use swear words in English more often than in Spanish, because when they say bad words in Spanish "it offends her father". The topic of swear words was also present during the interview with Sasha, and it was also mentioned by Isaac, who explained that although he tends to use English swear words, he also said: "*I do believe that curse words in Spanish are more satisfying to say*".

When discussing the dynamics of communication in the family domain with participants during the interviews, they seemed to make clear distinctions regarding the language skills and practices of their parents. For instance, Adriana, Sasha and Isaac recognized their mothers' knowledge of English and openness to perform flexible languaging. Daisy, Farah, Maggie, Jane and Nely provided accounts of the emergent bilingualism of both parental figures, which led in turn, to the promotion of flexible

language use in the house. For example, Nely explains how her parents learned English as they helped her and her siblings with schoolwork, which contrasts with the more radical approach of Farah's parents who restricted the use of Spanish in the house so they (both parents) could learn English upon their arrival to the U.S. In the case of Elzi, Regina, Julie and Renata, they explained the particularities of growing up in an environment similar to that of Becky and Betina, where the father was reported as being bilingual and the mother monolingual. As mentioned earlier, these narratives were particularly interesting for the underlying explanations provided by participants. As we saw above with Becky's and Betina's father not wanting to speak English with his children, this pattern seemed to be present in the case of most participants with a bilingual father and a monolingual mother. Renata for example told me that her father was bilingual, but he never "taught" them English. Regina's father, who is an English teacher did not 'teach' them the language deliberately nor did he use this language to interact with his children either. While initially the marked differences between the father and mother figures might seem to be directly connected with the gender roles performed (father = provider, mother = domestic care), which might seem to favor or hinder English learning in each case, there also seems to be an underlying sense of the parents as protectors of their culture manifested in the language use. As we saw above, this can be seen in the way Betina portrays her father as being offended when she curses in Spanish or in the way Adriana's aunt (also a mother) prefers to speak Spanish to talk about her memories of Mexico (see section 5.6.2).

5.6.1.1 Languaging and parental gender differences

Furthermore, when considering the study on the manifestations of the culture of migration in children by Kandel and Massey (2002) presented in chapter 2 (section 2.1.8) we could draw a particular interpretation of the gender pattern emerging here. According to Kandel and Massey's findings, male participants tend to aspire to only work in the U.S., while females tend to aspire to work and settle in the U.S. following their family's migration experiences. Following this trend, we could see how father figures might regard the learning of English only in terms of the ability it gives them to access work in the U.S., but since they tend not to want to settle in that country, they might not see a reason to promote a 'formal' or 'permanent' use of English in their children. On the other hand, the mother figures, who might want to both work and stay in the U.S. could regard the learning of English as an important ability to develop in

their children. Even when mothers might be limited in learning opportunities outside the household environment, that does not mean they abandon the idea of encouraging their children (and themselves indirectly) to learn English and *be* bilingual. Additionally, even though participant's narratives position mothers as mainly monolingual, we must remember that their bilingualism could be placed at different stages of emergence according to translanguaging theory. After all, mothers are active participants of transnational movements where two languages are frequently used and where they learn from and with their children. It is also important to highlight that the portrayal of mother figures as 'monolinguals' might also be attributed to an 'imprecise description' from the participants' standpoint based on notions of 'native speakerism' or 'monolingual ideologies', which are still a common reference for them when trying to explain the situation with no previous knowledge of translanguaging or alternative views on bilingualism.

Another relevant aspect found in the narratives has to do with a specific role that participants play as language brokers in certain domains, particularly in their workplace or within the family environment. In fact, this was one of the first things that Becky remembered: "[…] *mi mamá, por lo menos ella, dice que sabía hablar muy bien en los dos idiomas, dijo: "Tú eras de las que sabía traducirnos bien todo"* (at least my mom says that I knew how to speak both languages well, she used to tell me: "You were the one that knew how to translate things for us well"). Laura also reported being a language broker for her mother, for example, while navigating everyday chores or when carrying out institutional procedures at embassies. Betina, and Elzi explained how they have acted as language brokers in the workplace where they have been given special tasks because of their knowledge of English (Laura) or French (Elzi). The aspect of language brokering as part of the languaging practices of youths has been explored in research conducted in other regions of Mexico, pointing at the impact that childhood brokering has in youth's identity construction through their lives and in the professional field (Mora Pablo et al., 2015). In line with the findings of that research, the participants in this study also point at the advantage of having eventually developed their 'childhood brokering' into a skill they continue to use in their current activities at school or work.

The task of linguistic and cultural mediation is also performed by parents as a direct consequence of engaging in transnationalism. In some cases, the families have to work together and use all their linguistic resources and forms of capital to make sense of the tasks that children have to carry out at school, such as doing homework. Other

times, parents face the need to explain to their U.S. born/raised children certain cultural aspects of life and linguistic expressions commonly used in Mexico. An example of this comes from the interview with Fernando, who started sharing his story with me by saying: *"I never knew my life as a Mexican, but as an American, and my childhood was in California […]"*. During the interview, our interaction was extremely flexible in terms of language use. His voice was soft and calm as he described episodes of his life in the U.S. and Mexico. He made frequent pauses while speaking. Towards the end of the interview, I asked Fernando if there was any other story he wanted to share. It was then when he remembered an episode that happened upon his return to Mexico when he started going to school. In this episode he quoted his friends, himself and his father to explain how he tried to make sense of certain local expressions that his friends were using. This example is a remarkable translanguaging moment, capturing the complexity of managing each character's languages and styles. At the same time, it portrays the role that Fernando's father had in helping him make sense of the new environment:

Original quote
Tryin' to think of any other stories now, that happened to me when I was young ... uhm ... well, when I arrived in Mexico everything was in Spanish, and yeah, I spoke Spanish but not much and there's people that'd come up to me ... friends, people that I noticed that now are my friends ... —"Qué onda güey, what you doin'?"—and stuff like that, "güey", and I was thinking: "that word, I've never heard of it" ... —"Apá, they call me 'güey' what's that?"— ... —"Who called you 'güey'"—... —"Him"—... —"And, what is it?"—... —"It's like 'vato'"—... —"And, what's 'vato'"—... and Oh my God ... and stuff like that ... and they'd use many words, not ... I didn't know what it was ... and I would think of it literally ... I was very ... I would think of stuff literally, and I didn't knew ... I didn't knew metaphors or nothing […]

Fernando starts off by explaining the linguistic context and limitations he found upon his arrival to Mexico after living in the U.S. for 13 years. Once he started interacting with people, he began noticing the use of a specific word *(güey)* when people addressed him. He first makes an effort to identify the word, but he realizes it is not part of his repertoire, so he goes to his father in search of an explanation. The word *güey* has undergone a radical change in its meaning over the years. For a long time, it was a taboo word used as a form of insult meaning 'idiot' or 'stupid'. Therefore, the use of this word was mostly restricted to adult speech[32]. This explains the reaction of Fernando's father when he questions: "Who called you that?". Fernando's father was

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[32] The meaning of the word *güey* has significantly shifted as it has popularized over the years in Mexico. It went from being a strong insult to a one of the most popular, colloquial and friendly forms of addressing friends or colleagues. Additionally, there are myriad expressions that incorporate the word *güey* to indicate surprise, emphasis, solidarity, etc. https://www.bbc.com/mundo/media-41181179

probably worried about his son not being treated with respect in the school or community in Mexico. Once Fernando clarifies that it was another child calling him *güey*, his father goes on to provide a synonym using a local form of Spanish: *vato*, a word that is widely used in the northern part of Mexico normally employed to address male friends or to refer to a man in general. However, Fernando was also unfamiliar with that word, therefore, he had to ask further questions to his father, a situation he seemed to find funny, by the tone in which he said "*Oh my God*" as he told me the story. Although the exchange described, seems to be interrupted, it illuminates the way in which Fernando's father mediated for him in order to help his U.S.-born son adjust to his new life in Mexico. At the end of the narrative, Fernando reflects on the strategies he used to make sense of words in Spanish. He explains how he would take the meaning of words literally instead of playing around with the metaphors that are commonly inserted and implied in the colloquial use of the Mexican Spanish used in Zacatecas. Later in the interview Fernando also explained that he normally communicates in Spanish with his parents and uncles or aunts, while he uses sometimes Spanish and sometimes English with his siblings, especially when they visit Mexico because he does not want "to change his accent or stuff like that". This last clarification on the dynamics inside his family connects with the previous discussion on interactions among siblings and parents-children.

5.6.2 "Making our own language"

Another significant example of everyday languaging comes from Isaac, who at the time of the interview was a student in the school of physics. From the beginning of the interview his attitude was open and confident, his descriptions were rich and highly reflective. He laughed a little as he told me he liked "flamboyant words and the complexity of the language". Among the many things we talked about, he mentioned having a group of international friends including his polyglot girlfriend, daughter of a Mexican mother and a Swiss father. I asked him how they went on about everyday communication, and his answer unfolded an unexpected account of translanguaging:

Original quote
"Uh, we're working on making our own languages, language, like, it's a mixture between English, German and Spanish, [AN: Oh cool!] I mean it's just jokes, nothing formal, but yeah ... I mean, eh, in everyday conversation we speak Spa ... Spanish because she believes that she wants ... that she needs to practice. In that regard ... because her mom is from here, Mexican and her dad is Swiss, and they are both very bilingual, they actually met in the United States doing a ... a ... like stay, like, a summer stay like I did in Canada. Uhm ... so yeah, like, in her house growing up bi, bilingualism, multilingualism was a thing of everyday, and everyday thing, yes. So, in everyday conversation we speak Spanish, uh, other times in English, and she's teaching me a bit of German here and there."

The first remarkable characteristic of Isaac's narrative is the fact that he explicitly mentions 'everyday language practices'. Framed within his notion of "bi/multilingualism as an everyday thing" Isaac goes on to explain the flexibility in the use of languages between him and his girlfriend. In fact, the very first description he provides is about how they are "working on making their own language" by means of mixing the languages in their repertoire. Although he qualifies this as having a sense of informality, when observed with the lens of translanguaging it acquires a very significant value on the grounds of the creativity and complexity of their performance and their display of agency. Additionally, we could regard their 'building of a new language' in terms of 1) a strategy of scaffolding in the process of Isaac's learning German, and 2) a symbolic indicator that the elements already present in their repertoires are not enough in order to perform the communicative processes that are relevant to them, so that they find in the "mixing" of three languages a suitable solution that adjusts to their communicative reality and needs. I found Isaac's description extremely interesting and I inquired further, asking him to elaborate on the mechanics of this 'new language' and some examples of what they *do* with it. He then went into more detail and explained as follows:

Original quote
I: *"Yes! I mean ... it's mainly just my use of broken German that becomes kind of like a joke and we develop it, like, I'm thinking of a phrase, uh ... Ah, yes! There's one, uhm, it is Es gibt es kein Problem, that is broken German from, for 'there is no problem' or 'it's OK'. And we turned that into a phrase that we say it all the time, and we use it as though it were correct, and also, it's not really spoken, it's mostly written our jokes, and ... because we use the Umlaut, and stuff like that, so yeah ... uh-huh, again, mostly, mostly joking, and like a code and .... we use to tell us .... to each other that we love each other and stuff like that, but jokingly ↗"*.

Similar to previous examples, this narrative can also be regarded as a translanguaging moment and as an insight into the actual process behind the communication between Isaac and his girlfriend. Once again, this narrative displays the tensions between the speakers' language ideologies and their actual translanguaging

practices. Isaac uses the adjective 'broken' to describe his way of speaking German, which implies a self-perception of his German as 'not complete' or 'damaged' from the perspective of monolingual ideologies. In observing Isaac's conflict between using language for effective communication versus using 'correct' language it is worth looking at the meaning and implications of this so-called *monolingual orientation*. The monolingual orientation, according to Canagarajah (2013) is originated by a general set of beliefs around language and communication that emanate from the perspective of "the native speaker's use" (p.1). Therefore, when a speaker challenges those expected conventions and reinterprets, extends or disregards the norms, the outcome(s) displayed in the performance "violate our assumption" (p.1). Consequently, instead of focusing on whether or not communication is possible, the tendency is to correct what seems *broken* or *incorrect.* The perpetuation of these ideologies oriented towards a model of a native speaker as the holder and model of 'proper' language use not only cripples the exploration of new ways of communication and language creativity, but it also stigmatizes any new form or performance developing at the margins of those 'native-speaker-expectations'. However, in the case of Isaac, despite this trace of a monolingual orientation in the way he perceives his German, the tension between the notion of complete and incomplete German is finally resolved as Isaac and his girlfriend embrace their particular use of a phrase in German and they "use it as though it were correct". Isaac's reference to the joking tone of their performance can be regarded as a negotiation of their language ideologies by *breaking the rules* of the language structure, taking the result as joke, and then following the phonetic rules of the language. The result of their translanguaging is a "code" that allows them to express meaningful messages to each other, and to keep that sense of creativity, jokiness and closeness.

We now turn to an analysis of the next participant, Adriana. Within the constant movement of Adriana across borders, everyday languaging can have myriad nuances, and it becomes an intricate reality that could be perceived as conflicting. In the following extract Adriana provides an insight to this complexity and she shares a reflection on her understanding of her translanguaging:

Original quote
A: It's strange because when I was at the States, I … well, I used English most of the time, well with my aunt it was only Spanish. I don't know why they only … well, they speak Spanish, and she speaks English to her childs, I mean to her sons … And it was strange because she knows that I know English, but she communicated with me in Spanish. But I think that she did it because she missed to speak in Spanish … like it gives her like this homesick feeling, and we were only talking about things and places from Mexico, and she was always like: "Oh, I miss that!" … And with my cousins I speak … I spoke in English … and I don't know because when I was there, I felt like my English wasn't that good, but it was because I wasn't used to all these slangs, and everything. But at the same time it wasn't like I wasn't identified with the language, I had my own English @@@, and it was a bit formal for the rest of the people, but I like it … but I noticed that I was thinking in Spanish. I was there, but I was thinking in Spanish, and trying to say things in English … and when I'm here I think in English! … but I speak in Spanish, and that's kind of weird. I don't know how it works, but it happens.

Adriana's description might be hard to interpret at first glance considering the many aspects that she addresses while speaking. She slowly explains and tries to untangle the different elements that converge as she talks. This narrative is thus linking two places and it gives an insight into how languaging happens within a transnational field where multiple interactions take place. Adriana begins by trying to make sense of her languaging in the U.S., where she claims to use "English most of the time", except when interacting with her aunt. As Adriana reflects on the reasons why she speaks in Spanish with her aunt when she visits the U.S. she describes her aunt-family's bilingual practices by clarifying that they speak Spanish, although her aunt speaks English to her sons. Even though Adriana's aunt is aware that Adriana knows English, she prefers to communicate with her in Spanish. Adriana's explanation of her aunt's choice is linked to her perception of her aunt being homesick. Within the context of the transnational migration that Adriana's family experiments, Adriana might be well aware of these circumstances and the emotions around being away from Mexico. Therefore, she finds in her aunt's language choice a strategy to cope with the feeling of homesickness, as they used Spanish to talk about "things and places from Mexico", particularly those that her aunt misses the most. On the other hand, Adriana speaks English with her cousins, who might be more connected with that language than their mom. Even though Adriana is open to using English with them, she feels that her English is not 'as good' due to her lack of knowledge of colloquial language forms, such as slang. Adriana is sensitive to the nuances of language use within her transnational context, and she expresses her feelings of being identified with English at the same time that she acknowledges that she has *her own English*. Finally, Adriana explains how she feels languages interacting at a cognitive level as she changes her location, a phenomenon that she characterizes as "weird".

It is remarkable that both Isaac and Adriana provide accounts where they acknowledge the sense of having or creating *their own language*. Contrary to the case of Isaac and his girlfriend, who communicate by means of using 'broken language' that is self-regarded as informal, Adriana perceives her English as being a *bit formal* for a context where slang and 'lax' linguistic forms seem to be favored. This is a powerful example of the conflicting expectations about language ideologies and performance. As we see in these participants' descriptions, on the one hand bilinguals have been conditioned to think of their language use as 'deficient', while everyday language in an English-speaking environment is performed at the margins of 'correct' language expectations, leaving bilinguals again in a position of rupture. These seemingly opposing examples in Isaac's and Adriana's narratives find a point of junction in the fact that beyond monolingual ideologies, expectations or perceptions these bilingual speakers find a way of communicating which they embrace, celebrate and continue to promote because it accommodates to their worlds' needs.

5.6.3 Language twists

Following this line of everyday creative languaging I also found that many of the participants embrace translanguaging practices in the school setting. Considering that participants enrolled in the LILEX program are in contact with many languages as part of their studies it was not a surprise to hear about their flexible languaging and their complex repertoires. However, the actual examples provided in the narratives were very insightful. Additionally, the participants who were not enrolled in the LILEX program also described instances of flexible languaging due to their activities online, their hobbies and their contact and interactions with classmates, lecturers or professional colleagues, who speak languages other than Spanish, therefore confirming the prevalent presence of translanguaging as an everyday practice.

About a year and a half before I came to Ireland to undertake this PhD project, I was teaching one of my usual modules with a group of 5th semester at LILEX. I distinctly remember approaching the door to enter the classroom, when I heard one of the students say to one of his friends: "¡[name] ya llegó la maestra, agarra tus *goats*!" ([name] the teacher is here, grab your goats). I could not resist laughing at the cleverness of the phrase, I found it so great that I dedicated the first few minutes of the class to talk about it and discuss it with students. At the time I did not know about translanguaging, but we did have a wonderful discussion about idiolects and

'personalizing' languages. *¡Agarra tus chivas!* is a common phrase used in Mexican Spanish that could be translated as: *Grab your stuff and let's go/move!* As normal with idiomatic expressions, it is difficult to make sense of it if translated literally into another language. However, within a bilingual Mexican environment it is not only cleverly funny, but it actually makes sense. At the time, I thought that the phrase had been a funny isolated event. However, when I went back to Zacatecas to conduct the interviews with the participants, Laura brought up this memory and I was given another example and explanation by Adriana on how students where using this creative languaging:

Original quote	English translation
AN: *"Ah OK. Y en las otras actividades que tienes en tu vida con tus amigos fuera de la escuela o actividades que hagas, ¿usas el inglés aquí en México?"*	AN: Uh OK. And what about in other activities with your friends outside school o hobbies, do you use English here in Mexico?
L: *"No, no. Nada más cuando hablo con mis hermanas el Spanglish, es lo que uso o si hablo con mis amigos de Estados Unidos, pero pues es muy rara la vez que hablo con ellos y todo ... [external interruption] ... a mis hermanas ... y nada más el inglés para mandar mensajes de texto con mis compañeros de Estados Unidos, pero en sí el inglés aquí no, con mis amigos ... Ya ve que a veces en clase usábamos el Spanglish que: ... 'your'... ¿Cómo dijo una vez B? ... agarra tus 'goats' ... así, cómo cosas así, pero palabras así muy ... pero nunca una conversación fluida."*	L: No, no. Only Spanglish when I speak with my sisters, that's what I use or if I speak with friends in the U.S., but we rarely speak and stuff ... [external interruption] ... to my sisters ... and I only use English to send texts with my mates in the U.S., but English here, no, with my friends ... Do you remember that sometimes in class we used Spanglish, like: 'your' ... What did B said that time? ... agarra tus goats ... yeah, stuff like that, but it's only words ... never a full conversation ...

As we talked about Laura's everyday languaging I asked her about her use of English in her daily activities in Mexico. She then went on to explain how common *Spanglish* is in her life, as she uses it to communicate with her sisters and friends in the U.S. Although she also uses English to text friends in the U.S. she claims not to use it in Mexico. As she takes a short pause, Laura asks me if I remember how we sometimes used Spanglish in class, and she then quotes her classmate B's famous phrase *"¡agarra tus goats!"* as an example of the way they language. Although Laura says it is only a funny way to use words and not a strategy used in a conversation that flows (*fluida* in the sense of fully conducted in English), I now understand through the lens of translanguaging as an extremely 'fluid' manifestation of languaging in the sense that they incorporate myriad creative *language twists* to make their communication work.

In an effort to try to find out more on how this type of languaging started at school I asked Laura for further details. She explained that she does not know how exactly it was that they started doing that, she says it was just a 'silly' thing they started

to do for fun, just picking up random words and translating them literally. Then she said:

Original quote	English translation
"Es más como broma porque como que lo hacen para hacerse ... para reír, porque en la clase de inglés antes de que todo fuera en inglés [content classes] lo decían, así como que para que no riéramos, así de que: "Ah jaja lo traduciste así literal, así como es y suena chistoso". Ahí creo que solo es por el ámbito social, por hacernos reír no tanto académico porque cuando si hablan de cosas académicas cambian todo, totalmente a puro inglés bien, así como se dice."	It's more like a joke because, like, they just did it to have … to have fun because in the English class, before we had content classes in English they just said it to make us laugh, like: "Uh haha you translated it literally and its funny". I think it was just on a social aspect, to make us laugh, it had nothing to do with academic stuff because when they discuss academic topics they speak differently, they would only use English as it is actually used.

Laura's explanation and reflection on how translanguaging emerged in the school context is remarkable on many levels. She is not only describing the phenomenon of translanguaging, she is also providing an insight into the dynamics of language use inside the classrooms and in relation with academic language and other macro-social aspects. From Laura's perspective this 'literal translation' of random words is just a joke, a strategy that her classmates use to make others laugh. Although this explanation is in itself valid coming from Laura's experience and perception, when we look at the broader context, we discover other layers that lead to other possible interpretations of this phenomenon. Laura traces the emergence of this translanguaging practice back to the first stage of the program where classes in LILEX are taught in Spanish. She locates the emergence of this practice inside the English class. Within this context, the creative languaging of the students could have three additional interpretations to the one provided by Laura.

The first possible explanation considers the foundational notion of resistance by Williams (1994) and it also aligns with Goodman's (2017) call for the consideration of translanguaging practices as an act of resistance in an educational context where English is used to teach content. Therefore, the language twists performed by students could be regarded as a manifestation of resistance against English if we consider that the students are within the context of an English class in a bilingual program in Mexico, where the tensions around the hegemony of English vs Spanish are constantly present. The second interpretation could suggest that the meaning of this performance points at the lively display and manifestation of the reconfiguration of students' linguistic repertoires given that they are constantly exposed to English and Spanish given the

nature of the B.A. program, and the fact that the teachers and the students in that program are bilingual. Finally, the third interpretation can be linked to a strategy of scaffolding (García, 2009a) associated to students' language learning process, meaning that they not only rely on the resources available in their repertoire, but they produce meaningful languaging that is connected with other linguistic and cultural resources already available to them. This is grounded in the fact that at least in the case of the phrase *agarra tus goats* the selection does not seem to be completely random, as it is a very particular idiomatic expression typically used in Mexican Spanish. It is unfortunate that I was unable to interview B, who seems to be the starter of this trend, as he could have provided me with other answers. At this stage, the information provided by Laura in combination with translanguaging theory is all I have in order to provide possible explanations.

Further information on these *language twists* and creative everyday languaging also emerged during my conversation with Adriana as she told me about her feelings towards being bilingual:

Original quote
I have never felt it as an issue or something, but the opposite, uhm, even if sometimes I'm speaking in English in a place where I know people is only speaking Spanish or anything. I don't mind because I just wanted to say it that way, and maybe that's the way I wanted to express it, and it's not the sa- ... Sometimes I'm thinking or saying things in English and I've said them that way, and people maybe don't understand me, but that's how I felt them, and if I try to say them in Spanish they don't make that much sense and they don't feel the same way, and that's the same thing with Spanish, but in a place where everyone speaks in English. Like ... there're words that just match the feeling and that's what you say in the moment. And I think that a lot of us do that here, a lot of my classmates, we are using, like, Spanish, Spanglish and everything all day! It's like: "Los love" or things like that all the time, all the time! We're used to it; we know each other and it's not a big deal. In other places of course people have said to me, like: "Why are you speaking in English? Or Why do you say that in English? Like: Do you feel more that us? Or something like that?" And I'm like: "NO! It's just ... that's how I felt it, that's how I felt it!". I don't see it like an issue. I know that a lot of people maybe see it like weird or maybe ... I don't know what they believe! @@@.

This narrative describes how comfortable Adriana feels with her bilingualism. She describes how she navigates ordinary situations where English or Spanish have different positions of power. Adriana's description of how she adapts to the linguistic environment can be taken as a reflection or influence of her transnationalism since as we saw in previous sections she goes back and forth between Zacatecas and the U.S. frequently. She has a clear notion of language flow and mobility, although it is not limited to geographical places, as she describes that her languaging is a direct consequence of how she is "thinking or saying things" at a given moment. Moreover,

her languaging is about "how she feels". Adriana draws on her repertoire to express her thoughts and feelings accurately through the use of a given language despite the fact that a particular language might not be regarded as a valid means of communication in a particular context. Moving to the example from her individual experience and performance she also describes the dynamics of languaging at school, where she confirms the phenomenon previously mentioned in my conversation with Laura. In this case Adriana explains that it is a common practice among her and her classmates to speak in "Spanish, Spanglish and everything all the time" by saying things like: *"Los love"*, a phrase that is used to mean: "I love you guys". Similar to Laura, Adriana perceives the use of these language twists as something ordinary that is "not a big deal". And she contrasts this relaxed and flexible languaging at school with situations outside where her fluid or heterogeneous practices are frequently questioned. Both Laura's and Adriana's perception of these practices as part of the routine and not as an issue illuminates the level of embeddedness and familiarity that students in the school context have with this way of languaging. The suggestion that these practices are widely accepted within the school among students and in some classes where Spanglish is used allows us to see the complex dynamics of this context, where tensions are negotiated or eased through the humorous tone of their translanguaging.

5.6.4 Experience as teachers

During the interviews and in some of the writing compositions many of the participants revealed their experience as English teachers. In fact, 11 out of the 23 participants talked about their teaching practice. Their narratives around this aspect of their lives provided rich information that added details to understand their translanguaging practices, and it also provided significant evidence of the constant negotiation between widespread traditional language ideologies and their languaging. The reasons for becoming English teachers and the circumstances surrounding participants' teaching practice involve various factors, however, their knowledge of English due to their transnational profile played a determinant role in it as it became a skill that added value to their professional identity. In fact, Lengeling (2013) explains that entering the "teaching profession is a multifaceted process" (p.13) that involves reasons such as: 1) having command or love for the language, 2) having an experience abroad, 3) following a family tradition of teachers or 4) 'falling into the job' meaning one becomes a teacher by means of language command and not teaching education.

These elements were mentioned by the majority of the participants who shared narratives about their teaching practice. Although the participants' reasons and stories about becoming English teachers are themselves interesting, what was most remarkable for this study was considering aspects about their translanguaging regarding the role that language creativity and language ideologies play inside their classrooms and how these contrast or align with the translanguaging practices and events found in their narratives about everyday languaging.

Becoming an English teacher at a relatively young age and while completing tertiary education was a common denominator for nearly all the participants who talked about their teaching practice[33]. In fact, various references to their teacher-identity were made throughout the interviews. Furthermore, when I asked questions about the benefits or advantages of being bilingual in Mexico, the responses were overwhelmingly centered around English opening up job opportunities in the field of teaching. For example, upon her sudden return from the U.S. to Mexico, Nely became an English teacher at 18 years old in the university where she studies a B.A. in Educational Intervention as part of her social service[34]. Another example is Carlos, who continued studying English upon his return to Mexico. His professionalization through the completion of TKT[35] courses and exams led him to become an English teacher and to eventually teach Physics courses in this language while completing his postgraduate studies in this field. Renata has also built a career in the field of English language teaching. She talked about her master's studies in ELT, which were in progress at the time of the interview. In the case of Moni, teaching became an opportunity that allowed her to relocate in Mexico and consolidate a teaching career after completing postgraduate studies. Some other participants including Javier, Maggie, Paco, Regina, Romina and Yvonne started their teaching journey as part of their professional practice while completing their major at LILEX or simply as a job on the side of their academic

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[33] My personal story about becoming an English teacher in Mexico also relates to some of the participant's stories. See Núñez Asomoza (2013).

[34] The Social service is a mandatory requirement for university students in Mexico in order to obtain the B.A. diploma or degree. All students must carry out temporal professional activities (equivalent to 480 hours) in their field of study in the interest of society or the State, therefore the social service is offered in public or government institutions or NGOs offering a direct social benefit to Mexico. The objective of this service is to allow students to gain experience and networking opportunities for future employment.

[35] Teaching Knowledge Test is a Cambridge assessment aimed at testing candidates' knowledge on given areas of language teaching. There are five modules (three general and 2 specialists). For more information see: https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/teaching-english/teaching-qualifications/tkt/

activities as in the case of Isaac, who was majoring in Physics at the time of the interview.

In addition to the economic and professional opportunities that teaching has offered to these participants, their teaching practice is yet another key dimension to understand and explore their translanguaging practices. Through their teaching they not only manifest and project their own languaging and their beliefs about languages but in some cases, they also provide spaces for their students' translanguaging. Therefore, their classrooms can also be regarded as translanguaging spaces where the dynamics of language use illuminate the conflicts, negotiation processes and creativity that participants engage with through interaction with students, colleagues, global discourses and their own transnational experience.

One of the main findings around the teaching practice of the participants has to do with the way they navigate languaging inside the classroom with students and outside the classroom with their colleagues. Their descriptions regarding this dimension of their lives also provide valuable information to reflect on other aspects of their lives or the dynamics emerging within other domains where their translanguaging is manifested. The following example taken from the interview with Isaac is a very rich account of his translanguaging practices in different domains, including his classroom and professional interactions with colleagues:

Original quote
"[...] uhm ... yes, I mean, nowadays I, I have the fortune of working as a teacher in [school's name], so that requires, like, a very specific kind of English. Like, you're teaching, so you can't use very flamboyant and overly specific words, you need to keep it simple, and I like flamboyant words @@ I like the complexity of the language, so I have to tone it down a bit. And even there, uh, there are contrasts. It's not the same teaching a level-one-student than an upper-advanced or something, uh ... Also, in ... uh ... in 'Física', in Physics we've had some meetings with, uh, a gentleman from ... Sweden, but he's Mexican so, uh, it's interesting. And some of the meetings are carried on in English because his, his co-workers, uh, don't speak Spanish, so we mainly talk in English and that requires, like, a kind of more formal, more specific, more specialized use of the language 'cause we're talking about mathematics and physics, and stuff like that. Uhm, also ... what else could I say? Oh, also with my ... uh ... co-workers there in [school's name], the teachers! I mean, we all have ... I mean I respect their level of English. I mean we all have, like, a standard, and there we speak, like, very colloquial English, curse words and all [AN: slang ...] Yes, slang, and that is, like, the contrast, the facet, all the different facets that I use. Uhm, let see what else ... uhm ... also with my brother, he hasn't had the chance to go abroad, but, uhm, he's sti- ... he's also very fluent in English, and we speak kind of playfully in English just to annoy everyone else because they can't understand us, stuff like that, yes."

This quote has been chosen with the purpose of illustrating the complexity of the languaging practices and dynamics that characterize the worlds of bilinguals. Isaac starts off by stating his positive feelings towards working as an English teacher, and he

describes the way he approaches his teaching practice. As an instructor, Isaac believes in accommodating his vocabulary in order to simplify his student's experience in the classroom. This teaching belief collides with his personal preferences around language, as he highlights the fact that he enjoys "flamboyant words" and "the complexity of language". Therefore, he has to navigate a situation that could be regarded as a conflict between his professional use of language and his personal languaging outside the classroom, which has been previously described as highly creative (see section 5.6.2). Interestingly, Isaac's language awareness and sensitivity lead him to perceive the nuances in teaching different levels. In this sense, his clarification about interaction with lower and upper-level students implies the possibility that he is able to accommodate to various teaching levels. Therefore, fulfilling his preference for complex language use in advanced lessons, and also showing his flexibility around languaging.

Additionally, Isaac is also conscious that within different domains there are given expectations for specific language use and performance. This is manifested in his description of how he navigates language use in academic settings within an international community formed by a fellow Mexican scientist and other non-Spanish-speaking colleagues. Isaac shows awareness of particular features of academic language as he lists adjectives such as: "formal", "specific" and "specialized". This then contrasts with another side of his teaching world where languaging among his teaching colleagues is flexible and somehow opposes his 'simplified' interactions with his students. Isaac first acknowledges his colleagues' language command by saying "I respect their level of English", this statement is then followed by what could be regarded as an explanation as to why he respects his colleagues' language level. First of all, Isaac highlights the fact that standard English is the common variety among teachers. Then he explains that they also use colloquial English and he particularly refers to the use of "curse words" and "slang" as the most salient ones. This flexibility in the use of language within the teacher-circle is yet another indicator of the dynamics manifested in Isaac's ordinary performance and it reinforces his belief about modifying and toning down his language when he is in the classroom. Finally, Isaac ends his description by sharing more about his everyday languaging practices inside the family domain, where he and his brother "speak kind of playfully in English". The fact that he qualifies their languaging as 'playful' evokes a sense of flexibility and creativity characteristic of their performance. This is consistent with Isaac's previous descriptions and examples about his languaging practices, which were described, in his own words,

in section 5.6.2 as a "code". In this case, Isaac explains how he and his brother use English to "annoy everyone else because they can't understand". Therefore, their languaging allows them to engage in a form of communication that has an intention and a particular meaning for them both, just as happens with the "code" Isaac uses with his girlfriend.

Isaac's narrative above can be regarded as a collage that integrates his professional and personal experiences and beliefs about language use. Although the narrative seems to have a sense of tension linked to Isaac's languaging, his decisions and performance appear to co-exist with lingering traditional monolingual ideologies across domains. This constant negotiation of embedded ideologies and his heterogeneous languaging practices emerged at various points throughout our conversation. In inquiring further about Isaac's approach to teaching, he provided me with more details on his beliefs. In the quote below Isaac provides an account of the core principles he follows in his teaching practice:

Original quote
"I mean, over there in [school's name] of course it's a franchise, so they have their rules, their method that you need to uphold, but there are many, many liberties while teaching. Uhm ... there, and in other places that I have tried teaching ... uh, on. I, I believe, and that's because I learned it ... I learned it that way ... that, uh, there's no need for Spanish. Maybe in introductory courses, like, vocabulary for example: "this means this", "this means that" ... but limiting the use of Spanish because if you keep using Spanish, if you keep telling the students to ... resort to that, resort to what they know, then, I think they will always have that little bug in the back of their mind, like: "Oh, what's the translation for this?" When it's not always the case. Like, for example, like, right now, I'm not thinking of Spanish, I'm just thinking in English as a language, so ... I believe that ... uh, the best way to learn the language and what I try to implement in my classes is zero Spanish, none whatsoever, none at all. And, of course, the methodo-, the methodology that I use to kind of like lever this lack of Spanish with, uh, kind of like complete unknowing of the language is showing them examples and having a lot of visuals, like: "Oh, here's a picture of a house", "here's a picture of a door", whatever. Like, showing, not telling because it's not really like ... teaching a language is not really like teaching mathematics or physics. It's very, very different, and I try to keep that in mind when teaching".

In this narrative Isaac provides further details about his workplace and his teaching beliefs based on the schools' policy and his own experience as a language learner. Although Isaac claims he has "many liberties while teaching", he also points out to the fact that the school where he works at belongs to a franchise, therefore the way it operates is already pre-established, particularly when it comes to their English-only policy. Consequently, this implies that as a teacher he must follow the given guidelines. In addition to following the rules of the school, Isaac also explains that one of his core teaching beliefs is rooted in his previous experience as a learner, which leads him to conclude that "there is no need for Spanish", hence his policy "zero Spanish" in

the classroom in alignment with the school's policy. He supports his belief by saying that in relying on Spanish or on "what students already know" there is a risk of having a "little bug" leading to always look for a translation. Interestingly, after describing his teaching strategies, which are based on using visual aids and giving examples, Isaac claims that teaching a language is not like teaching subjects such as math or physics. This reflection becomes significant in that Isaac recognizes the level of complexity in teaching a foreign language. What makes his reflection remarkable within the context of the narrative presented is the fact that Isaac seems to distance his teaching from his own flexible practices outside the teaching domain. In fact, it seems quite contradictory that he disregards his own experience to a great extent in favor of adopting a rigid monolingual approach to teaching. As I analyze this portion of the interview with Isaac, I wonder the level of influence that the school policies, his own learning experience and even him knowing a little about my background in ELT have in the way he portrays himself as a teacher with a strong monolingual approach that suppresses the use of students' mother tongue in the classroom.

It is relevant to highlight here the fact that Nely, who works in the same school as Isaac also pointed at the rigorous policy around avoiding the use of Spanish in the classroom. When I asked Nely how she approached her teaching and if she used any Spanish in class, she told me: "*Pues lo que siempre nos dicen es que motivemos a los alumnos a que usen puro inglés [...] y si no, pues decirles frases de: "¿Cómo se dice [insertar palabra]?" y, y, que sólo diga el objeto en español o ... pero sí, se busca, así como que, motivarlos para que usen el inglés que ellos saben.*" (Well, they always tell us to motivate students to use only English [...] or to use phrases like: 'How do you say [insert word]?' and then they say the object in Spanish or ... the idea is to motivate them to use the English they do know). When considering both participant's description, it becomes clear that there is a strong influence of the school's policy in the way they approach their teaching. However, contrary to Isaac's "zero Spanish" policy, Nely has a slightly more flexible opinion. Although she follows the school's rules, Nely also believes in having some balance in order to motivate students. In fact, she states: "[…] *en mí opinión si debería haber cierto control y cierto balance.*" (in my opinion there should be some control and some balance).

On the more flexible end of the spectrum there is the teaching approach that Paco follows. In our conversation, he explained how during his professional practice teaching adult students he moved from teaching only in English to incorporating Spanish in his

lessons. In fact, he recognizes that his training as an English teacher had instructed him to use English only: "*La maestra M siempre me ha dicho: Es que tienes que hablarles siempre en inglés"* (Teacher M has always told me: Always teach them in English). Given his experience in the classroom, Paco decided to "switch" between English and Spanish during class despite going against his training principles. The rigidness of the ELT training that Paco and many teachers in Mexico receive was clearly manifested as he said: "*Al inicio dije: "Ay Dios mío, me va a regañar la maestra M si se entera", pero cómo me dio resultados [...]"* (At the beginning I said: "Oh my God, teacher M would scold me if she finds out, but since it worked …"). In defying this strict and almost dogmatic belief about teaching English through English only, Paco reached the conclusion that it was beneficial to provide students with "a base of English-Spanish", so that: "[…] *para que cuando lleguen a ese nivel de hablar sólo inglés puedan enfrentarlo de una manera en la que usen lo que saben y aprendan lo que les falta, en este caso, vocabulario y más confianza ... así es de que me siento satisfecho con eso, culpable pero satisfecho"* (when they get to the level of speaking only English they can face it by using what they know and they can learn what they need, in this case, vocabulary and gaining confidence … in that sense I feel satisfied with my choice, guilty, but satisfied).

The narratives that have just been discussed provide evidence of the tensions that bilinguals have to navigate particularly when they engage in professional domains where policies and expectations are highly prescriptive. The decision to present three narratives in the sequence above has the intention of illustrating the various degrees of translanguaging that the participants promote in their teaching practice. Although the accounts are highly descriptive and informative, they raise the question of the extent to which the influence that my professional identity had in the way participants expressed their answers given the heterogenous languaging practices they perform in other domains. The way they portray themselves might be regarded in terms of a *rhetorical function* to construct their professional identity (García, 2009a). This observation is based on the interactions and descriptions provided by Nely and Paco. In the case of Nely, her neutral final statement about *control and balance* or Paco's reference to *guilt* in disobeying a trainer's advice might be taken as indicators of participants' intention to save face by not 'completely' or 'freely' adhering to the idea of using translanguaging in their classrooms. The questions about their languaging practices in the teaching domain did not intend to elicit right or wrong answers, but they rather aimed at

exploring this aspect of participants' life and languaging. The accounts provided allow us to see a prevalence of monolingual ideologies inside ELT classrooms in the research site, which could be taken as an indication of the broader teaching context across Mexico.

The strong influence of purist and prescriptive ideas about language use particularly inside classrooms continues to perpetuate stereotypes that more often than not influence students' confidence and performance both in and outside the classroom[36]. In this regard, Li Wei notes that "[u]nfortunately, although switching and mixing of languages occurs in practically all bilingual communities and all bilingual speakers' speech, it is stigmatised as an illegitimate mode of communication, even sometimes by the bilingual speakers themselves" (p.18). The pressure that comes with this stigma might be another factor influencing the teachings beliefs and practices that participants described previously. However, there also seems to be a degree of resistance manifested in certain languaging practices reported by them. For instance, Carlos confidently described the high level of English command that his students in a private school have by stating: "[…] *en su mayoría yo diría que más del 90% de los estudiantes, este, interactúan con uno en inglés*." (the majority, I'd say more than 90% of the students interact with me in English). In a similar fashion Moni explained what the situation is like in the public school where she teaches: "*In my classes I try to speak, uh, English ...probably, like ... 80% of my classes are in English. I can say, like, a higher percentage because I give the beginners course, so sometimes it's really hard to only speak English with them*. The fact that Spanish is present at least to a minimum degree in these participants' classrooms is a refreshing indication of languaging flexibility.

In addition to the teaching situations reported above by Carlos and Moni, it is

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[36] Throughout the course of revision of this section reference was made to the fact that the use of 'the target language' in the classroom could be motivated by factors other than monolingual ideologies, as in the case of the notion of *learner autonomy* or *learner agency* (Little, 1999; Van Lier, 2010). While these concepts find justification on constructivist learning theories, which share some principles with translanguaging, I would argue that the meaning of 'target language use' would have to be contextualized particularly when applied to certain EFL/ESL teaching-learning contexts where one would have to delineate the meaning and implications of the notion of language appropriateness (which in most cases means standard/prestigious/written language). In fact, Little (2007) claims that "key to successful implementation of the principle of target language use lies in the effective use of group and the appropriate use of writing" (p.25). However, from the perspective of translanguaging other forms of literacy are also seen as 'appropriate' and meaningful, thus, they are encouraged as part of emergent bilinguals' repertoires and skills leading to the development of skills in other 'languages' or elements adding to their repertoire. Additionally, one would have to look at the actions that accompany the notion of appropriateness attached to learner autonomy. For example, is the figure/model of a 'native teacher' promoting this so-called autonomy? If so, what are the implicit values attributed to the use of students 'mother tongue' and 'target language' in that particular context? While these and other questions emerge, the concept of autonomy and agency offers yet another window to the exploration of ways in which emergent bilinguals and translanguagers can celebrate their bilingualism in order to exercise their sense of agency and identities. Therefore, this line of thought is left open to be explored in future work.

important to look at the moments where language attitudes and perceptions emerge in what would be considered an average English classroom in Zacatecas. The following excerpt provides an example of this and it comes from the interview with Renata. The narrative illustrates a remarkable translanguaging moment during our conversation that provides an insight into the tensions and the reality that Renata and her students navigate constantly:

Original quote
"Yeah, 'cause sometimes you feel, like, very subconscious ... 'cause I have some of them that don't wanna talk: "No miss, es que hablo muy feo" (No miss, I speak really badly) o "es que no me va a entender"(You won't understand me). And I'm like: "I'm just correcting, like, your ... Not, like, your accent, just, like, that you're speaking clearly, that you know how to communicate and that's all that matters". When you go to another country they're gonna understand you, and usually people don't mock others for their accents 'cause you know that they're from another country, like, if a Chinese person comes and they start talking to you in Spanish, you know that they're gonna speak differently, but it's 'cause they're from another place, it doesn't mean that they don't know or that they're dumb or anything".

This narrative, which is in itself a translanguaging moment, is creatively used by Renata to illustrate the kind of interactions she has with her students. This particular example allows us to see the preoccupations that Renata's students have around their accent and their performance in English. The statements impersonated by Renata accurately show what Li Wei referred to as the stigma that many bilinguals have about themselves, which is in most cases clearly motivated by the negative experiences and perceptions that the so called 'native-speaker' ideal promotes and perpetuates. In this translanguaging moment Renata uses Spanish to quote her students and English to quote herself in her role of the teacher and also to describe the situation in the language she chose for the interview exchange. It is also deeply interesting to consider the message that Renata sends to her students in the way she reacts to their beliefs about their language use. Without explicitly stating her teaching principles Renata distances herself from the image of the English teacher as a model of 'correct language' and 'native-like-accent'. She positions herself as a teacher who promotes effective communication rather than correctness in structural terms. Moreover, she aims at fostering confidence in her students by reassuring them of the sympathy that people abroad would tend to have towards those aiming to communicate in a foreign language. She even tries to personalize the situation by including students in an example of the sympathetic attitudes that they themselves would have when encountering a hypothetical Chinese person speaking Spanish. Renata finishes her example by highlighting the fact that

speaking a foreign language with an accent does not imply a lower level of intelligence or worthiness, therefore encouraging students to embrace their accent.

Renata's transnational background and her professionalization as a teacher give her words a particular type of strength. Even if her students are not aware of her background or her story, her confidence and her coherence are palpable in the way she encourages them. Throughout the interview, Renata made numerous references to the importance of embracing one's bilingualism, accent and personal ways of speaking. For instance, she reflected on episodes of her everyday life in Mexico or in the U.S. when her accent was the center of attention. Her reflections about those situations and the interactions with people eventually led her to reach a point that she describes as follows: "[…] *it doesn't bother me as much, it used to bother me a lot, but then it's, like, what I tell my students, like: "It doesn't matter if you have an accent when you speak another language [...] you can practice and you can still talk very clearly and very nicely, but it doesn't make you, like, less, it doesn't make your knowledge, like, questionable or anything.*" Renata's approach to teaching clearly based on her life experiences is a refreshing finding for this study, as it draws important lines for reflection on the way bilingual teachers could encourage learners and emergent bilinguals along the language learning journey.

5.7 Languaging and discrimination

The richness of the data that emerged from the interviews not only provided evidence of the translanguaging and creative moments in the discourse of the participants. Their accounts often included episodes where their languaging practices were reported to be pointed at negatively in myriad circumstances, domains and contexts. Considering the relevance of the accounts revolving around this struggle, this section presents some of the most salient narratives around the theme of 'languaging and discrimination'. The discussion of this theme becomes imperative because it illuminates aspects that many times are only interpreted through the lens of migration theory, for instance when addressing language shift in favor of assimilation into a 'migrant-receiving society'. In considering the transnational trajectories of the participants the scope broadens and the data shows evidence of how ethnic and linguistic discrimination are manifested across borders and domains when translanguaging is present. Moreover, the data in this study also shows how through the

act of translanguaging participants resist the spell of purism and prescriptivism to celebrate their bilingualism in their very own ways.

The relationship between language and identity has been widely discussed by scholars as the connection between these two elements is central to how people portray themselves or how others perceive them (Bucholtz & Hall, 2004, 2010; De Fina, Schiffrin, & Bamberg, 2006; Edwards, 2009; Norton, 2010). Gloria Anzaldúa's work revolved around this fact: "Ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity—I am my language" (p.81). Consequently, when discourse practices contest prescriptive norms and standard language use, they become an issue leading to discrimination in many cases, as they might be perceived in terms of their 'failure' to endorse a particular type of identity. In this regard, Li Wei (2007b) explains the conflict that some speakers face around their languaging as "[s]ome bilinguals may find themselves in a socially disadvantaged position and would prefer to conceal their true bilingual identity; others may have a particular view of what constitutes bilingualism and would not self-identify as bilinguals" (p.5-7). This situation proved to be highly significant for the participants in this study as we shall see in the narratives in this section.

During my conversation with the participants there were no questions explicitly using the terms 'discrimination' or 'racism' (see appendix 4 for interview-questions' guidelines). However, when asked about the disadvantages of being bilingual or if they had faced any problems for being bilingual, at least 18 (78%) out of the 23 participants made refence to having faced some kind of linguistic or racial discrimination against them or people they knew both in the U.S. and in Mexico. Also, many of the anecdotes or episodes that the participants described included situations that clearly qualify as acts of discrimination, particularly in domains such as: school, family and casual encounters in public places (this last one significantly more common in the U.S.).

Experiencing transnational mobility is a very complex situation as one must constantly adjust to different cultural frameworks, language(s), schooling systems, etc. Navigating from one framework to another implies an unavoidable clash of realities that can be hard to process given the degree of instability intrinsic to the nature of transnationalism and to other personal factors of the individual experiencing this type of mobility. As young children or teenagers the transnational participants of this study had to navigate and adjust to life in at least two places. In fact, most of them continue to live their lives suspended on transnational links. This reality forced them to experience and observe various kinds of situations that soon confirmed and marked their transnational

journeys. For the majority of the participants in this study, school has been one of the most significant domains framing their transnational journey. School in many cases has been a central aspect dictating their permanence or return in/to a place, it has shaped many of their beliefs and future dreams, but it has also been a place where discrimination has been a recurrent practice. According to E. Hamann and Victor Zúñiga (2011) "everyday school practice is associated with the construction of national identity" (p.143). Therefore, it can be said that the dynamics of school are rooted in and aim at promoting the values of a given society and the governing State. Consequently, what happens inside school can be regarded as a micro universe of what happens in other domains of a society. The descriptions provided by the participants in this study illustrate this clearly.

As documented in previous studies (B. Arias, 2007; Gandara & Orfield, 2010; Mendoza-Denton, 2008), one of the most shocking practices in U.S. schools is the systematic segregation of non-white or non-English-speaking students not only inside classrooms, but in other school activities and common spaces. According to the conversations I had with participants, this was a common practice that came as a surprise for them. For instance, upon his arrival to the U.S. to study high school, Carlos noted that the U.S. system was 'very efficient' at classifying students. He explained to me how he was tested to place him in the appropriate English level class. However, he had a conflicting opinion as he expressed that: "*Está bien y está mal porque de alguna manera u otra los categorizan. Los categorizan tanto a nivel de estudios, pero los categorizan también de: "Ah eres raza de tal" ¿sí?*" (It's good and bad because in a way they categorize them [students]. They categorize them academically, but also in terms of: "Oh, you're this race". You know?"). For Carlos the idea of being in an English classroom with students who shared the 'same level' of knowledge or language proficiency seems to represent a positive situation, as it contrasts with the mixed-level English classrooms commonly found in Mexico. Nonetheless, Carlos soon realized that other aspects such as race or migration status also played a significant role in the way students were classified; after all, as he described later in the interview his English class was mostly integrated by "*no: sólo de gente, de latinos, sino que también de otros países que también estaban aprendiendo inglés [AN: ¿otros inmigrantes?], sí [...]*" (not only people, Latinos I mean, people from other countries who were also learning English [AN: other immigrants?], yes).

Another participant who perceived the atmosphere of segregation was Elzi. Just

like Carlos, Elzi was placed in an ESL classroom at the school she attended upon her arrival. According to our conversation, the ESL classroom was mainly composed of 'international students' from multiple countries across continents. In the following narrative she describes the school context she experienced in the U.S. This extract is a remarkable example as she provides a detailed account of how language and ethnicity played a central role in the dynamics of discrimination and targeted violence:

Original quote	English translation
Y algo con lo que batallé más, pues en cuanto a eso, pues, lo del idioma y también en la escuela había un poco de racismo. Entonces era difícil lidiar con eso porque … uhm … a pesar de que el subdirector, no era mexicano, pero si tenía raíces mexicanas y también era bueno porque te ayudaba un poco y te entendía un poco más; pero si había mucho racismo en esa escuela. También había esto de que se separaban por … pues si, por tipo cholos o algo así, entonces era los que son americanos tienen su grupo como de cholos o de vandalismo y eso, y los latinos … y	And something that I struggled a lot with was, yes, language, but also in school there was a bit of racism. So, it was hard to deal with that because … uhm … even though the school director was, not Mexican, but he was of Mexican origin, and that was good because he would help and understand you a bit more; but there was a lot of racism in that school. Also, there was this thing where students would separate themselves by … like, cholos or something like that, so it was like the Americans had their group similar to cholos or vandals and stuff, and the latinos … and
AN: ¿Cómo pandillas?	AN: Like, gangs?
Ajá, y aunque no pertenecieras como a esa pandilla ya los demás te veían feo y así y es como: "¡Ah mira la mexicana! o la …" Entonces sí te identifican y en cuanto a también al acento, a la forma de hablar … pues yo ya lo aprendí más grande, no tan … no como si fuera pequeña y al adquirir el acento como el de ellos. Entonces, sí, el que se burlaban un poco de tu acento, el pues, sí, la apariencia física, tus rasgos mexicanos que es como … te hacen, te hacen a un lado. Y sí, había también pues peleas, había muchas peleas en la escuela @. Y pues creo que eso, era difícil también … sí.	Uh-huh, and even if you didn't belong to a certain gang the others would still look down on you, like: "Oh look! the Mexican or the …" So, they would identify you and also because of your accent, the way you spoke … I mean, I learned it [English] when I was older, not so young to get an accent like theirs. So yeah, they made fun of one's accent, and also your looks, like your Mexican features, that's how they put you aside. And yeah, there were also fights, lots of fights at school @. And I think that's, that was hard too … yeah.

This complex and emotive account by Elzi portrays the ordinary tensions and violence present at the school she attended in the U.S. The tone and structure of the narrative somehow reflect the anxiety and sense of vulnerability that Elzi most likely felt during this time. The narrative in its original version in Spanish is hard to read because the sentences overlap with each other, as if Elzi was trying to say everything at the same time, yet, sometimes she seems to struggle to find words. Her description incorporates language as one of the central elements connecting with threads of racism and violence. From the beginning Elzi signals language (learning English) and racism as the main aspects she struggled with at school. For her it was even more difficult because

there was not a clear support from the authorities. On the one hand she recognizes how having a Mexican-origin director provided certain advantages as he seemed to be sympathetic towards Latino students, but on the other hand she was able to perceive the latent racism at school. This confirms that an anti-Latino sentiment was deeply rooted in the environment despite being a clearly diverse community that included even the school director. Elzi explains how the dynamics of segregation revolved mainly around the formation of 'gang-like-groups' where students from specific ethnic backgrounds would join together against one another. Placing herself as an outsider in the sense of not being part of any 'gang', Elzi describes how students, herself included, were racially or ethnically profiled by other students in using terms such as "la mexicana" (the Mexican) mostly based on their physical features. Elzi also recalls the role that language played in this profiling process, as she refers to "accent" and "the way you spoke" as the main reasons for being made fun of. Elzi was particularly affected by this as she explains how due to her learning English at an older age, she struggled to have a 'native-like accent' that as she implies would have prevented her from being discriminated against in this school.

The U.S. school practices and dynamics described so far are clearly the result of decades of a systematic harassment towards non-English speakers in the U.S. As we saw in chapter 2, multiple attempts from various U.S. government bodies have been made to end bilingual education and to promote an English-only-policy not only in schools, but in all social domains. This approach and its consequences in the form of systematic micro-aggressions towards non-white and bilingual individuals and communities in the U.S. have been described by Anzaldúa (2012) as *linguistic terrorism* (see section 2.2.4). Unfortunately, this type of discrimination is not unique to the U.S. context. Language purism, monolingual ideas, racism and classism are also found across multiple social domains in Mexico, including school, and this was also widely reported by participants. As the interview continued with Elzi, she told me how hard it was for her to return to Mexico. She was worried that she would not be able to practice her English after the huge effort and struggle she went through to learn it. She would also miss: "[…] *el convivir con otras culturas ... ya sólo con mexicanos […] y en cuanto a no recibir racismo, pues, eso también, pero igual, sí ... por una u otra cosa te discriminan igual aquí en tu país. Entonces en cuanto a eso, era igual.*" (being around people from different cultures … it would only be Mexicans now […] and about not

being a target for racism, well, that too, but it's the same … people discriminate against you in your own country for different reasons. So, regarding that, it was the same).

The experience of transnationalism is one of rupture. Not only is one metaphorically split between places or people in multiple geographical locations; but many dimensions of one as an individual and as a member of a community break and are reconfigured in order to survive as a transnational. Crossing borders could be regarded as an act of violence if we consider Bartra's (1987) conception of the nation as "the most trodden and yet impenetrable of all territories in modern society", in fact, Bartra characterizes borders as scars of its "founding violence" (p.15). In line with this, Anzaldúa's (2012) metaphor of the border as "an open wound" (p.25) prompts reflection to conceive the transnational individual or community as an extension of that wound, therefore cracked, bleeding and constantly re-constructed.

Reconfiguration and adjustment within the process of mobility also impact language. A journey marked by mobility and contact with multiple locations, people and domains leads to the emergence of new forms of communication and languaging. In her work, Anzaldúa spoke about Chicanos and their ability to *create* a language that could express all they were. In fact, she identified eight languages spoken by Chicanos: 1) Standard English, 2) Working class and slang English, 3) Standard Spanish, 4) Standard Mexican Spanish, 5) North Mexican Spanish dialect, 6) Chicano Spanish (Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California have regional variations), 7) Tex-Mex and 8) Pachuco (called *caló*) (Anzaldúa, 2012, p. 77). The ability to communicate in some of these *created* and *creative* languages was mentioned by Sasha during our conversation. Sasha did not refer to herself as a Chicana, but she made it very clear during the interview and in her writing composition that she grew up learning cultural aspects of Mexico and the U.S., therefore she feels comfortable *"to talk about them with facility"*. Among the various topics we discussed, Sasha told me that growing up in the U.S. she lived surrounded by Latinos, Mexican-Americans and African-Americans and because of this, she said: "[…] *de repente entiendo las palabras que son, bueno, los ...* [AN: ¿El 'slang'?] *... Ajá, el 'slang' y luego también entiendo lo que [...] lo que es el Spanglish, ciertas palabras, y también entiendo el inglés y también entiendo lo que son palabras del español mexicano ..."* (from time to time I understand, well, … [AN: 'slang'?] … Yes, 'slang', but I also understand Spanglish, some words, and also English and also words in Mexican Spanish). In line with Anzaldúa's description, Sasha seems deeply aware of the impact that her experience of transnationalism has had particularly

in terms of her linguistic repertoire, which offers clear evidence of the emergence of her translanguaging.

When Sasha's complex and unique discursive repertoire is seen with the lens of translanguaging, it becomes extremely valuable and worthy of celebration. However, this was not always the case. Upon return to Mexico, Sasha was enrolled in school where her creative languaging became a problem and the daunting violence of having crossed borders was manifested in unexpected ways for her:

Original quote	English translation
"¡Oh! Cuando llegué, cuando llegué aquí a México, este, yo nunca había sufrido discriminación. Incluso ni en Tijuana cuando estuve, ni en Estados Unidos cuando llegué sabiendo nada de ... de inglés. Nunca sufrí discriminación hasta que llegué aquí. Este, mis profesores, ehm, me trataban diferente, me trataban como si yo no entendiera el idioma: Me hablaban como si ... sí, o sea, me hablaban muy lento, me explicaban las cosas, incluso cuando había como tareas de lectura me decía: "Si quiere Usted no lea tanto". Y yo decía: "¿Por qué? O sea, sí sé leer. Sí comprendo, comprendo la lectura en inglés, la comprendo en español, la comprendo. Igual la comprendo en ambos sentidos y sé lo que estoy leyendo y lo estoy entendiendo y puedo hacer una reflexión sobre ello". No sé porque me tratarían así. Mis compañeros también cuando llego aquí a México me tratan distinto, no me juntan, este, me hacían carrilla porque decían que yo me creía mucho porque yo sabía inglés. Cuando pues, yo no hablaba con nadie porque nadie se acercaba a mi por ese, por ese hecho, de que: "Ay, viene de Estados Unidos no le hablen". No sé si se podría llamar envidia, no sé si se podría llamar carrilla, bullying, lo que fuera, pero nunca había sufrido discriminación. Ni nunca había sentido que hablar inglés fuera un obstáculo hasta, hasta que llegué. Incluso hubo un tiempo en el que yo decía, a mi me daba vergüenza que mi mamá dijera que yo sabía inglés, yo, así como que: "Cállate mamá, no le digas a la gente". Sí, porque al momento de que la gente sabe que sabes hablar inglés, como que cambia la perspectiva que tienen de ti, entonces ... sí. Incluso también en la secundaria, en la secundaria también hubo ... me hacían como ciertos come- ... o sea, en la secundaria, en la prepa, en la prepa ya fue menos porque ya, ya me valía ... pero sí, todavía en la secundaria me llegaban a hacer comentarios. Incluso los profesores: "A ver aquí que su compañera nos explique, ella que sabe", pero no era así como que un, una intención de ayudar, sino era una intención como de ... [AN: Señalarte ...] Ajá ... de señalar, de sí ... hasta ese punto fue	Oh! When I arrived, when I got here to Mexico, uhm, I had never felt discriminated against. Even in Tijuana when I was there or in the U.S. when I got there not knowing a word of ... English. I never felt discriminated against until I got here. Uhm, my teachers, uhm, they treated me differently, they treated me as if I didn't understand the language: They treated me like, like, I mean, they spoke very slowly, they would explain things, even when there was was reading for homework they would tell me: "It's OK if you don't read much". And I would think: "Why? I mean, I know how to read. I do understand, I understand the reading in English, I can read in Spanish, I understand. I can even read back and forward, and I know what I'm reading and I'm processing it, and I can reflect on it". I don't know why they would treat me like that. Also, when I came to Mexico my classmates would treat me differently, they didn't include me, uhm, they would pick on me because for them I was a snob because I spoke English. When, well, I didn't talk to anyone because no one would approach me because of that idea that: "Oh, she comes from the U.S. don't speak with her". I don't know if we could call it envy, or mockery or bullying, whatever, I had never felt discriminated against. Neither had I felt that speaking English was an obstacle, until I got here. There even was a time where I would feel embarrassed of my mom showing off that I knew English, I would tell her: "Be quiet mom, don't tell people". Yeah, because the moment people know you speak English, they change their perception about you, so ... yeah. Even in junior high school there was ... they would make certain commen- ... I mean, in junior high school and then in high school it was a bit less because I didn't care, but yeah, in that period even teachers would say things like: "Let's have your classmate here explain since she 'knows'", but it wasn't like, they didn't mean it in a helpful way, it was with the intention of ... [AN: putting you on the spot ...] yeah, putting me on the spot, yeah ... It was in that moment when I started to feel like speaking English wasn't cool, but then I

dónde yo empecé a sentir que hablar inglés no era tan padre, pero no luego ya superé ese, como ese miedo, y ya digo: "Bueno ya".	got over that, like, fear, and now I'm like: "Whatever".

Sasha's narrative is a very significant account as it provides details of her transnational journey and also about some aspects of her translanguaging and bilingualism. She is very emphatic when she says she "had never experienced discrimination". In fact, she repeats this phrase three times in her description. In this narrative once again, the school domain becomes the scenario where macro discourses of national identity linked to language are at the center of the violence experienced by those who do not meet the expectations. Sasha's creativeness and competence in multiple languages (in Anzaldúa's terms) is not only overlooked, but it is publicly and unceasingly punished. Additionally, other complex aspects and skills of her translanguaging are also disregarded in the school context, when she is advised "not to read much". The teacher's advice is in itself contrary to what would be expected from an educator. This is particularly relevant if we consider the level of reflection and detail that Sasha is able to express in how she experiences the reading process in 'individual languages', but also as she reads back and forward in two languages, which constitutes an example of translanguaging. In essence, given the multiple situations described in the narrative, Sasha evidently experienced linguistic terrorism, a situation that eventually leads her to want to hide her bilingualism, thus silencing her voices in the languages she speaks. Fortunately, and perhaps as a result of what I have called earlier the 're-constructing ability' of transnationals, she was able to overcome the "fear" and embrace her bilingualism. In fact, as described in section 5.5 this situation was put forward as she started her interview by saying *"[…] pues me siento cómoda con los dos* [idiomas]" (I feel comfortable in both [languages]).

In addition to the descriptions about linguistic and ethnic discrimination in school, there were also accounts of linguistic terrorism within the family domain. Being restrained and attacked within this context is perhaps one of the most significant findings around this theme because members of the same family would normally be well aware of the migration journeys of those around them. This sense of disappointment was expressed by some of the participants, who were surprised to see the reactions of some family members towards their languaging or their transnational journey. For instance, Javier told me how there is a running comment in his family questioning the fact that "being bilingual he is working as a chief waiter on the

weekends". This comment bothers him because for Javier being bilingual and earning all he has is directly related to the years of effort and hard work in both Mexico and the U.S. Another example comes from Nely, who on the one hand, has a very flexible languaging with her nuclear family to the point that she reported that Spanglish and "inventing words" is a common practice in their communication process. However, on the other hand, she explains that despite the flexibility displayed with her nuclear family, other members have attacked the way she and her sisters speak. For instance, Nely distinctly remembered the following comment from one of her aunts: "[…] *nosotros a mis papás, a mi mamá siempre le hemos dicho mamá, pero a mi papá le decimos 'daddy', o sea, como 'papi' en inglés ... y mi tía una vez si nos dijo: "Están en México, díganle, papá [...]".* (my sisters and I call my parents, we have always called my mom 'mamá', but we call my dad 'daddy', like, 'papi' in English … and my aunt once told us: "You're in Mexico, call him papá").

In other cases, an effort to constrain bilingualism has been regarded by families as an act of protection or good manners. Regina, for example, described her parents expressing how "[…] *les preocupaba mucho la discriminación que íbamos a sufrir en las escuelas por ser hijos de mexicanos [...]"* (they were worried about the discrimination we could face in school for being born to Mexican parents). In the case of Renata, she reported: "*my parents had a rule that: "When you're with a person that only speaks Spanish, you only speak Spanish", like: "Never talk in a language that other people don't understand in front of them because it's really rude".* These and other episodes described by participants illuminate the struggle that transnationals go through even in intimate situations with family, reminding us of the power of what Anzaldúa (2012) called the *tradition of silence*: "[e]ven our own people, other Spanish speakers *nos quieren poner candados en la boca [they want us to lock up our mouth]*"(p.76).

Considering the previously mentioned premise that the school is a micro-universe of what happens in other areas of society and given the findings about linguistic discrimination in the family domain, it came as no surprise that the participants reported episodes of "linguistic terrorism" (see section 2.2.4) when interacting in other everyday places and situations. For instance, Adriana referred to moments where people have asked her if *"she feels more than them"* for speaking or using certain words in English. A similar situation has manifested when Moni has been made fun of because she pronounces American brands such as: *Walmart, Disney or Gatorade* as she would say them in English with an American accent. Isaac and Carlos

referred to the comments some friends have made as jokes. In fact, Isaac was very emphatic to say he thought those comments were not made with the intention to offend him. However, behind the jokes made there is still a sense of transgression that almost touches the limits of an insult: *"Oh, here comes the Doctor in English"* or a more direct: *"Quit talking German"*; and in the case of Carlos, referring to him as "Fresa" (Mexican slang meaning snob or posh) when he speaks English. Although these comments can be indeed regarded as insignificant elements in the ocean of playful interactions that youths have, they acquire further significance if we consider the experience of Maggie, who while sitting at a restaurant with her cousins in the U.S. witnessed how two men went in wearing jackets that read: *"Speak English, if not leave"*. The importance of looking at these apparent 'playful' comments in a more serious manner originates in the fact that normalizing these ideas, words or behavior we contribute to the reinforcement of linguistic and ethnic discrimination even at the core or our most intimate domains.

Fortunately, beyond the struggle caused by experiencing episodes such as the ones described above, most of the participants in this study also reported positive accounts around their bilingualism and languaging practices. For instance, as we talked about the languaging dynamics in the academic context, Regina provided me with this significant reflection and account that seems appropriate to conclude this section:

Original quote	English translation
@@@ *Ahí en la maestría por una situación específica de que tuvimos este semestre conflictos y así, pues como un poco a broma, pero con tensión, así como: "la otra persona está pensando que yo ... o está diciendo que yo hablé el español así o asá" ... Pero por ejemplo también me pasa con ... en mi grupo de amigos de que también nos pasa que nos inventamos palabras, ahí si lo tomamos uhm ... como con risa e incluso ... e incluso creo que a veces lo celebramos ... eh ... Tengo un amigo que egresó conmigo de la licenciatura y con él de verdad como que celebramos cada vez que nos pasa algo así porque decimos: "digo, es que eso significa ... que estamos consolidando otras cosas a nivel mental tal vez, eh, de nuestras lenguas". Por ejemplo, él habla francés, italiano, un poco de alemán e inglés y español ... entonces la verdad es que cuando dice una palabra medio inventada o trae una frase completamente traducida palabra por palabra de otra lengua nos da risa y celebramos, pero sólo me pasa con quienes somos ... hablamos varias lenguas ...*	@@@ There was a particular situation during the master's this term that led us to have some conflicts, so there were jokes but also tension, things like: "this person is thinking that I … or s/he is talking about how I spoke Spanish in this way or the other" … But at the same time, it also happens with my group of friends that we make up words, and there we take it uhm … as a joke, even … I would say we even celebrate it … uh … I have a friend that graduated with me from University and we really celebrate every time something like that happens because we say: "It means … we're consolidating stuff about our languages at a mental level maybe … uh". For example, he speaks French, Italian, a bit of German, English and Spanish … so, really, when he comes up with a kind of made up word or when he brings up a phrase in a different language that is translated literally word by word we laugh and celebrate, but it only happens around those of us who … speak various languages …

The narrative above captures very relevant aspects of translanguaging moments and other everyday situations. It starts off by acknowledging the common conflict and tensions around language, which in this case are placed in the academic domain but are not limited to it. As we can see from the unfinished examples that Regina gives about such tensions, these normally revolve around miscommunication (*"this person is thinking that I…"*) or a tendency to signal nonstandard language forms produced by bilingual-speakers (*"…that I spoke Spanish in this way or the other…"*). However, Regina's account also provides an insight into the interactions among bilinguals. According to her description, it can be said that bilinguals themselves create translanguaging spaces where they creatively use language and celebrate their languaging. Moreover, Regina unveils the metalinguistic reflections that emerge inside those spaces. She reveals how these highly flexible languaging exchanges lead to a complex cognitive process of making sense of the mental activity linked to their languaging. Although these reflections and actions seem to be restricted to 'safe spaces' where only bilinguals interact, they provide evidence to reinforce Mazak and Herbas-Donoso's (2015) findings of how translanguaging promotes a stronger sense of self in bilingual speakers.

5.8 Identity

The coding process of the data collected for this study provided significant information about the theme of identity in different directions. There were many references made to identity that had to do with aspects such as ethnicity, citizenship, sociocultural remittances or institutional procedures that the participants have undergone in most cases as a result of their transnationalism. As noted in Chapter 1 the notion of sociocultural remittances coming from transnationalism became salient. However, given its sociological nature, it was discussed in a separate article [37]. Therefore, this section focuses on the role that translanguaging plays in participants' identity construction.

5.8.1 Constructing identity through translanguaging

In addition to the foregoing, there was significant evidence pointing at the role of translanguaging in the identity construction of the participants. In considering that

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[37] See Núñez Asomoza (2019).

"[t]ransnational identities are often constructed through the use of these [creative languaging] different resources" (De Fina, 2016, p. 168), this section presents an analysis of the participants' narratives that link their translanguaging and transnationalism with their identity.

Towards the end of my conversation with Maggie she made a significant reflection and revelation about identity that is shown in the interview extract below:

Original quote	English translation
Sí, hay un ... uhm ... un dicho de una película que dice: "We have to be more Mexican than the Mexican and more American than the Americans" ... entonces siempre está como esa presión de que ... de que tienes que hablar allá inglés perfecto y aquí español perfecto y todos los errores eso que, que ... por ejemplo, identificar femenino y masculino, se fija mucho la gente en eso o a lo mejor que estás aquí en México hablando español en- ... hablando inglés y te dicen: "Ah, estás en México, habla español" ... "Ah estás en Estados Unidos, habla inglés" y son como a veces las personas muy cerradas culturalmente y a fuerzas quieren que sea a su manera. Eso no me gusta.	Yeah, there's …uhm … a quote from a movie that says: "We have to be more Mexican than the Mexican and more American than the Americans" … so there's always like this pressure that … you have to speak perfect English over there [in the U.S] and perfect Spanish over here [in Mexico] and all those mistakes, like … for example, identifying feminine and masculine, people pick a lot on that or maybe you're here in Mexico speaking Spanish, I mean English, and they tell you: "Oh you're in Mexico speak Spanish" … "Oh you're in the U.S. speak English" and it feels like people are so closed-minded culturally speaking and they want things their way. I don't like that.

The quote that Maggie brought up in her interview comes from the movie *Selena* released at the end of the 1990s. Selena was a 'Mexican-American' singer from Texas, who was known for singing mostly in Spanish, 'even though' she was born and raised mostly speaking English in the U.S. According to the movie, upon going on tour around Mexico for the first time, her father told her the words quoted by Maggie above in order to make Selena aware of the expectations that people on both sides of the border would have about her language(s) use. After her tragic death, Selena became an icon for all those who identify with her duality and her creative bilingualism as she had the ability to connect the Mexican and the American culture in a very unique way that continues to have an influence even today. In quoting these words from the movie, Maggie seems to portray herself in the image of Selena that is evoked by the movie's quote. Her life as a transnational has allowed Maggie to see and experience people's perceptions and expectations, as we have seen in previous sections containing her narratives. In her description Maggie mentions the pressure she feels around her languaging. The example she provides about people picking up on her use of gender in words is in fact consistent with another example she mentioned at the beginning of the interview when she said: "[…] *confundo mucho 'corras' y 'corres'. El 'a' y el 'e', y eso es algo que me ha estado*

167

pasando y ya llevo ocho años aquí en México y todavía me pasa y no entiendo porque, está bien raro." (I get very confused with 'corras' and 'corres'. The 'a' and the 'e', that's something that has been happening, and I've been in Mexico for eight years and it still happens, and I don't know why, it's weird). For Maggie, this pressure of restricting herself to speaking 'the language of a country' in a given territory or using the 'correct grammatical forms' represents the limitations that people put not only on others, but on themselves by not opening to something that is different or flexible. Moreover, beyond the content of Maggie's narrative, her practices demonstrate that her identity is strongly built on how she uses language. As we can see, Maggie's account mostly performed in Spanish integrates the creative use of a quote in English to express a dimension of her identity and her thoughts on the topic of the interview.

Another remarkable account of the links that unite language, transnationalism and identity comes from my conversation with Jane. As she narrated the adventures of her family in the U.S., she made two noteworthy references to identity. The first one emerged when she quoted her grandmother, who in referring to Mexican migrants told Jane: *"Van allá y se amalditan"* (They go over there and they 'evilize'/become evil). The grandmother's quote is in itself an example of translanguaging, as she creatively uses the word 'amalditan' (or 'amalditarse')[38], which is not common to hear in Mexican Spanish, to mean that migrants become 'evil' or 'bad-mannered' when they go to the U.S. Jane explained that for her grandmother the concept of *amalditarse* has to do with a transformation that migrants undergo when they have contact with the U.S. culture. According to Jane's explanation this transformation happens because migrants *"quieren pertenecer a la comunidad, pero como que olvidan lo que han aprendido acá [en México]"* (want to belong to the community, but they forget what they learned here [in Mexico]). Jane's personal perception is that *"en México somos mucho de … mmm… valores, el honor y todo eso"* (in Mexico we're all about …uhm … values, honor and all of that). In analyzing the grandmother's view through Jane's explanation, when there is a clash of these two systems there is a perceived rupture with the elements that would 'typically' define the Mexican migrant, consequently becoming 'other' in the eyes of their own people. This opposition embedded in the notion of 'other' is seen here in terms of an implied binary where Mexican culture is 'decent' and U.S culture is 'evil'.

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[38] Even though the word 'amalditarse' is used in Spanish, it does not appear in the dictionary edited by the RAE (Royal Academy of the Spanish Language), which represents an example of the tensions and discrepancies found in institutionalized domains where certain linguistic forms are disregarded despite their common use in society.

Finally, according to Jane's grandmother the rupture experienced by migrants leads them to a position where: "se pierden totalmente y ya no son ni mexicanos ni americanos, es cuando quedan atrapados ahí" (they get completely lost and they are neither Mexican nor American, and it's when they get trapped there). The observations of Jane's grandmother find echo in Anzaldúa's notion of identity. For Anzaldúa these discrepancies leading to 'otherness' are the result of a deep conflict related with *acculturation.* From her perspective, "Chicanos and other people of color" experience a "voluntary (yet forced) alienation" (p.85) that sets the grounds for a scenario of fusion where two macro value-systems converge resulting in what she describes as a "synergy of two cultures with various degrees of Mexicaness or Angloness" (p.85). This complex interaction of values and cultures in addition to language is then clearly illustrated in Jane's second reference to identity, which emerged in her last comment during the interview as I asked her if there was anything else she wanted to add before finishing our conversation:

Original quote	English translation
No sé simplemente es, como que me gusta mucho aprender el inglés, no sé, me siento, muy cómoda por lo que decía de eso de que siento que puedo llegar a más personas. Mmm, pero también me siento muy orgullosa de hablar español. O sea, no es simplemente que yo diga: "Es que puedo llegar a más personas y demás", pero sé que también puedo llegar a muchas más personas con el español, con ambos. Ambas lenguas son muy importantes para mí. Y a pesar de que yo digo: "Soy mexicana", este, también tengo ese pequeño sentimiento de pertenecía a otro país. Entonces pienso que es muy importante para mi tener ambas identidades. Si no soy algo 'en medio', al menos sé que soy parte de ambos. Aunque no me sienta confundida, yo sé que soy parte de ambos. Entonces eso me gusta.	I don't know, I just … like, love learning English. I don't know, I feel very comfortable because as I told you, I feel like I can reach more people. Uhm, but at the same time I feel very proud of speaking Spanish. I mean, is not just saying: "I can reach more people and stuff", but I know that I can also reach lots of people with Spanish, with both. Both languages are very important for me. Even though I say: "I am Mexican", uh, I also have that little feeling of belonging to another country. So, I think it is very important to have both identities. Even if I'm not something 'in the middle', at least I know that I'm part of both. Even though I'm not confused, I know I'm part of both. So, I like that.

In this narrative, Jane began by highlighting her love for learning English and her pride in speaking Spanish, therefore language is placed at the center of her reflection on her own identity. Jane explains her love for language based on how comfortable she feels along with the fact that she can communicate with large audiences through English. By saying this, Jane shows awareness of the discourses that place English as the language of 'international communication'; at the same time, she acknowledges her parents' beliefs and comments about the importance of learning English (reported throughout the interview and discussed in section 5.5). However, she is also quick to

underline how proud she feels of speaking Spanish, and she then recognizes the importance of Spanish in reaching large audiences too. Jane reflects on what can be interpreted as her duality when she says that although she is Mexican, she also feels a certain level of belonging to the country where she was born (the U.S.). Moreover, Jane's last reflection resembles Anzaldúa's idea of having *various degrees of Mexicaness or Angloness*, as she distances herself from the idea of being "something in the middle" to place herself as being part of both worlds and being at peace with that.

As we have seen so far, language has emerged as a very important aspect in the construction of identity for these participants. Moreover, the narratives point at bilingualism as a key factor in the process of identity formation as they look retrospectively into their ongoing journeys. During the last minutes of my interview with Regina she expressed her thoughts on the importance of bilingualism, and she made significant statements that resonated with Anzaldúa's call to *dar la lucha* (to resist, see section 3.4) and with what I identified as *the symbolic essence of translanguaging as a form of resistance* (see section 3.2.1). In referring to what she would say to a bilingual she stated:

Original quote	English translation
[...] le diría eso que la utilice como ... a su favor, como una estrategia, hasta de aprendizaje diario, hasta de resistencia ... sí, eh ... ... I'd flattered them, you know like ... you're special ... I mean, I do think people, people are special uhm ... if they're capable of speaking another language, two, three as many languages as possible ... ... pero también procuraría no ... no decirles: "Ah tú tienes una responsabilidad" porque siento que eso es contraproducente. Simplemente: "toma ventaja de eso y resiste"...	[...] I would tell them to use it as … in their favor, as a strategy of daily learning, even resistance … yeah … uh … I'd flattered them, you know, like … you're special … I mean, I do think people, people are special uhm … if they're capable of speaking another language, two, three, as many languages as possible … … but I would also be careful not to … not to say: "Oh you have a responsibility" because I feel, like, that would be counterproductive. Simply: "take advantage of it [bilingualism] and resist" …

It is through translanguaging that Regina arrived at a position of resistance. Her bilingual call to resist is also a call to never stop learning, and also to embrace one's worth as a bilingual. She used two languages to construct her message, which can be interpreted as a portrait of how she conceives the world and how she navigates it: bilingually. I find her last quote particularly powerful as she takes off the equation the idea of bilinguals having a 'responsibility' and she in turn advocates for resistance. From my perspective this last statement can be regarded as an invitation to navigate the world with freedom, the same freedom that a monolingual speaker has to express and use language. Finally, our conversation touched on the theme of bilingualism and

identity and regarding that she expressed the following:

Original quote	English translation
AN: … porque finalmente es parte de tí, de tu historia y en cada quién es algo diferente ...	AN: … because finally it is a part of who you are, your story, and for everyone it's different …
R: ¡Sí! porque incluso, digo hay quienes lo tratan de olvidar o negarlo ¿no? ... pero ... ... con respecto a la identidad creo que eso es algo muy peligroso ... no imposible ni nada, pero, que te puede desbalancear totalmente en tu vida diaria, laboral o de lo que sea pues ... en tu vida diaria, te puede desbalancear el que tu niegues o trates de olvidar o de ... se entiende de dónde vienes porque si es una presión muy fuerte, debe serlo ... pero se me hace muy peligroso, si, si neglect pieces of you, of yourself. Creo que yo lo he hecho, no directamente relacionado con las lenguas por eso creo que es muy peligroso @@ esa parte de neglect pieces of yourself, porque todas son parte de quiénes somos y algo muy importante. Ser una cosa no cancela ser otra, no dejas de ser capaz de hacer algo porque tienes un acento o porque tu conocimiento de una lengua es más coloquial que académico o al revés, más académico que coloquial ... yo a veces me siento intimidada por las personas bilingües, uhm, español-inglés, así que dicen que sus lenguas maternas son el español o el inglés porque yo siento que mucho de mi inglés es académico, así como que, no entiendo muchas cosas coloquiales o así como que muy de barrio [AN: Slang ...] Uh-huh pero, o sea, para mí esas personas son como personas con más potencial si lo canalizan.	R: Yes! Because even … there're people that try to hide it or deny it, right? … regarding identity I think it is dangerous, not impossible or anything, but it can completely turn your world around, your everyday, your work life, whatever … In your everyday life it can affect you if you deny or try to forget … I mean I know where you're coming from because it is a huge pressure, it must be … but I think it is dangerous, if, if you neglect pieces of you, of yourself. I think that I've done it, not directly related to languages that's why I think it's very dangerous @@ that part of neglect pieces of yourself because every piece is a part of who we are and it's very important. To be one thing doesn't cancel being something else, you won't stop being capable of doing something because you have an accent or because your knowledge in a language is more colloquial than academic or vice versa, more academic than colloquial … Sometimes I've felt intimidated by bilinguals, uhm, Spanish-English, who say that both of their languages are their mother tongue because I feel that most of my English is academic, like, I don't get a lot of colloquial stuff or, like, ghetto [AN: slang …] Uhm, but, I mean, for me those people are people with lots of potential if they follow the right path.

In this narrative once again, we see the bridges that connect language and identity. As in the previous extract, this one is also an example of translanguaging as Regina uses her repertoire flexibly to make her points and also to reveal pieces of her identity construction. In this last bit of our conversation Regina reflects on the dangers of neglecting pieces of oneself: in fact, she herself recognizes how she has been in that position. The central point of this narrative emerges when Regina emphasizes how everyone's particular way of languaging is valid and does not (and should not) change the essence of who you are and what you do or know. Validating and embracing unique forms of languaging as I interpret Regina's words, is the ultimate form of resistance. Once again, the message of liberation emerges in Regina's reflection as she signals the way in which some bilinguals think of their languages from a monolingual perspective as separate 'mother tongues', going beyond that idea she seems to conceive bilinguals in terms of their embedded potential.

5.9 Summary of the findings

Considering that the presentation of qualitative results necessitates a robust discussion of their interpretation, this section aims at summarizing the three sets of findings comprising chapter 5. The sections below are arranged in the order in which they were presented throughout the chapter.

5.9.1 Participants' profiles

The first part of this chapter (section 5.1) was dedicated to presenting the profiles of the participants based on their transnational journeys. A total of six profiles were identified and this information was presented in two formats. The first one corresponds to table 8, which displays the six profiles of participants based on their country of birth (Mexico or the U.S.), age (19-32 years old), average time spent living in the U.S., Mexico or abroad and the type or frequency of their cross-border mobility. The analysis and classification of the biographical information of each participant allowed me to determine the characteristics of each profile (A-F): Profile A corresponds to participants born in Mexico who lived in the U.S. for 1-4 years before relocating in Mexico (Carlos, Elzi, Yvonne), Profile B describes participants born and raised in Mexico with seasonal or occasional stays abroad (Adriana, Isaac, Paco), Profile C includes participants born in the U.S. and brought to Mexico soon after birth with occasional stays in the U.S. (Emily, Jane, Regina), Profile D groups participants born in Mexico or in the U.S. who moved various times between both countries (Becky, Laura, Renata, Sasha), Profile E comprises participants born in the U.S. who lived in the U.S. for 5+ years before relocating in Mexico (Betina, Julie, Moni, Romina), and Profile F describes participants born in Mexico who lived in the U.S. for 5+ years before relocating in Mexico (Daisy, Farah, Fernando, Javier, Maggie, Nely).

The second format presenting the profiles of participants is an illustrative diagram (figure 28) arranged by profile (A-F) and displaying key biographical information about each participant. The information included sheds light on aspects such as participants' family life, their migration journey(s), their transnational networks, some elements comprising their linguistic repertoires and their academic and work trajectory. This diagram provides a visual representation to personalize each participant and it gives a broader context to understand their backgrounds. It is important to highlight that even though there are common denominators in the backgrounds of

participants that make it possible to 'classify' them into profiles, their journeys are unique. Consequently, the analysis of the biographical data presented regarded the particular experiences and profiles of participants as an important contextual framework to understand the languaging practices found in the study and the practices described by participants in their metalinguistic commentaries.

5.9.2 Translanguaging Natural Occurrences (TNOs)

After completing the coding process, which was supported by the use of software tools, the data corpus was delimited. The final data corpus for this study consisted of 250 quotes produced by participants, which were "contextualized moments where translanguaging occurred" (Mazak & Herbas-Donoso, 2015, p. 704). These quotes were coded and classified into 13 translanguaging types or occurrences. The description and color codes for each translanguaging type have been outlined in table 9 in this chapter. The collection of translanguaging occurrences was presented in a bar-graph where each TNO was represented by the color assigned during the coding process. The TNO-collection graph displayed the number of quotes belonging to each TNO from the most to the least frequently found in the data corpus. The 13 TNOs found in the data and represented in the graph according to their frequency were: 1) *Original language*, found in 89 quotes and referring to participants usage of original language of proper nouns, brands or acronyms, 2) *Conversation flow*, present in 74 quotes capturing participants use of a word or expression in a different language and go with the flow of the conversation, 3) *Quoting others*, with a total of 41 quotes, where participants impersonate characters in their narratives by using different languages, 4) *Giving examples*, located in 41 quotes with participants using words in different languages to give examples during conversation, 5) *Local varieties*, present in 13 quotes, that showed words or expressions used mainly in the center-north region of Mexico, 6) *Phraseological calques*, found in 12 quotes containing literal translations from a language into another one, 7) *Vocabulary query* with 11 quotes with participants asking for translations or expressions during conversation, 8) *Espanglish,* located in 9 quotes with words of expressions labeled as 'espanglish' by participants, 9) *A third person*, found in 7 quotes showing changes in language, tone, attitude to impersonate a person in participants' narrative, 10) *U.S.A talk*, comprising 7 quotes containing words or expressions in English used to talk about the U.S., 11) *Spelling,* present in 7 quotes showing spelling explanations using phonetic/phonological elements from different

languages to mark a contrast, 12) *Academic English*, 3 quotes with words or expressions in English to talk about academic/school terminology and 13) *Euphemism*, present in 1 quote with words or expressions used in a different language as a euphemism.

The TNOs found were analyzed by taking into account different angles. The analysis looked at the TNOs of participants both individually and by profile (see figure 31). The observation of the data showed that there was no clear influence of or pattern linking the profiles of participants and the TNOs they displayed. Additionally, the language participants chose as the main vehicle of communication for the interview did not influence an incidence of certain TNOs (see table 11), and finally, even though some participants shared a prevalence of certain TNOs every participant displayed a unique range of TNOs. The panoramic, segmental and basic numerical analysis of the data presented in this chapter demonstrated that the translanguaging practices of the participants in this study are highly complex and heterogeneous.

The conclusion reached after conducting the analysis described above is that the TNOs found can be regarded as a representation of the discursive practices of participants' in everyday speech. This is based on the fact that their frequency of occurrence in the data corpus is consistent with the descriptions provided in the metalinguistic commentaries made throughout the interviews and in the writing compositions. The collection of TNOs found in this study demonstrates that the languaging practices of participants are heterogenous, therefore confirming participants creativity and flexibility. Examples of each TNO were provided throughout sections 5.2.1-5.2.4 along with a brief contextual explanation for each one. Some of those examples were broadly discussed as part of the metalinguistic commentaries' analysis in sections 5.4-5.8.

5.9.3 Metalinguistic Commentaries (MLCs)

In addition to providing evidence of the translanguaging natural occurrences, the interviews and writing compositions were sources of metalinguistic commentaries (MLCs). This data strand comprised participants' rich descriptions of their languaging processes, experiences and understandings. Through the analysis of the metalinguistic commentaries we gained insights into the worlds of the bilinguals in this study and we found explanations about the TNOs that emerged in the first data strand. The coding process of the MLCs was also conducted with the help of software and it resulted in the identification of five main themes: 1) Migration and transnationalism, 2) Making sense

of bilingualism, 3) Everyday languaging, 4) Languaging and discrimination and 5) Identity. Each theme was deeply discussed throughout sections 5.4-5.8 in which selected narratives and quotes from participants commentaries were analyzed.

The first theme, *migration and transnationalism* (section 5.4) captured participants' accounts of the transnational profile of the state of Zacatecas, which is manifested in myriad aspects of individuals' and communities' everyday lives. The descriptions provided by participants confirmed the embeddedness of transnationalism in Zacatecas, which was discussed in Chapter 2. According to the narratives presented in section 5.4, transnationalism is manifested in multiple ways. For instance, with the presence of migrants during particular holiday seasons, in the linguistic landscape across towns where creative languaging can be found, in the use of English by migrants during their visits, and also in the common references that people make to discourses and practices around migration to the U.S. The analysis of the data for this theme demonstrated that participants are aware of the effects of transnationalism in their hometowns and they are receptive of the social and linguistic practices emerging with this phenomenon. Finally, the narratives of participants provided evidence that the creative use of language(s) in various domains of their social environment is a significant marker of the phenomenon of transnationalism in the region.

The second theme, *making sense of bilingualism* (section 5.5) presented a collection of narratives where participants explained their understandings of language use from an internal perspective as they reflected retrospectively into their languaging processes. The narratives in this section illustrated the clash between the widespread monolingual ideologies that prevail in society with the internal organic processes of bilingualism that participants experienced as a result of their transnationalism. The extracts analyzed demonstrated that translanguagers or bilinguals are deeply aware of their language proficiency and their languaging skills beyond the monolingual framework. They know that this framework does not capture their abilities and realities, and this was manifested in the way they challenged labels such as 'native speaker' or 'mother tongue' in order to adapt them to their understandings of languaging. Another relevant dimension of the data analyzed in this section pointed at the openness of families to bilingualism. Even though there was a tendency to favor monolingual ideologies, parents seemed to be supportive of the idea that speaking English in addition to Spanish —in most cases— could provide their children with positive outcomes in the long term. Therefore, these transnational families seem to resolve the conflict of

adhering completely to monolingual ideologies by negotiating the languaging of their children and adapting to flexible language use in their own terms. According to the narratives of participants, a flexible and *wholistic*[39] use of their repertoires and linguistic resources allows them to navigate everyday situations efficiently and in resonance with their realities and understandings of their worlds.

The third theme, *everyday languaging* (5.6) is the largest section in the chapter comprising four subsections. Each portion of this theme aimed at exploring particular aspects of participants' daily lives that were most commonly found in the MCLs corpus. The narratives in each subsection (5.6.1-5.6.4) provided evidence of the strategies, processes, creativeness and criticality of participants languaging. The first subsection called *languaging and mediation* (5.6.1) examines participants accounts of languaging within the family domain. Each one of the narratives and quotes presented illuminated the languaging practices of transnational families with an emphasis on interaction at two levels: parents-children interactions and siblings' interactions. The analysis of the accounts in this subsection provided evidence of the flexible discursive practices within families pointing at two main findings: 1) the interactions among siblings seemed to be much more dynamic and heterogenous in terms of language mixing and creativity, with participants referring to them as (e)spanglish and describing the meaningfulness of its use; and 2) the interactions among parents and children seemed to respond mostly to a need for mediation beyond language. In these interactions parents and children displayed flexible practices to help each other make sense of language use and cultural references within the transnational fields they inhabit. They use a variety of resources in their repertoire to help each other and to navigate daily tasks and situations that characterize their worlds. The second subsection titled "*making our own language*" (5.6.2) explored participants' own reflections on their creative languaging as a result of a process of interactions with other bilinguals. The narratives analyzed in this subsection showed how participants conceive their languaging as a natural part of their everyday lives. They reported using their knowledge and resources in their repertoire in order to learn other languages, but more importantly to interact with other bilinguals and to create deep emotional connections through creative languaging. The analysis of these narratives revealed the high awareness that participants have about monolingual ideologies. However, the analysis also showed how participants' translanguaging acts as

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[39] This term is used here in reference to Grosjean's definition of bilingualism (see section 3.1.1)

a form of ideology negotiation in which they 'follow' given rules at the same time that they allow themselves flexibility to navigate situations in which language is a central element. Through their reflections, participants seem to find in their languaging a way of expressing that accurately fits their needs, journeys and identities. The third subsection named *language twists* (5.6.3) captured very concrete examples of translanguaging given by participants in reference to their discursive practices in school. These acts of translanguaging performed by them and other students in school are perceived as 'normal' and they are legitimized by humorous manifestations. The analysis pointed at the interpretation of students' motives to translanguage as a form of resistance, as an evidence of their complex repertoires and as a form of scaffolding. The final subsection entitled *experience as teachers* (5.6.4) focused on the recurrent narratives of participants about their language teaching activities. The analysis of the data for this subsection provided refreshing results on how participants navigate the traditional monolingual practices and expectations within the ELT context from their experience as bilinguals and transnationals. The narratives analyzed highlight the prevailing monolingual ideologies and policies within ELT classrooms, which lead to the perpetuation of stereotypes that contest bilingual practices. Bilingual teachers face the conflict between adhering to school policies and having flexible discursive practices. The convergence of personal history, experiences, professionalization and education seemed to empower transnational-bilingual teachers to encourage their students to embrace their emerging bilingualism and be flexible.

The fourth theme, *languaging and discrimination* (section 5.7) provided an analysis of participants' struggles in various domains as a result of their languaging. This section was anchored in the discussion of narratives about school-life in Mexico and in the U.S. under the premise that the school is a micro universe of what happens in wider society. Participants' accounts once again evidence the deep prevalence of monolingual ideologies inside institutionalized contexts and among individuals and communities in societies. The narratives of discrimination in school demonstrated that the monolingual policies that govern this domain not only disregard bilinguals' abilities and forms of capital, but they act as mechanisms of rejection towards 'the other' in this case bilinguals and migrants creating or increasing their vulnerability. The narratives of participants also revealed the emergence of discrimination in the family domain and in other social domains, where this behavior is commonly hidden or 'moderated' by humorous comments carrying a discriminatory intention or tone at their core. It is

important to say that despite being marked by experiences of discrimination, the participants in this study also made reference to the celebration of their languaging practices. Their deep reflections and understandings of the processes and journeys behind this allow them to acknowledge the value in their languaging.

Finally, the fifth theme, *identity* (section 5.8) focused the analysis of participants' narratives on their identity construction through translanguaging. The commentaries of participants included in this section illuminated the identification that translanguagers have with others who display fluid identities and ways of languaging. The incorporation of various values, forms and cultural aspects as a result of transnationalism seemed to be regarded by the general public as a form of neglect of transnationals' identities within the notion of monocultural/monolingual frameworks that favor the notion of having a 'national identity' linked to one language (the language of the nation-state). However, this notion frequently dismisses the fact that identity in this case is the result of living suspended between two or more cultural and linguistic frameworks as a result of transnationalism. According to the analysis conducted, the notion of identity of participants in this study did not seem to be constructed in terms of hybridity, but rather in terms of recognizing and celebrating those aspects that are part of their journeys including their contact with multiple cultures and languages. In most cases, embracing bilingualism as a valid form of languaging is regarded as a form of resistance in a world that favors monolingualism.

5.10 Conclusion

This chapter presented a detailed description of participants' biographies, which supported the identification of their distinct transnational profiles. This information provided a strong context for the analysis of their translanguaging practices and their commentaries on the processes behind said practices. The analysis of the data provided evidence of the particular types of translanguaging performed by the participants individually and according to their profiles and also about the context where they occur. Moreover, through the exploration of participants' commentaries significant themes emerged, which allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the complex cognitive and sociocultural processes embedded in their translanguaging. In analyzing the dynamic languaging practices of participants along their transnational profiles and journeys the data provided insights into how they navigate the monolingual and

monocultural realities of the world. Participants' flexibility and creativity significantly emerged at the core of their identity construction challenging traditional ideologies and providing new avenues for languaging and communication in a globalized context. The next chapter will provide the final remarks to this dissertation.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

> *What recourse is left to them but to create their own*
> *language? A language which they can connect their*
> *identity to, one capable of communicating the realities*
> *and values true to themselves ...*
> (Anzaldúa, 2012, p. 77)

The doctoral study presented in the previous chapters unfolded over the course of four years in ways that could not have been fully anticipated, but that provided interesting and insightful answers to the research questions. This chapter sets out to review the work conducted and to offer a final perspective on the most significant aspects that emerged from the research process. The chapter also discusses how the study contributes to a deeper understanding of the languaging practices of transnational youths. Additionally, this chapter outlines the implications derived from the findings and reflects on the limitations of the study. Finally, it offers suggestions for future research.

6.1 A review of the study

The study originated from a general interest in understanding transnational youths' processes of identity construction. Throughout the course of the research, I became attuned to the particular role of language use in both informing and reflecting my participants' sense of themselves as transnationals. Following this line of inquiry entailed first, a meta level exploration of bilingualism with an emphasis on language practices, language ideologies and contemporary debates around these issues. This starting point allowed me to think critically about understandings of *language* and the notion of *bilingual speaker*. I was faced with conceptualizations that contested my ELT training and I was empowered by ideas that resonated with my beliefs on the descriptive, creative and fluid use of language. My own position as a transnational student/researcher also added a rich perspective to this study, enabling me to engage with themes, tropes, dilemmas and metalinguistic features that may have been invisible to the non-transnational observer. This opened a window to a more reflexive analysis of the data, adding another rich perspective to my work. Walter Mignolo notes that *se es dónde se piensa* (one is where one thinks), therefore, my constant movement and the

lived experiences in my journey played a major role in my understanding of the research and its outcomes as a result of my changing geographical and social positionality.

In reviewing the research traditions of bilingualism in Chapter 3 it became clear that the exploration of discursive practices in the context of a community with a historical tradition of transnationalism such as Zacatecas had to go beyond structural aspects of language. In fact, as participants shared their notions of transnationalism, their languaging practices and the processes behind them became symbolic of other practices and notions embedded in their experience of transnationalism. For instance, their teaching beliefs, their interactions with members of their communities in Mexico and in the U.S. or their understanding of the migration phenomenon in their families and communities. These practices were made visible through the theoretical framework that guided the research design and the data analysis of this study, as it facilitated the exploration of participants' narratives and descriptions in such a way that their languaging practices and processes emerged organically providing insights of ruptures and processes of reconfiguration that play a central part in the construction of their identities. The descriptions and reflections provided by the participants of this study are sources of invaluable knowledge, a type of knowledge that can only be accessed when we let go of what we think we know or have been taught about language(s) and bilingual speakers. Appreciating the moments of creative languaging that emerge in everyday activities, in casual conversations and in particular locations provides us with great examples of the complexity of the linguistic systems and repertoires, that as individuals and members of communities we all operate and draw on. Furthermore, the analysis of such moments and their discursive outcomes illuminate deeper instances of the social, psychological, cultural, political and ideological processes that govern our contemporary societies and the world.

In the epigraph of this chapter Gloria Anzaldúa refers to the approach used by the Chicano community in the U.S. to find a *practice* of communication that captures their contact with Spanish and English within a geographical and ideological border space. Anzaldúa calls this *un lenguaje* (a code) that corresponds to a way of living, and in that logic this *lenguaje* is alive. In a similar way the discursive practices of the participants in this study embody their journeys and encounters with other languages, speakers, places and spaces where they transit or where they position themselves. The creation of a *lenguaje* finds its genesis on the need to be true to oneself, says Anzaldúa.

Creativity is an act of liberation and transgression. It allows you to express your true self and story, while it implies going beyond the limits of what is established or imposed. Creating one's own *lenguaje* is a constant exercise of construction and deconstruction of the self, others and the elements that make up our worlds.

The notion of constructing and deconstructing was recurrent in this research. It emerged when revising Makoni and Pennycook's ideas about *disinvesting languages*, and it was confirmed when listening to the participants' narratives on the way they work on "making their own language", in the way they adhere to consented rules about language(s), the ways in which they bend those rules or the way in which they undergo a process of metamorphosis to adapt to their realities at given moments in their journeys. Participants' processes and reflections were accounts of construction and deconstruction. Transnationalism is, in this sense, also about constructing and deconstructing. The constant mobility, the moments of waiting and being suspended, the ephemeral stability; all of this requires a form of plasticity that is only captured by what we call identity, and in this context, identity is the result of this constant process of reconfiguration.

Considering the foregoing we can say that in witnessing translanguaging practices we also observe a process of decolonization. The process of construction and deconstruction that is manifested in the 'flexible' discursive practices we observed throughout this study becomes part of the process of *desprendimiento (de-linking)* understood by Mignolo as "un despertar del sueño y la ilusión hegemónica del conocimiento y del entendimiento (an awakening from the dream and hegemonic illusion of knowledge and understanding, Mignolo, 2010, p.34). The practices of transnational Mexican bilinguals become then, a mechanism to understand and deeply reflect on the effects of the project of colonization that continues creating confrontation in Latin American societies. The reference made in Chapter 2 to the way in which English is perceived in Mexico is a clear example of this lingering impulse of colonization. On the one hand the bilingual practices of the Mexican elite are celebrated and promoted to preserve the interests of the system that created them; to the extent that they align with the global commodification of English as a marker of social and economic status. On the other hand, the bilingualism of anyone with the 'archetypal migrant profile or history' is placed as a *subaltern epistemology* (Mignolo, 2010) that is *invisibilized*, censored and appropriated by the colonial enterprise.

Through performing translanguaging practices, individuals challenge what Makoni and Pennycook (2007a) have called a "very specific ideological apparatus" (p. 9) that includes the constructs of nation-state, ethnicity, language and capitalism. In this context, the flexible practices displayed by the transnationals in this study and their exploration through the lens of translanguaging become a process of unlearning and detaching from structuralist notions of language that represent the oppressive ideologies. In the words of Anzaldúa "decolonizing reality consists of unlearning consensual "reality"" (Anzaldúa, 2015, p. 44). The flexible languaging of transnational-bilinguals can then be seen here as a process of metamorphosis that finds its origin in the creative transformation of 'named' language(s) in order to adapt them to the realities, values, feelings and trajectories of those preforming these practices.

6.2 Translanguaging practices and identity construction

The study presented throughout this dissertation aimed at finding answers to specific questions on translanguaging and identity construction. This section provides a reminder of the research questions at the core of the study and it offers answers to them based on the findings. The broad research question for this study was: What are the translanguaging practices of transnational youths in central-north Mexico? In order to find out detailed information on participants' languaging processes and experiences the following three questions were raised:

1) What translanguaging practices were reported to occur in the academic and social environment experienced by participants in the U.S. and in Mexico?
2) What translanguaging practices occurred during the interviews and in the writing samples used as data collection instruments?
3) How do the translanguaging practices found in the study explain participants' construction of their personal identity?

I now turn to answering each question based on the findings of the study presented in Chapter 5:

- *What are the translanguaging practices of transnational youths in central-north Mexico?*

The main contribution of this study is that it presents a description of the discursive practices of transnational youths beyond the structural features of language(s). In fact, in adopting the lens of translanguaging, the notion of bilingualism as a dynamic use of language(s), varieties, dialects and styles permitted me to perform a novel exploration of everyday languaging and of the narratives that provide insights into particular and organic moments of creativity and the processes behind languaging. The data demonstrated that the participants in this study have a heterogenous collection of translanguaging practices. This collection was captured in the identification of 13 translanguaging occurrences (see below next question for details). The identification and analysis of the translanguaging occurrences shows that participants are aware of the structural features of individually named languages, but at the same time they also demonstrate their increased creativity and criticality in their use of said languages. Even though this study did not aim at naming individual languages in the speech of the participants, it is worth mentioning for purposes of contextualization, that the heterogeneity found in the data corresponded to the flexible and creative use of instances coming mainly from Mexican Spanish (north-central varieties) and American English (standard and other varieties). In addition, throughout their narratives, participants made various references to languages (varieties, dialects and styles) such as: African American English, French, German, Italian, Korean, Náhuatl or Slangs. The heterogeneity and flexibility of participants' languaging practices emerges as a feature that allows for conversation flow and efficient interactions to happen at the time that it represents their positionality towards broader aspects of language use in society and given institutionalized domains such as school.

1) What translanguaging practices were reported to occur in the academic and social environment experienced by participants in the U.S. and in Mexico?

The rich descriptions offered by participants regarding their languaging in the U.S. and Mexico allowed me to capture their notions of transnationalism. The narratives extracted from the interviews, provided data that illuminated the languaging practices of the participants in academic and other social domains in both countries and within the transnational fields they partake in. As discussed in section 5.7, the discursive practices occurring within the academic or school environment were highly significant at the

level of translanguaging moments and also as they portrayed macro practices and discourses found at societal level. In the case of the languaging practices located in Mexico, the data revealed participants' awareness of the effects that transnationalism had in their hometowns, everyday activities and interactions particularly in the way Spanish and English (including varieties, dialects, styles) manifested. The descriptions of participants revolved around the creative use of Spanish and English in the linguistic landscape of their hometowns including social and cultural activities where they and other transnationals participate. Many participants referred to the use of creative languaging with the label *(e)spanglish* and they emphasized the central role that the discursive practices described as (e)spanglish play in their everyday lives within various social domains and also in school. Examples of these practices include names of establishments where languaging is used creatively (Ex. Doggería, section 5.4), the use of 'invented' words (Ex. Parkeadero, section 5.4) by them and people in the community, the free use of resources in participants' linguistic repertoire whenever they feel the need to express in any given language or creative form (section 5.5), the restructuring of idiomatic phrases (Ex. ¡Agarra tus goats!, section 5.6.3), the adherence to pronunciation of brands in their original language (Ex. Walmart = /ˈwɔːlmɑːrt/, section 5.7) or the construction of new linguistic systems (Ex. Broken German, section 5.6.2) that more accurately cater to their needs to express their feelings, journeys, resources and identities.

For the languaging practices located in the U.S. the findings also showed a high level of heterogeneity and flexibility for many social domains including the school domain. Participants described the languaging freedom promoted at home, even when some families tended to favor monolingual ideologies, participants reported having contact with multiple language(s), varieties, dialects and styles when watching TV, interacting with neighbors, doing schoolwork or when speaking with their siblings. The languaging practices that participants reported using in the U.S. were the same as those described above for the Mexican context including code-switching and 'mixing' in general. Moreover, participants displayed a strong agency to manipulate the discursive resources in their repertoire to navigate everyday tasks and particular situations in school where their languaging was often contested. Their notion of languaging within the U.S. context and their ability to communicate effectively led some of them to identify in terms such as 'native speaker' or to reject that notion altogether in favor of an explanation of their languaging processes, which provided an insight into their

bilingual worlds (section 5.5). According to participants' descriptions, their flexible languaging both in the U.S. and in Mexico served as a type of scaffolding strategy, which allowed them to engage in general language-learning, school activities, and in many cases to become highly proficient in Spanish or English. Through participants' dynamic and creative languaging they were also able to develop fine skills that allowed them to navigate the cultural and linguistic frameworks that defined their upbringing, and, in many cases, this also led them to exploit those skills as language teachers in Mexico (section 5.6.4). Finally, the dynamic use of language by participants and their families (particularly in the case of parents and children) seemed to trigger a system of mediating practices (sections 5.6.1 and 5.6.1.1) to help each other make sense of language use and cultural references. Through the exploitation of the multiple resources in their repertoire they seem to support each other in making sense of their bilingual worlds.

In addition to the foregoing, it is imperative to highlight the ruptures that participants experienced within the school and in other social domains in Mexico and in the U.S., where their languaging practices were commonly questioned or discredited (section 5.7). The data revealed how the monolingual policies and practices promoted in schools in both countries not only disregard bilinguals' abilities and forms of capital, but they act as mechanisms to dismiss bilinguals and making them vulnerable by 'othering' them or perpetuating notions of bilingual practices as deficient and unwelcomed. Overall, there seemed to be a prevalence of the widespread notion that languages must be pure-isolated systems. The narratives of experience in the school domain provided strong evidence of this, therefore triggering reflections on how school practices and policies are a reflex, or a projection of the monolingual ideologies favored in other social domains. However, there also seems to be a counterview and counter practice coming from bilinguals in this study pointing at the celebration of their languaging practices and to an awareness of the cognitive processes entailed in said practices.

2) What translanguaging practices occurred during the interviews and in the writing samples used as data collection instruments?

The data corpus underwent a meticulous process of coding and analysis with the help of software. The coding process revealed the emergence of 13 types of translanguaging, that is, contextualized translanguaging moments (Mazak & Herbas-

Donoso, 2015). These moments or occurrences were given a code and a description in order to carry out the formal analysis (see table 9 in chapter 5). The 13 translanguaging occurrences found in this study were: 1) Quoting others (participants impersonate characters' in their narratives by using different languages), 2) Vocabulary query (participants asking for translations or expressions), 3) Original language (participants usage of original language of proper nouns, brands, acronyms), 4) Phraseological calques (literal translations from one language into another one), 5) Espanglish (words of expressions labeled 'espanglish' by participants), 6) Local varieties (words or expressions used in the center-north region of Mexico), 7) U.S.A talk (words or expressions in English used to talk about the U.S.), 8) Academic English (words or expressions in English to talk about academic/school terminology), 9) Spelling (spelling explanations using phonetic/phonological elements from different languages to contrast), 10) Giving examples (using words in different languages to give examples), 11) A third person (changes in language, tone, attitude to impersonate a person in their narrative), 12) Conversation flow (participants use a word or expression in a different language and go with the flow of the conversation), 13) Euphemism (word or expressions used in a different language as a euphemism).

The translanguaging occurrences found in this study represent a contribution to existent literature that has identified particular types of translanguaging events in the academic context (Mazak & Herbas-Donoso, 2015) or when observing transnational-bilinguals' interactions (Li & Zhu, 2013; Li Wei, 2018b). These findings provide an insight into the translanguaging practices of these participants in their everyday activities across multiple social domains and within the transnational fields they navigate. In addition to identifying the translanguaging occurrences in the data corpus, the metalinguistic commentaries provided by the participants allowed me to understand the processes and reflections behind their languaging. These commentaries have been addressed and explained in the answers to questions 1 and 3 in this section.

3) How do the translanguaging practices found in the study explain participants' construction of their personal identity?

The metalinguistic commentaries of participants in this study provided significant information regarding identity and how it is constructed by them (section 5.8). When referring to identity, the data revealed that participants made reference to various aspects such as nationality, language(s) use, culture, ethnicity and migration

journeys. Through their deep reflections on some or all of these aspects participants revealed personal processes of identity construction, and they also portrayed perspectives coming from wider contexts where their identities are marked by discourses of belonging that are found in institutional policies or inside given social domains. The narratives of participants provided evidence of how they identify with other 'translanguagers', who display fluid identities and languaging practices. The findings also suggest that identity for the participants in this study does not seem to be constructed in terms of hybridity, but rather in terms of recognizing and celebrating particular aspects of their journeys including their languaging practices. Moreover, embracing bilingualism as a valid and meaningful form of languaging appears to be regarded as a form of resistance that contests a world that favors monolingualism.

6.3 Implications of the study

After considering the findings and contributions of this study in the section above we now turn to a reflection on their general and specific implications. Overall, this study strengthens the idea that the languaging practices of transnational youths are the result of their journeys and life experiences. It is through their languaging that they find ways to navigate the sociocultural frameworks of the places and spaces they transit. Even though the results of this study provided evidence of the dynamism and heterogeneity of transnational youths' languaging, they also captured the prevalent hegemony of monolingual ideologies. However, the data obtained through this investigation also demonstrated the awareness of participants on the value of their practices and repertoires against governing ideologies and models of language use. The results of this study, therefore, point at more specific implications that shall be discussed below.

6.3.1 Implications for the perceptions of the role of the English language in Mexico

The background research conducted in order to contextualize this study led me to important information on the place that the English language has in Mexico. As pointed out in Chapter 2, section 2.2.5 there is little data on the number and profiles of English speakers across Mexico. Additionally, as cited in section 2.2.5 scholarly research on perceptions about this language has shed light on the tensions around English being a language for the elites, as a commodity that adds status; and on the

opposite end of the spectrum, English being a language of migrants, which is perceived as a vehicle for access to a life of struggle for survival. Consequently, the findings of this study have implications for the understanding of these tensions and the broad perceptions that the general public has about English speakers in Mexico. Moreover, the findings and the literature review conducted bring to the surface the fact that the languaging practices of migrants are not regarded as valid as to be considered part of the multilingual landscape of Mexico or in the global context by extension. The available information on this topic in addition to the findings of this study clearly point in the direction of classism and racism being at the core of these tensions. These elements are regarded by Mignolo (2010) as "the colonial matrix of power" (p. 84).

At a local level, this study also has implications for the sociocultural dynamics of Zacatecas as part of the historic region of migration in Mexico. Mapping and understanding the languaging practices of transnational youths can help in the broader understanding of the culture of migration prevailing in the region. As we gain knowledge of the ways in which transnational youths perceive and navigate the world through language, we also get a sense of their needs, expectations, values and skills. While it is hoped that through deep reflection on aspects such as those mentioned here public and educational policies can be directed to address the inequalities linked to language use in Mexico and the phenomena behind it, it is also hoped that profound changes can be triggered in the prevailing colonial mindset that hinders and commodifies the organic emergence of people's creativity and uniqueness.

6.3.2 Implications for the school system in Mexico

The findings of this study provided evidence of the struggles that transnational youths face within the school domain in Mexico, particularly in regard to their languaging practices. Therefore, it is imperative to critically evaluate the institutional policies and processes and the way in which they obstruct the academic trajectories of bilingual students. The findings of this study add to those of growing research in Mexico looking at transnational youths, multilingual indigenous communities and language perceptions in Mexico (Despagne, 2018; E. Hamann & Victor Zúñiga, 2011; López-Gopar, 2009; López-Gopar et al., 2013; Mora Pablo et al., 2015; Panait & Zúñiga, 2016; Serna-Gutiérrez & Mora-Pablo, 2017; Victor Zúñiga & Hamann, 2009; Víctor Zúñiga & Hamann, 2019). Taken together, this body of research places the investigation of transnational youths in schools in Mexico as a vital area of work to

support the education of teachers across all levels on the diversity of student-profiles in Mexico. Moreover, this implies working in the development and implementation of changes in the curricula, teaching practices and assessment instruments in schools in Mexico and worldwide in order to provide transnational youths with educational frameworks that build on their skills and repertoires at the time that they legitimize their languaging practices.

6.3.3 Implications for language teacher-training programs in Mexico

An important finding that emerged in this study was the insertion of transnational youths to the teaching profession from an early age. This finding adds to the research on transnational teachers in Mexico (Crawford, Mora Pablo, & Lengeling, 2016; Lengeling, 2013; Mora Pablo et al., 2015; Mora-Pablo, Lengeling, & García-Ponce, 2019). Taken together, these findings demonstrate the importance of developing teacher training programs to professionalize migrants relocating in Mexico. The development of such programs should consider the spread of teaching methodologies such as translanguaging and the creation of materials that build on the bilingual skills of teacher-trainees and students with multiple and complex backgrounds.

6.4 Limitations of the study

In Chapter 4, section 4.4 I discussed some of the main methodological limitations of the study. However, a final overview of the work done has led me to consider these limitations deeply. In addressing the challenges found throughout the research process I reflect on the aspects that could help me and other researchers improve the overall design of a study similar to the one presented here. Additionally, having an overview of the limitations will allow the readers to appreciate the results within the reality-framework that surrounded this piece of work.

The realization of this study was carried out within the context of transnationalism as it involved the researcher working in two distant geographical locations given the type of funding obtained. This meant that throughout the duration of the research I was based in Ireland and my participants in Mexico. Although transnational mobility and technology were great allies to make this situation work, there were still multiple details that had to be adjusted in order to design and carry out the research. Consequently, while many aspects of the research project were sufficiently

covered, the geographical distance was an ongoing limitation for this study. Being aware of this limitation became a key element even before I started the research, and it became a central aspect in the design of the instruments and the type of data collection procedures that would be followed. Considering this led me to make the final decision to create two instruments that could be adapted to both face-to-face interaction and online interaction. In doing this, the instrument design process became very insightful and it allowed me to explore options and resources I had not previously considered. This also allowed me to learn more on how to use online resources and to be very meticulous about writing materials for online interaction. Even though in the end I managed to have all the interactions with participants face-to face, the learning process behind the instrument design was extremely valuable. Being aware of the limited timeframe that I would have to travel to Mexico and conduct the data collection process also had a positive effect in the overall research-project management. I had to carefully plan and execute tasks and timelines in order to be efficient and to get the most out of my time with participants. This also tested and developed my creative and organizational skills preparing me for later stages of the research process where I continued drawing on the lessons learned at the early stages of the research.

One of the main elements in this study was recruiting an appropriate sample of participants. Since participation in the study was completely voluntary and the recruitment process was managed in coordination with a gatekeeper, I did not have control over the total number of participants in the sample or their gender representation. I aimed at having the largest number of participants possible hoping to get as close as possible to a balanced gender representation. The final population sample of 23 participants proved appropriate for the type of research and considering the sample-size of similar studies consulted during the revision of the literature. Regarding the composition of the sample population in this study, there is a greater representation of participants who self-identified as female than participants who self-identified as male. While I understand that this could be perceived as a limitation, I also see it as a consistent representation of the overall student population enrolled in the LILEX program at the time of the study. We must remember that the majority of the participants in the sample came from this program. It is also important to highlight that in an effort to increase the male representation I was able to contact more participants with the help of the gatekeeper. This procedure helped to the incorporation of more male participants even though the final number was not equal to that of female

participants. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that this study did not take the variable of gender as a main indicator for the analysis of the data or the results. The entire data corpus was analyzed in terms of the discursive practices content regardless of the gender of the participants. In addition to this, I tried to the best of my ability to include a diverse representation of participants' narratives throughout Chapter 5.

A final reflection on the overall research project brought me to consider aspects of access to research participants inside institutions. While my professional and personal contacts inside the University and the program where I conducted the recruitment were key to accessing potential participants, I also encountered obstacles derived from local institutional processes. This situation emphasizes the importance of developing research flexibility, adaptability and resilience in order to be able to make changes not only to the original research project, but also to the strategies and vehicles used to conduct other stages of the research. It is also important to recognize that, while research helps us understand the world and advance scientific knowledge, carrying out such projects could be 'uncomfortable' sometimes and results would not always point in the directions we want or calculate. However, institutions, researchers and other stakeholders should continue to improve processes and practices that allow to have access to the search for data that can lead us to improve services, opportunities and conditions in our immediate contexts to make this world a better place.

6.5 Recommendations for future research

Throughout the research process I carried out it became clear that there are many topics and issues that deserve further attention and exploration. First of all, further research is needed to continue investigating the translanguaging practices of transnational youths and families across different social groups, age groups and social domains. While it was evident throughout the process of literature review that research on Mexican migration is widely undertaken, it became clear that more work is needed to understand the practices of migrants and non-migrants beyond the economic aspects of migration. It is imperative to conduct research that can tell us more on the number of transnational and returnee population that transit through or relocate in Mexico, particularly of those in young ages identified in Chapter 2 as one of the most vulnerable groups. Another area that was addressed early in the process of this study was that of sociocultural remittances and their impact in language learning. Further research could

look at specific types of sociocultural remittances and their relationships with the linguistic landscape across traditional-migrant towns in Zacatecas and other regions of Mexico.

The exploration of translanguaging practices face us with the reality of mobility, diversity and superdiversity (Blommaert & Rampton, 2016; Vertovec, 2007) that have characterized traditional and contemporary landscapes and geopolitics in this globalized world. While the notion of superdiversity represents a 'new' phenomenon resulting from a highly mobile and interconnected world, we must remember that what appears to be 'new' in many urban or cosmopolitan geographical contexts in places of the 'global north' has been a reality in many places of the 'peripheral world', as in the case of the research setting explored in this study. Therefore, the encounter with this reality opens new windows to *visibilize* those practices that have gone *unnoticed* in the course of daily life. Moreover, facing this reality puts us in a position to understand language(s) beyond their 'colonizing' dimension or their structural analysis to recognizing their value and significance in the construction of self and collective identities. This is perhaps the greatest lesson from this study, eloquently expressed by Adriana, who during our conversation on her views on her studies at university said: "I was amazed because it wasn't just like languages and sounds and this… grammar. It was going beyond, it was how it touches people's hearts, it's how it influences power and everything …". It is only by listening to and acknowledging the stories, descriptions, reflections and practices of translanguagers that we can get a sense of this, and more importantly, we open space for their practices to reclaim their place in the world.

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A note on URLs:

Internet websites (URLs) were accurate at the time of writing. The author is not responsible for URLs that may have been modified or expired since this document was prepared.

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Appendix 1
Letter to the head of School Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras

Dublín, Irlanda, a 16 de enero de 2017

M en C. Gladis Albertina Olvera Babún
Directora de la Unidad Académica de Cultura
P R E S E N T E

Estimada Maestra:

Sirva la presente para saludarla cordialmente y hacer de su conocimiento que, derivado de los estudios de doctorado que estoy realizando en la *Escuela de Estudios Lingüísticos de Habla y Comunicación (SLSCS)*, del *Trinity College Dublin de la Universidad de Dublín*, he orientado mi proyecto de investigación al estudio de los fenómenos sociolingüísticos que tienen lugar en las instituciones educativas como el Programa de Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras (LILEX), que Usted encabeza.

Como es de su conocimiento, las tendencias en investigación a nivel global nos convocan al análisis de los complejos procesos educativos en contextos multinacionales, que tienen que ver con la identidad, la comprensión, apropiación y uso de la lengua, constructo que dio origen al proyecto de investigación que actualmente desarrollo y que por el momento he denominado "The social factors that underlie group identity in transnational and returnee students in an immersion education B.A. program in Mexico".

En ese sentido, y siendo el programa de Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras mi principal referente de investigación, solicito a Usted atentamente su autorización y apoyo institucional para promover entre la comunidad estudiantil, así como realizar y aplicar técnicas e instrumentos de investigación que me permitan la recolección de datos de los estudiantes inscritos en el Programa, que deseen formar parte del estudio.

Para el logro de este fin, dada la distancia geográfica que media, he solicitado a la LLE Rubi Esquivel, su valioso apoyo para que funja como enlace de este proceso, quien se encargará de distribuir la información vía correo electrónico para reclutar dos grupos: a) estudiantes transnacionales y/o retornados, y b) estudiantes sin historial migratorio. Una vez confirmados los participantes, los estudiantes del grupo "a" redactarán un escrito personal de 1000 palabras; el cuál deberá ser enviado a mi correo electrónico en un máximo de dos semanas. Los participantes de este grupo sostendrán también una entrevista de 60 minutos aproximadamente para dar más detalles con relación al tema de su escrito. Los estudiantes del grupo "b" responderán de manera anónima un cuestionario en línea en un tiempo estimado de 20 minutos. Cabe mencionar que los participantes recibirán un panfleto informativo con detalles sobre el proyecto y los instrumentos de recolección de datos; además, firmarán una carta de autorización para el uso y protección de la información con fines de investigación.

Appendix 1 (cont.)

No omito reiterarle que uno de los principales objetivos de la presente investigación es la propuesta de elementos educativos que contribuyan a la mejora tanto de los procesos, como del fortalecimiento de la identidad lingüística de los estudiantes. De igual manera le manifiesto mi compromiso ético y profesional en el manejo y uso de la información colectada así como del otorgamiento de crédito publico a nuestra máxima casa de estudios UAZ, en las publicaciones derivadas de este proyecto.

Conocedora de su sensibilidad ante los procesos de investigación con impacto educativo, no dudo de su valioso respaldo a mi solicitud, quedando a sus órdenes en la dirección de correo: nuezasoa@tcd.ie para responder cualquier duda que tenga sobre el proyecto de investigación y el proceso de aplicación de instrumentos.

Atentamente,

_____

MA in ELT Alejandra Nuñez Asomoza
Docente Investigador TC
Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras
Universidad Autónoma de Zacatecas

C.c.p. M. en C. Otoniel Serrano de Santiago- Responsable de la Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras-UAZ
C.c.p. Arch

Recibí 16/Enero/17

Rector 16/Enero/17

2

Appendix 2
Consent Form / Participant Information Leaflet

Consent Form

I am invited to participate in this research project carried out by *Alejandra Núñez Asomoza, under the supervision of Dr. Sarah O'Brien at Trinity College Dublin.*

The study is designed to research the role that transnational experiences have in the reconfiguration of identity in transnational and/or returnee students at the B.A in Foreign Languages (UAZ). My participation is voluntary, and even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. I agree to participate by producing a **1-2 page composition**, which will be turned in to researcher in person or through a PDF file sent to nuezasoa@tcd.ie by **June 30th, 2017**. I will also participate in an **interview** with the researcher (60 min), between **May 22nd and June 30th**.

The project does not imply any potential risks to participants; however I understand that if I feel uncomfortable answering any of the questions during the interview process I am under no obligation to answer and the researcher will take measures to minimize any discomfort. The research findings may benefit the transnational and returnee student community, as the results from the research can be used to promote the empowerment of these students as a group and as individuals. It also seeks to promote awareness and understanding of the social phenomena inherent to this topic and community.

Any information or data obtained from participants during this research, which can be identified with them, will be treated confidentially. This will be done by giving participants pseudonyms, and a numerical code to all the recording and interview transcriptions. All the data will be encrypted and safely kept in a password-locked computer only accessible to the researcher. Materials that are sensitive will be kept in a secure location, which will be locked when the researcher is not present. If copies are made available, similar conditions regarding the storage and use of recordings will apply. Portions of the recordings or written samples may be played or shown during conference presentations. Data from this research project may be published in the future. The original recording and all copies will be available only to the investigator and research supervisor. Participants are entitled to receive a copy of the interview audio or transcript upon personal request through their personal email account. A copy of the file requested will be sent to the same account within 40 days after formal request.

Any questions about this research will be answered by the main researcher Alejandra Núñez Asomoza at: nuezasoa@tcd.ie or they can directed to the research supervisor Dr. Sarah O'Brien at: sarah.obrien@tcd.ie, Tel. +353 1 896 1560 ext. 1626.

Signature of research participant
I understand what is involved in this research and I agree to participate in the study. I have been given a copy of the Participant Information Leaflet and a copy of this consent form to keep.

--   ---------------------
Signature of participant   Date

Signature of researcher
I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study.

--   ---------------------
Signature of researcher   Date

Appendix 2
Consent Form / Participant Information Leaflet

Participant Information Leaflet

Principal investigator: MA in ELT Alejandra Núñez Asomoza
Research Supervisor: Dr. Sarah O' Brien

You are invited to participate in this research project carried out by *Alejandra Núñez Asomoza.*

The study is designed to research the role that transnational experiences have in the reconfiguration of identity in transnational and/or returnee students at the B.A in Foreign Languages (UAZ). Your participation is voluntary, and even if you agree to participate now, you can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. If you agree to participate, this will involve you producing a **1-2 page composition**, which will be turned in to researcher in person or through a PDF file sent to nuezasoa@tcd.ie by **June 30th, 2017**. You will also be asked to participate in an **interview** with the researcher (60 min). The interviews will be conducted between **May 22nd and June 30th** at the time and day of your convenience.

The project does not imply any potential risks to participants; however, if you feel uncomfortable answering any of the questions during the interview process please point this out to the researcher, and she will take measures to minimize your discomfort. The research findings may benefit the transnational and returnee student community, as the results from the research can be used to promote the empowerment of these students as a group and as individuals. It also seeks to promote awareness and understanding of the social phenomena inherent to this topic and community.

Any information or data obtained from participants during this research, which can be identified with them, will be treated confidentially. This will be done by giving participants pseudonyms, and a numerical code to all the recording and interview transcriptions. All the data will be encrypted and safely kept in a password-locked computer only accessible to the researcher. Materials that are sensitive will be kept in a secure location, which will be locked when the researcher is not present. If copies are made available, similar conditions regarding the storage and use of recordings will apply. Portions of the recordings or written samples may be played or shown during conference presentations. Data from this research project may be published in the future. The original recording and all copies will be available only to the investigator and research supervisor. You are entitled to receive a copy of the interview audio or transcript upon personal request through your personal email account. A copy of the file requested will be sent to the same account within 40 days after formal request.

If you have any questions about this research feel free to contact Alejandra Núñez Asomoza at: nuezasoa@tcd.ie You are also free, however, to contact the research supervisor Dr. Sarah O'Brien at: sarah.obrien@tcd.ie, Tel. +353 1 896 1560 ext. 1626, to seek further clarification and information.

Appendix 3
Research Ethics Committee Approval Letter

Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

22/11/2016

Application   Academic Year 2016/17

Applicant: MT 22 Alejandra Nunez Asomoza

Title of Research: Immersion education in Mexico

Dear Alejandra,

Your submission for ethics approval for the research project above was considered by the Research Ethics Committee, School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences, Trinity College Dublin, on Tuesday 22nd November 2016, and has been approved in full. We wish you the very best in your research activities.

Please note that on completion of research projects, applicants should complete the End of Project Report Form and submit one signed hard copy to the School Office as well as an electronic copy (slcsc@tcd.ie).

Best wishes,

Professor John Saeed

Chair, Research Ethics Committee
School of Linguistic, Speech and Communication Sciences

Appendix 4
Interview Guidelines

GUIDELINES FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

1. I'd like to start by asking you to tell me a little about yourself and your background. Whatever you'd like to share: age, family, where you were born, etc?

If the interviewee mentions being born or living in the US:

2. Can you tell me about some of the memories you have from the USA? School? Friends? Neighborhood? Hobbies? Language(s)? Did you have any connections with Mexico at the time? Holidays? Family? Constant trips? Phone calls?
3. Do you go back and forth between the USA and Mexico? What is your relationship with each country? Do you feel more attached to one country in particular? Why?
4. Can you tell me more about what it was like to go to school in the USA? What courses or activities did you like the most/least? Why?
5. When you knew you would be coming to Mexico, what did you think of? How did that make you feel? When you knew you would be studying in Mexico, what did you think of? How did that make you feel?
6. Why/How did you decide to enroll in this particular B.A Program?
7. Which courses or activities do you enjoy the most/least at school here in Mexico? Why?
8. What are some advantages that you think you have at school by being bilingual?
9. What are some activities you do or hobbies that you have outside school? What are the advantages that you find in these other areas of your life by being bilingual?
10. Are there any times or places where you feel like being bilingual is a disadvantage or a problem?
11. How do you think that being bilingual or having a connection with two countries influences your life?
12. The B.A program requires you to learn a 3rd language, which one are you studying? How do you feel about this?
13. What are some personal and academic plans you have for the future? How do you think that being bilingual or having a connection with two countries could help you achieve these plans?

If the interviewee doesn't mention being born or living in the USA:

14. How long have you lived in Mexico? What are the things you like or dislike about it?
15. When you signed up to participate in this study you mentioned that you were born/have lived in the USA, continue with questions: 3, 4

WRITING TASK

Write a one or two-page (500-1000 words approx.) composition about **your experience of studying in the U.S.A and in Mexico.** You may refer to, for example: language issues, academic progress, challenges, interaction with teachers or classmates, etc.

When you finish please send the text to MA in ELT Alejandra Núñez Asomoza at: nuezasoa@tcd.ie If you have any questions or comments about your participation in this research project do not hesitate to contact the researcher, all your questions will be answered. Please be assured that the information you provide will be kept confidential, and it will be used for research purposes only.

Thank you for your participation! ☺

Interview transcript sample: Adriana

AN: ¿Prefieres hacer la entrevista en inglés o en español? ¿En qué te sientes más cómoda?

A: Mmm, pues cualquiera de los dos ... si quiere en inglés ... o en español ...

AN: ¿En inglés … o?

A: Sí, en inglés está bien.

AN: OK. Si tú te sientes más cómoda respondiendo en español, podemos cambiar.

A: OK

AN: Muy bien (clears throat). So, let's start. I'd like to ask you about your story, whatever you would like to share with me about your family, where you're from, anything about your story.

A: OK. Well, I'm from Jerez, Zacatecas. I have lived there all my life. However, my mom, uh, is a citizen of the United States. She wasn't born there, but she became a citizen because when she was, uh, very small they went there and they lived for a long time over there, so she has ... I think junior high, part of junior high she studied over there, and then she came back here; and that's when she got married with my dad and everything else, right? But, yeah, all of my ... of her brothers and sisters are as well citizens, and ... from ... it became like part of the family to continue ... uh, making that, Mmm ... how to say? ... like, to continue having the rest of the family as citizens or residents of the United States. Like, it was something that it was beneficial for us so, that's why my sisters and I are doing the same thing, like we had to go and do the interviews, and everything because well ... they think is good for us.

AN: So, do you have your papers now?

A: I have my green card.

AN: OK. Alright.

A: ... I already have that.

AN: And, what part in the U.S. is … your family from? Or where do they live?

A: Well, most of them are in California in [city], but others are in Arizona, but everything was made in California and some moved to Arizona ... so that's why.

AN: OK … and what's your relationship with the United States, you've mentioned that you visit your family there, what are the activities you do… or…

A: Yes! ... Well, at first it was only visiting family from house to house, or going for dinner to other place, or another ... but last year I decided that I'd like to work in the United States, and I ... Mmm ... went to Arizona, and I was for two months, all the vacation, summer vacation over there. And I worked only like for three weeks @, but I had that experience over there. It was very different from everything else.

AN: What do you mean 'different', in what sense?

A: Well, because I was used to just being only in someone else's house, and I didn't like the idea

that I had to depend on everyone, so they had to take me to this place or this other one because there I didn't have my license or anything ... so I had to rely on them all the time. And when I got this job that it was closed to my aunt's house, then I could just start doing something else than just being in her house @ over there ... And also, because I never worked ... I have worked here, but it's different over there ... I was ... I know English, I know that I ha ... I know English, but when I was there, I felt like I didn't knew enough. I was like: "OK. I'm not really understanding what they're saying", but I realized that as the days passed I was getting used to it because I was just that, that I wasn't used to the ... not even listening to their ways of speaking, and where I worked there were a lot of people from different places ... and ... it was curious because I could like, also notice that they weren't from the same place.

AN: Uh-huh, their accent …

A: Yeah, their accents and everything, and even some of them were Mexican, like me, but they didn't believe that I was Mexican. They were like: "Where are you from? You have a different accent. I'm curious to know" ... And I was like: Uhm, well I'm from Mexico. "-Which part?" ... and I was like: "Zacatecas" ... "-Oh! May be that's why" @@.

AN: So, they also identified you!

A: Yes!

AN: That's very interesting! ... and regarding your feelings towards the language, do you feel more identified with English or with Spanish now that you have had those experiences?

A: It's strange because when I was at the States, I ... well I used English most of the time, well with my aunt it was only Spanish. I don't know why they only ... well, they speak Spanish, and she speaks English to her childs, I mean to her sons ... And it was strange because she knows that I know English, but she communicated with me in Spanish. But I think that she did it because she missed to speak in Spanish ... like it gives her like this homesick feeling, and we were only talking about things and places from Mexico, and she was always like: "Oh, I miss that!" ... And with my cousins I speak ... I spoke in English ... and I don't know because when I was there, I felt like my English wasn't that good, but it was because I wasn't used to all these slangs, and everything. But at the same time it wasn't like I wasn't identified with the language, I had my own English @@@, and it was a bit formal for the rest of the people, but I like it ... but I noticed that I was thinking in Spanish. I was there, but I was thinking in Spanish, and trying to say things in English ... and when I'm here I think in English! ... but I speak in Spanish, and that's kind of weird. I don't know how it works, but it happens.

AN: That's very interesting!... and what about with your mom, do you speak in Spanish or in English?

A: Uhm recently when I started the B.A and everything from fourth semester and on ... and so on, English is like everywhere. I don't know, like, I'm speaking with my little sister, we speak in English most of the time, and also with my mom but she's not used to it, and she's always like: "—What did you say?— or —¡Dime en español!—", and ... but no, my little sister she's 13 and she's really getting used to the language, and she has been in the United States, but just like me, just for like three weeks, two weeks, she hasn't spent a long time over there but she speaks English very well! And she hasn't taken like classes or anything, just because she listens to a lot of music, and well, I communicate with her like this, and she's even reading in English so that's good! And she's getting used to it, and she likes it, she likes to speak in English!

AN: Cool! … And regarding … well I know Jerez has a very large community of people who have family in the U.S. even the city has like a lot of … this essence of English everywhere …

A: yes!

AN: Uhm… how do you feel in this place or how do you see your hometown?

A: I feel like there's a lot of impact of ... how do you say? Like Chicano society in Jerez. I mean, it's like ... I actually wrote an essay about that @@ in third semester. Uhm ... because I feel like they are a part of ... they wanna be a part of Jerez so bad, and at the same time Jerez wanna be ..., wants to be part of that side of their families so bad ...like that Chicano style. They ... we always grew up seeing them as ... like, we admire them: "Oh because they live at the States, and they're working, and they're sending the dollars @", and everything. And you always grow up seeing them as something bigger, and when they come here you get to know that, well, yes, they are, they have their lives and everything, but they at the same time feel like they are not completely a part of us as well, like we ... they wanna be so much like Mexicans, but at the same time they have this ... like ... American side ... and, I think that it's like ... like ... they share like that ... it's like an emptiness I think ... that, the ones that are here miss them and they miss us. And whenever there's like ... the ... how do you say? ... the holly week ... [AN: Easter] ... yeah Easter in Jerez, everything is like messy; but I think it's because they ... Uhm ... they ... try to use ... they wanna be so bad a part of us that they make those mess ... so that ... they become like 'us', and they do all these messy things believing that that's how we do it ... and that's más ... ugh ... I was gonna say "mas o menos" @, that's more or less what I wrote in the essay ... that there's like this emptiness because they don't know if they're Mexican, they don't know if they're American. At the same time, we have our own emptiness, and we share it. We know that we're here, but at the same time we don't know if to stay or to go ... they complement each other ... we complement each other. And, there's a lot of influence of ... them in Jerez, like, for example, once I noticed something really strange. Like, there was this place called ... Uhm ... I think it was a sports bar called "Doggería", and I was like ... OK ... That's, uhm, 'dog' from English and the other is, how do you say? A suffix? from Spanish. And I was thinking: "It makes sense!" Of course, but you have to know English and Spanish. And that's why like ... everyone knows that there are a lot of people from the outside that they don't mind. They know that people will understand, or at least the majority of people will understand. And of course, we take a lot of words from them, and they take a lot of words from us, like: 'parkeadero', 'troca'. We invent, and just, like, we do that a lot.

AN: That's fascinating, I love going to Jerez and seeing all of those features …

A: Yeah, it's really strange because Jerez ... well the city is small, but all the communities that are outside are part of the same, like ... how do you say? ... territory, but all of them have people living in the United States. And, it's really strange because sometimes I go to the United States and it's like: "Oh, let's go to this sushi place where someone from [town's name], —a ranch that is close to Jerez— is working". Like ... everywhere, everywhere ... like, we are everywhere, I don't know how, but every time I go there, I found someone from Jerez or related, and it's very strange.

AN: Yeah, it's very interesting … Once we went to I think it was San Antonio and we were in a restaurant, and the waiter, he was from Jerez, and there was another waiter who was American and he spoke to us in Spanish, but he's Spanish was very like, from Zacatecas; and he said things like: "ahorita", "ahorita vengo". And we were like: "How did you learn 'ahorita'", and he was like: "—Oh my friend from Jerez taught me—" @. [A: Oh my God! @] I: So yeah, it's very interesting to see all those little things, it makes you feel like you're at home somehow.

A: Yeah ... once I ... last time I went in December we ... Uhm ... how do you say? We ord ... ordered? I don't know ... an UBER, and the driver's mom was from Jerez! And I was like: How? He lives in California, and it's HUGE! And I was like: How? Because we started talking and he was like: "Oh, where are you from?", and we were like: "Mexico" ... "—(quoting taxi driver) Which part?—" ... A: "Oh, Zacatecas" ... "—Oh my mom is from Zacatecas, but from

a ranch around Jerez—". And we were like: "OK, we're from Jerez" ... "—Really?!—". It was really interesting.

AN: Yeah … definitely. And in all of this story that you have told me … how did you end up in this program?

A: How did I end up here ... well, first of all I didn't know what to study I have to admit. I had ideas of what I wanted, but I wasn't a hundred percent sure; like everything stopped me for a while, and I actually took a year ... I didn't ... after finishing high school I didn't study right away. I worked for a year and that's when ... an uncle told me about this program, and he gave me this ... how do you say: "tríptico"?

AN: leaflet?

A: Yes! ... with the program, and I was like: "Oh, I'll check it", and then he said: "—Oh, you have to make the TOEFL exam, if you want I can prepare you for the exam—", and I was like: "OK". And actually, I started going to ... only for that time, it was when I went to his classes, but it was just for the TOEFL. Me and a friend, we were in that class. [friend′s last name]? It was [corrects friend′s last name]. And then, well I started doing all the process. It was because, well he told me: "—Well, it's a nice program and there are good teachers, and ... give it a try, you know?—", and I was like: "OK". And I have to admit that at the beginning I was still like not convinced, I didn't know, I didn't know, like, how ... the view ... what was the view in here. I was just like experimenting like to see what it was about and everything else. And I it was after ... between third and fourth semester when I was like: "OK, I think I like this" because I started to like linguistics a lot, and then after taking the specialty of teaching I was like more interested in it, I was like: "I like this, I like this a lot". And there was what ... at the begging I was so unsure that I was even thinking of studying something else or going somewhere else. I was obsessed with the idea of going to the United States actually. I was like "OK". I knew that I had to do all those things, all the documentation of the green card ... and so that's why I never missed that, and I even missed classes here because I knew that I couldn't let that opportunity go. And it was like: "If I don't like it ... if I don't like this place then I can go, I can always go there". That's the positive of having that ... but after ... then when I started liking it, I was like: "Well I don't need to go to the United States ... yet" ... I was like: "I like this, I want to finish this, and see what happens next". Not just ... not just to finish the program, I wanna see what else ...what other doors can be opened after finishing this major. That's why I decided to keep going ... and, well I have had a lot of good experiences that make me feel like there are going to be good opportunities or chances to make good things, and that's why right now I'm like ... I'm really happy, but at the same time I'm afraid because there are a lot of things, and time is going so fast. It's just a year, it's gonna be a year and we're done ... so that's why.

I: Wow! And how do you feel about the fact that you have classes in English and in Spanish? Because you said third and fourth semesters were like 'the semesters' that gave you 'light' and that's exactly when we make the change from Spanish to English.

A: Yeah ... well, I think that the course ... well, how do you say? ... it was like a ... well, when we have our final Spanish classes I think it was a good thing because we saw grammar with teacher G and Spanish. And I was like: "Oh my god! ... I don't know Spanish! ... I don't know Spanish at all, and it's my native language, and it's my FIRST language, and that's not OK! Like I'm obsessed with getting good grades in Italian and in English, but how's my Spanish?! And that's when I saw the importance of that. It's ... that language is not just learning the random language like: "Oh, I know this language, or I know this other". It's more about ... uhm ... how ... like YOUR language ... like I have Spanish, and I have English, and I have Italian right now, and I know I wanna have a lot of others; but that's ... those are mine and how am I gonna transmit them to everyone else? And, like if Spanish is my native language and I'm not doing like everything that I should, I was like ... it was like messy. I was like: "No, no ...

How can this be possible? How can this be possible?! And I don't know like, I really like ... uhm ... I saw ... in that moment I saw the importance of language because I have, like, ideas from other semesters, but after that and applied linguistics was when I saw like the whole view ... that it was not just ... because first it was like phonetics and etymology, and we were seeing like theory, but when you see, where ... you connect ... where ... what it opens and how big is the ... view ... of language, I was, like, amazed because it wasn't just like languages and sounds and this ... and grammar. It was going beyond, it was how it touches people's hearts, it's how it influences power and everything ... that's when I realized that it was a big deal @@@.

AN: Yeah … more than just the rules and …

A: Yes! Because most of the people think that: "Oh you're studying foreign languages! Well say something to me in Italian" ... They think that it's just that, and I have to admit that at some point it pisses me off, like, yes, I am learning languages, but it's not just that. It's not just saying: "Ciao" or saying "Goodbye" or anything ... it's more than that. And ... that's the good thing, now that I'm learning that I can share that with everyone else and tell them: "OK, it's not just that, it's not that simple".

AN: Exactly, yeah … you can share your experiences and your perspectives. And about school, have you found any challenges? Well, you've mentioned about Spanish that you realized that you didn't actually know the rules and all of that … have you found any other problems in English or in Spanish at school?

A: When I ... I realized that it was eas- ... that it's easier for me to write in English than in Spanish because when we had to wrote an essay in Spanish, actually for ... in third semester. It was a task that was given to us with two months of how do you say? ... we had two months to do it, and I started right away ... and when I had my first draft, I was excited, but then when I handed in I saw all the things that were wrong and everything was in red and I was like: "Oh my God! How is this possible?" And it was like: "This is not making sense", and I was like: "But ... how?". It made sense to me because you're writing how you're thinking, but when you read it is not like someone else is going to understand it, and that's when I noticed that as well. And it was easier ... it was easier for me to write in English. I don't know why, maybe it's because I noticed that English you can be more direct and in Spanish you can in cycles of saying the same thing over and over and over again, but aside from that, uhm ... of course, with grammar in Spanish I am like lost, but in English it's OK. It's not like I know all the grammar yet, but I do have ideas and it's easier for me. Maybe that's why because I've seen every element and I didn't learn Spanish like that. And for example, I don't know, like, with Italian, it's kindda ... it's like Spanish that it has a lot of forms, and a lot of tenses, and it's ... but at the same time I'm more familiar with that grammar than with Spanish. And it's really confusing because at certain point you generalize ideas from Spanish, maybe this is how this form is used, but it's not ... and that is what happened to us exactly with the last form that we saw, in that we did exercises of translation and we realized that it wasn't like a literal translation of Spanish of that tense. You could translate with other tenses in Spanish, but in Italian it was just one form ... and that when you get like: "How? ... Why? @@". Well the good thing is that you have to practice and block Spanish for a while and just think in that language because then it starts to mess around with your mind. It happens at the same time with language. Sometimes you are like in Italian class, and then suddenly you are like: "Uhm ... Yes! ... or start saying things in English and you're like: "No" or think your answer in English, and you're like: "No, in Italian! In Italian, please". And I think that's the biggest issue that we're thinking in one language and then another. And sometimes I leave the Italian class after finishing and I' thinking in Italian, and then I go to an English class and I'm still thinking in Italian ... that's the thing, the biggest issue. And I don't have, like, ... I think for example in Italian in speaking I just need more practice, I don't feel that insecure, but I just need more practice. With English I think that I'm OK, but I ... What I would like to develop more in the three languages is writing ... I don't know I'm obsessed with writing right now. And ... but for writing I need to read a lot, so that's ... I

think that's basically ...

AN: … the main challenge.

A: Yes!

AN: And now that you mention reading, how do you feel about your reading skills in English and in Spanish?

A: In English it's the same, like, I understand them better than in Spanish. There are a lot of subjects that I saw in Spanish, and when I see them in English, I understand them better. I don't know why ... I ... I don't know the answer of that, but that's how I work! And it's very strange because I'm like: "Oh, I have seen this" ... and now I'm like: "Oh!". I remember that we actually saw a bit of Chomsky in third semester in Spanish, and then we took him again in applied linguistics and the rest of the linguistics… in psycholinguistics, and I was like ... the first time that I was reading him in Spanish I was like: "WHAT IS THIS?!" It was really, really complicated, I was like: "I don't know" ... I had ideas and everything, but I couldn't connect the whole theory, I wasn't even sure what he was talking about, and now ... and then after reading him in English, after seeing the topic in English I was like: "OK!" ...

AN: … makes sense!

A: ... yeah, "that was what was going on! I get it!" And that was ... it's strange, I don't know why I understand better in English ... and there are classmates that say the opposite: "I understand better in Spanish" and I'm like: "No, I think I understand better in English". I also think that I ... when I do my homeworks or, like, presentations I feel more secure in English than in Spanish ... I don't know.

AN: Yeah … sometimes it happens the same to me, especially when reading and writing, I feel more confident … And do you read anything else outside school because this like academic English. Do you have any books or other things that you like to read?

A: Yes! I actually like to read ... uhm ... actually, when I was in Arizona, I read a lot. All that time that I still didn't have the ... well, a job ... I applied in different places and called me right away from one place, but they were like: "Oh, you can come to the interview next week" ... the I went to the interview, it was a lot of time, like, on hold ... still waiting, and they said that yes, they would hire me, but they were like: "Oh, we'll set a date for your training ... oh, this and that", and that ... well it was almost all the vacations that I didn't do anything, and all the time, well, I went to the library. My aunt would be in the ... I don't know it was like kind of Zumba class @, and I went to the library at same ... well because it was in the same place, so while she was there, I went to the library. And it was very interesting, I found other books of authors that I had already read, and that was very curios because I started actually to read one author in Spanish and then ... there I grabbed one of his books in English and it was really different as well ... and you can compare everything, and it was ... that's another thing it was difficult for me to read it in English, and in Spanish it was easier I don't know why, but I think it was because the way he writes it's with a lot of ... kind of poetry, and he uses a lot of metaphors, and ... well, in Spanish maybe I have an idea of those things, but in English there are still words that I'm like: "I don't have an idea of what they're saying". I felt like when I was reading in Spanish and didn't understand anything but in English @@. And, well, I grabbed some books from the library. Most of them are like fantasy novels and ... yeah, most of them are fantasy novels or like thrillers ... uhm ... uhm ... yeah, like, I bought a lot of books on that time because everything was cheaper over there, so I was like: "books, and books, and books" and, yeah ... I've actually been reading after that because I bought so many that I'm still waiting some of them @@.

AN: Yeah, takes a little bit of time to get that done.

A: Yes!

AN: All right, and about your feelings towards the fact that you're bilingual … have you ever felt like there is a disadvantage or have you ever felt that this is an issue for you in Mexico or in US.?

A: I have never felt it as an issue or something, but the opposite, uhm, even if sometimes I'm speaking in English in a place where I know people is only speaking Spanish or anything. I don't mind because I just wanted to say it that way, and maybe that's the way I wanted to express it, and it's not the sa- … Sometimes I'm thinking or saying things in English and I've said them that way, and people maybe don't understand me, but that's how I felt them, and if I try to say them in Spanish they don't make that much sense and they don't feel the same way, and that's the same thing with Spanish, but in a place where everyone speaks in English. Like … there're words that just match the feeling and that's what you say in the moment. And I think that a lot of us do that here, a lot of my classmates, we are using, like, Spanish, Spanglish and everything all day! It's like: "Los love" or things like that all the time, all the time! We're used to it; we know each other and it's not a big deal. In other places of course people have said to me, like: "Why are you speaking in English? Or Why do you say that in English? Like: Do you feel more that us? Or something like that?" And I'm like: "NO! It's just … that's how I felt it, that's how I felt it!". I don't see it like an issue. I know that a lot of people maybe see it like weird or maybe … I don't know what they believe! @@@.

AN: Maybe that you're trying to show off or …

A: Yeah, but I don't worry much about that because like I said that's how I felt it and at the same time, I'm glad that I'm expressing it that way, like … because that's how I felt it and I don't wanna keep anything to myself, so that's why. But yeah … I think that a lot of people does sees it like: "OK, you are not in the United States, don't speak in English, speak in Spanish" or "Oh, you speak in English, that's really good and blah blah blah", and well, you … there are a lot of comments, I don't … but I don't see it as an issue, I don't care if someone says to me, like, it's wrong or right for me it's not an issue.

AN: OK, and what … how's your relationship with your classmates that have had experiences in the US? Because many of them here in the school have lived there or go back and forth … how do you relate to them?

A: Uhm…well, we have shared our experiences a lot and they … well, it's different because … uhm … some of them said that … they feel like they belong more here than there, and that they, well they have the experiences where they, well of course: "My mom and dad speak to me in Spanish, but in school it was English" and that's when everything comes in, with bilingual things … and they come here and everything is in Spanish and they start getting confused because they were used to seeing all the topics in English, and, well, I grew up with just Spanish, but English was something that it was always present, like I didn't … My mom wasn't, like, teach me, teaching me or anything, but it was just like: "Well, we brought you these movies from the United States, they're in English!" And I was like: "OK, I don't understand anything" but I was obsessed with the movies and I wanted to keep seeing them, and it was the same with video games and other things, and we share that experience like how the contrast is … some of them have, had even asked me where did I learned English or if I actually lived in the United States, and I'm like: "No, I have never lived there". And they're like "Why? You sound kind of like a native speaker", and I'm like: "No, I just … I learned here …", actually more on my own than @@ in classes or anything. And well, we … we share that a lot, and it's good because well … some identify with each other and at the same time we see like both sizes … both sides @ sorry, I said sizes! @@. And that's good, I think that's really good, we're like a huge family

over here right now @@@.

AN: Yeah, it sounds like it … and regarding your plans for the future, you have the papers to go there, you have options also as you mentioned things you would like to do here. Do you think you would like to go live in the United States?

A: Well … I think I'd like to live in the United States, but when I'm done with all my studies because I'd like to study a master's and I have a lot of options, like, I'm already seen options, but I'd like to get a scholarship because it's really hard if you wanna study abroad or somewhere else. And I know, I know that one of the issues as I am a resident of the United States I cannot … well, I cannot apply for programs of scholarships that are Mexican because those are just for foreigners and if I'm not a foreigner of the United States well they are not going to give me a scholarship. But that's why I'm thinking of studying somewhere else @@. I saw some options in the United States, but I'm just like: "OK. I can leave those on hold until I get my citizenship @@". So, for the moment I'm just like, I'm waiting until I get my title because that's another thing, until I can …

AN: … make decisions

A: Yeah! I have a lot of … like, national and international options because I was first like: "Well, I can study here", but my mom was like: "Go bigger … like, go bigger! Don't keep just …" Like, I know the schools here are great as well, but do not just, like: "Do not be a conformist". Like, if I have the opportunity the to study ab- … how do you say?

AN: Abroad

A: … abroad, and yes, I'm really excited about that I hope that I get that!

AN: I'm sure that you will!

A: I, I really hope so!

AN: Yeah! So, do you have any other comments or any final stories that you would like to share, or a question?

A: Uhm … stories? Well, I don't know … I had … I feel very strange because I am … Uhm … well I'd like to learn a lot of languages, but it takes a lot of time and at the same times we don't have other options over here. And when I first came here, I was with the idea that was going to learn three languages German and French and Italian … but then when they told me that: "Oh no, it's just one". I was like a little bit disappointed, but then I saw why, like: "OK, they are asking us to get a really good level of these languages, and if we can't even deal with one! How are we going to deal with three!", so I was like: "OK, makes sense! It makes sense". And … but I would love to have the other languages as well: German, French, I'd actually love to learn Arabic or Russian or Japanese or Chinese … I don't know a lot of languages, and even from here like Nahuatl, and I don't know … even sign languages, but there are some many! And you don't even know where to start, and you need time for that but I'd really, really love to learn more languages, and I was very excited because I have seen a lot of programs in other schools like of master's and once I was, like, really … I don't know French @, but I was seeing a program from a school in Switzerland, but it was in the French side of Switzerland, so everything was in French but I was checking it because there was a Masters over there and … then I saw that it … I don't know what it said because I don't know French, but it was something like C1 and it said Fren- … Français … I don't know how it's said … and I was "Damn it! I cannot enter this program" I was really sad at that moment, I was: "Oh my God, why didn't I learn French?", and then my boyfriend, who is actually living over there and is actually learning French was like: "No, that's not what it says … it does say that in French, but

it also says in other of the official languages of Switzerland that is actually Italian, English …

AN: German

A: … German, and I was like: "Oh, OK!" @@ … but yeah, that was an issue because I was like: "Oh, no I can't study here anymore" That's when I noticed: "I need to learn more languages! I was already so disappointed just because I couldn't understand the simple information. I don't know that was messy, but yeah like I'm seeing a lot of programs. There are so many that I don't even know which one I'd like to choose … I don't know, I don't know …

AN: So, your boyfriend is in Switzerland?

A: Yeah! He's doing his PhD there, and well, that was actually a good thing because he was the one who started like motivating me to study abroad, outside from Mexico, and he was … Uhm … he actually, like, sent me something because I was like really relaxed. I was like: "I'm not done yet with school, I will worry about that later" He said: "Well, I know, but if you really care you should be checking already because sometimes there are some … how do you say? Convocatorias or … you can miss them because they have certain times …

AN: Deadlines …

A: … and I was like: "OK, I'll check" and then I was checking and everything, and that's when I started getting excited, but at the same time I was like afraid. But, yeah, it was good because I'd really like to do that and now, I'm seeing everything bigger. And maybe not … Uhm … I'd like to … I'd love to apply for a scholarship to study aboard, abroad sorry. But If … if there's not the opportunity I can study here a master's and then I can do the PhD there. I don't know, but I'm not letting that go. I already have that idea, I already have a goal, so I'm not letting that go yet, no!

AN: Well, thank you very much A this has been really, really …

Appendix 7
Interview transcript sample: Isaac

I: ¿No hay problema por el ruido?

AN: No, si se escucha, ya está más que probada ...

I: @@@ OK

AN: ... ya hemos hecho entrevistas en medio de casi un concierto y todo, así que ... si se escucha bien @@

I: OK, OK, OK, bien ...

AN: Bueno, no sé si tengas preferencia por hacer la entrevista en inglés o en español, o...

I: Either way is fine, I mean, it's OK with me at least ...

AN: So, we can try in English [I: Of course] and then if you feel like switching to Spanish we can do that [I: Awesome, yes!] flexible ... OK, so first of all let's start with whatever you'd like to share with me about yourself, your family, what do you do ...

I: Kind of like a background kind of thing? OK, well, uh, first of all I'm a student here in Zacatecas, I study in the academic unit of physics, I am originally from Durango, uh, I am 21 years old soon to be 22 [AN: OK] @@, and uh ... let's see my ... I believe something related to my managing or my, English language skill, I guess, no? ... Well, I studied in Durango in all of the English academies there namely Harmon Hall, uh, an academy known as Techno, an academy from the 'Tecnológico de Monterrey', uh, and basically, just that. That was my formal training in English, uh, after that I mean it's just, uh ... practicing on my own with media books, movies, music, and after that I got an opportunity to spend a summer in Canada doing, uh ... well is not really like research, but was like a ... kind of like, like I don't know, high school subjects over there in English, I took chemistry, literature, mathematics and stuff like that but in English, oh!, uh, also, I took some English centered courses as well, but it was mainly focus in like a high school experience in Canada. This was in [city's name], Canada [AN: Ah, OK!], and it was pretty, pretty amazing, uh, after that I've been, uh ... numerous times to the States mainly for shopping, things like that, but, uh, nothing acade-, academic so far ... but, the intention is there ...

AN: OK, alright, I see ... so before your formal education in English, uhm, did you ever speak in your house or with your family?

I: No, not really, I mean my mom is also fluent in the language, but in, uh, my father isn't, so that kind of created like an environment where I was like hearing it from my mom, but not really from my dad, and, uh, I wasn't really like stich ... sticking to it, I was just like learning Spanish, uh, I mean it was, that's kind of like, uhm, concerning my, my fathers, my parents, sorry. Uhm ...

AN: And how did you mom learn English?

I: Uh she studied, and she worked for a bit in Tijuana, so she got to go, uh, to the United States pretty often, so, yeah ...

AN: Ah OK, so that's the relationship ...

I: Yes.

AN: Alight, very interesting, uhm, and uh, talking about your experience in high school in Canada, how was it for you to change and had formal education in English after being in Mexico for a while ...

I: Sure, well ... for starters I thought that the level that I was at, the level of complexity and depth of the subjects was lesser there than here. Mainly, I think it probably has to do with the fact that it was just like a summer course, that it was like intensive in any regard, but still, I guess that is main, uh, factor the intensity of the courses, uhm, but ... answering the question, like, how was the ... like, uh, what could I say, like, the contrast between the education there and the education here well, for me it made like no difference, it's just the language it was carried on, and, I see English as just another language, if you can speak it then you can take subjects in that language. One thing though, the course that was based on literature, we focused a lot in like classic literature like Hemingway, like, uh, what else? I studied mainly Hemingway, but, uh, Roald Dahl, and many other ...

AN: Classic, iconic ...

I: ... classic, iconic writers, yeah ... that was basically it, and it was, that was the most difficult subject for me, because I had to like get involved with all of these authors, and I didn't know anything about them, I was immersed in Latin-American and maybe some, but like pop culture kind of thing, not really classical literature, yeah that was the most challenging thing for me.

AN: So, it was more about the content and not the language [I: Yes!] in that case ...

I: Yes, in the language I didn't ... struggle that much because at that time I had like a pretty good proficiency level.

AN: And did you ever use, or do you have memories of using Spanish to help you understand content or things ...

I: Not really because my classmates were from different parts of the world, I mean I had two Korean classmates, one from South Africa, uhm, one from there from Canada, and two others from ... where were they? ... [I: International] Portugal! So, kind of like the Portuguese kind of thing, but not really, and [inaudible] didn't speak Spanish either so if I used Spanish it would be like ... I would be helpless like, why? are you asking help in that language nobody speaks that so ... and I went with people from Durango and other states, but we were in different classrooms so I couldn't go like to another classroom: "Ey, me ayudas con esto? o algo así" [northen Mexican accent], no that was ... it wasn't an option really ...

AN: Uh-huh, and about for example taking notes or doing homework did you ... use Spanish or words at the beginning at least?

I: Yes!, eh, uh, I remember in that class in literature, like, the idioms mai-, mainly like the idioms that Hemingway used because all of that is ... also some phrasal verbs that I didn't quite know, I mean, those ... mostly idiomatic expressions that like for example I always give this example, uh, to other people like, If you say to British guy or a Canadian "Ey que sangrón", there's no like one to one translation, yes? like, you can say like "Oh you're bloody" or something like that, I mean stuff like that, like I could say: "Oh, settle, settle down mean casarse" something like that, like a translation.

AN: Alright I see, uhm ... are there any situations in your daily life where you use a specific language for specific things like ... well, you tell me @@

I: OK, a specific language for specific things [AN: uh-huh, have you noticed?] uhm ... yes, I mean, nowadays I, I have the fortune of working as a teacher in [school's name], so that

requires like a very specific kind of English, like you're teaching so you can't use very flamboyant and overly specific words, you need to keep it simple, and I like flamboyant words @@ I like the complexity of the language so I have to tone it down a bit, and even there, uh, there are contrasts. It's not the same teaching a level-one-student than an upper-advanced or something, uh, also in ... uh ... in 'Física', in Physics we've had some meetings with, uh, gentleman from ... Sweden, but he's Mexican so, uh, it's interesting, and some of the meetings are carried on in English because his, his co-workers, uh, don't speak Spanish, so we mainly talk in English and that requires like a kind of more formal, more specific, more specialized use of the language 'cause we're talking about mathematics and physics, and stuff like that. Uhm, also ... what else could I say? Oh, also with my ... uh ... co-workers there in [school's name], the teachers! I mean we all have; I mean I respect their level of English; I mean we all have like a standard, and there we speak like very colloquial English, curse words and all [I: slang ...] Yes, slang, and that is like the contrast, the facet, all the different facets that I use. Uhm, let see what else ... uhm ... also with my brother, he hasn't had the chance to go abroad but, uhm, he's sti- ... he's also very fluent in English, and we speak kind of playfully in English just to annoy everyone else because they can't understand us, stuff like that, yes.

AN: Kind of like a secret code ...

I: A secret code that's not really secret @@ yes!

AN: Alright, uhm, and have you ever caught yourself, uh, for example getting mad and saying something in English or ...

I: Yes! Many, many times ... although I do believe that curse words in Spanish are more satisfying to say, sometimes I have found myself in a situation where I curse in English or I, I'm suddenly speaking to myself in English for no reason.

AN: Alright, uh, and well regarding your, uh, education experience in the school of physics, uhm, what is the role of the languages you speak in that particular area.

I: Yes, well, mostly it has to do with textbooks because most of them are in English, most of them are from Springer, which is like an editorial company, and most of their texts are in English, and those are like, I mean, those I consider to be the highest quality books because they don't go through a loop of, I don't know like, maybe there's some information lost in translation because the original author they're from, I don't know, Massachusetts or Great Brittan or something, so they wrote in its intended language, so, maybe some information is lost between translations ... shouldn't be the case and I don't think it's the case, but I rather stick to the original, like in movies, like in music, like most things. I rather stick to the original language, uh, also some courses, some online courses that were recommended to me by some teachers were also in English, uh, they are offered by a school in New Mexico, in Santa Fe. So, of course they're in English. Let's see, what else? ... uh, some of course research papers are also in English, and uh, for those it's much harder to find a translated version, that's it.

AN: Did you ever have to write essays or academic texts in English?

I: Not really, it's not a requirement, but, uhm, I would love to @@ I mean, it's because here in Mexico, yes science it's a thing and it's pretty advanced and it's respectable, but the true heavy , uh, is done in, uh, English speaking countries and also Germany, so I'm ... Ah! That's also kind of like a background thing, I'm studying German at the moment, I'm not really quite fluent at it right now [squeaky tone, representing doubt], but I'm getting to it.

AN: What level are you in?

I: Uh, barely A1, barely, barely A1, so ... I'm just getting started ...

AN: Quite a difficult language to learn ...

I: It is, it is, it is ...

AN: Yeah, but I'm sure you'll have no problem. I mean, if you already know English you kind of have some background, at least to know the steps on how to go about it ...

I: On how to learn actually a language because, I mean, German and English they have their similarities, but those are few and far between [inaudible]. German is a very beautiful, but very specialized language.

AN: Yeah ... very complex the grammar, Oh my God! Yeah

I: Yes, yes, yes ... the grammar in it, but I mean I believe that English and soon to be German are the languages of science today in some way, so I thinks that's like a priority for science students in general to learn the language ...

AN: And, uh, well you told me a little bit earlier before that the intention is there to go abroad, uh, do you plan on studying postgrad, a postgrad or something else abroad? or what are your plans for the future?

I: Yes, I actually, this is my last semester here in, uh, 'Física' and I have several plans ... though, as with most, uh ... how do you say? graduate, uh, level courses you need to have several options because you're not guaranteed to be accepted in all of those, so I have, uhm ... uh ... I have, uh, how do you say? Maybe ... in my sights I have several, several universities like the university in ... uh, what was it? I don't even know @@ uh, ah! yes! it's the University of Colorado at Boulder. That's one, of course the other one is the MIT, Massachusetts, another one is in Frankfurt [pronounced in German], in Germany, and the last one it's in Switzerland, in Basel [pronounced in German]. Uhm, those are my abroad-options. Of course, I have options here in Mexico, like UNAM and UG, Guanajuato, but considering my abroad options and opportunities those are the ones in my spot.

AN: Alright, very interesting. Uhm, do you have any ... well, you told me about your coworkers, but at the school do you have any bilingual classmates [I: Oh!] that you speak English to?

I: One, there's one out for everyone, and it is because I mean ... he's my friend so I'm gonna call'im that ... he's a 'pocho'. So, his parents, uh, I think he was at one time a DREAMer, he was born there and came here, uhm, yeah, he's from Jerez, uh, his name is [friend's name]. He's a pretty cool guy, he speaks English fluently, uh, and we jokingly speak it in the class, again it's like a secret code 'cause nobody else has that level of ... has that fluency, and that ability to comprehend what we're speaking because he speaks really, really fast like this, I mean, he speaks like that, so ...

AN: He's probably still in contact with the States and ...

I: Yes, I mean, he has a store in Jerez, where he sells ... I don't know, I think it's clothes or clothing in general, so he often goes back to the States to supply the store, so he has contact with people there, and I do believe he has family there, so yes.

AN: He's very familiar ... and about I don't know ... any other frie- ... international friends that you have online, or ... where you use English.

I: Yes, actually my girlfriend @@ she's from Switzerland ... [AN: Ah! Cool!] so, and she's actually kind of like my role model in this whole ... languages thing because she speaks

Spanish, German, Swiss German, French, English [AN:. Oh my God!], Roman, [AN: Jesus!] Latin [AN: Wow!], and she's only 22 years old, so that's actually like: "Oh, wow!"

AN: Very impressive, yeah!

I: It is impressive, and, uh, that's one part, my girlfriend ... uh, let's see ... from my stay in Canada I made some good friends, one from the United States, one from Canada and one from Korea actually, so only those three were the ones that I have contact. Uhm, the guy from the US is currently, eh, studying law, the one from Canada is a girl, she's actually ... she wants to be a ... uh, flight assistant, and the guy in Korea, actually, he wants to be a fashion designer [I: Oh, wow!] she's like really, really posey and awesome @@ Uh, I think that that's it ... my international friends, [AN: Uh-huh, your circle] Oh! I mean, also the friends from my girlfriend in Switzerland, some of them are Italian because it's really close by, some other are from Germany, some French, so it's kind of like a close friend circle.

AN: Uh-huh, and how do you communicate with your girlfriend? Which language, or do you guys mix? @

I: Uh, we're working on making our own languages, language, like it's a mixture between English, German and Spanish, [AN: Oh cool!] I mean it's just jokes, nothing formal, but yeah ... I mean, eh, in everyday conversation we speak Spa ... Spanish because she believes that she wants ... that she needs to practice. In that regard ... because her mom is from here, Mexican and her dad is Swiss, and they are both very bilingual, they actually met in the United States doing a ... a ... like stay, like a summer stay like I did in Canada. Uhm ... so yeah, like in her house growing up bi, bilingualism, multilingualism was a thing of everyday, and everyday thing, yes. So, in everyday conversation we speak Spanish, uh, other times in English, and she's teaching me a bit of German here and there.

AN: And ... I'm very interested on this aspect that you mentioned that you're working on building your own language. How does that work? [I: @@@] Do you have any like examples?

I: Yes! I mean ... it's mainly just my use of broken German that becomes kind of like a joke and we develop it, like, I'm thinking of a phrase, uh ... Ah, yes! There's one, uhm, it is Es gibt es kein Problem, that is broken German from, for 'there is no problem' or 'it's OK'. And we turned that into a phrase that we say it all the time, and we use it as though it were correct, and also, it's not really spoken, it's mostly written our jokes, and ... because we use the Umlaut, and stuff like that, so yeah ... uh-huh, again, mostly, mostly joking, and like a code and .... we used to tell us .... to each other that we love each other [rising intonation] and stuff like that, but jokingly.

AN: Alright! That's fascinating! It's really, really interesting ... [I: @@@] uhm, what about uhm, your relationship with your students, 'cause you're an English teacher but there's also that tension [I: Yes!] of how do I teach my students? uh, do I use Spanish? Do I not use the language? [I: Nop, not at all] How do you approach it?

I: I mean, over there in [school's name] of course it's a franchise, so they have their rules, their method that you need to applaud, but there are many, many liberties while teaching, uhm, there and in other places that have tried teaching, uh, on. I, I believe, and that's because I learned it, I learned it that way that, uh, there's no need for Spanish, maybe in introductory courses, like, vocabulary for example, this means that, this means that ... but limiting the use of Spanish because if you keep using Spanish, if you keep telling the students to resort to that, resort to what they know then I think they will always have that little bug in the back of their mind, like "Oh, what's the translation for this?" when it's not always the case, like for example, like right now, I'm not thinking of Spanish, I'm just thinking in English as a language, so, I believe that, uh, the best way to learn the language and what I try to implement in my classes is zero Spanish, none whatsoever, none at all. And, of course, the methodo-, the methodology that I use

to kind of like lever this lack of Spanish with, uh, kind of like complete unknowing of the language is showing them examples and having a lot of visuals like: "Oh, here's a picture of a house", "here's a picture of a door", whatever. Like showing, not telling because it's not really like ... teaching a language is not really like teaching mathematics or physics. It's very, very different, and I try to keep that in mind when teaching.

AN: And how do you feel their attitude towards, uh, you as a teacher? Do they ever make comments about how you speak the language or how you learned it?

I: Yes! They are ... that is like number one questions that students always ask because they want to know the background of their teachers, they want to know if he's going to be able to actually teach them because students there are really cocky because they are like, uh, kind of wealthy people, so they want to see their money's worth, so that's something they always, they always ask, like: "teacher, where did you learn the language?", "teacher, how old are you?", "teacher, how many kids do you have?", like: "OK, I'm not that old!" @, but yeah, they're very inquisitive, and, uh ... the way that I react it's just you know telling the truth, like: "I, I studied the language because I was interested in it, I had the need to learn it, I dedicated myself to it, and took every opportunity" as simple as that, and I also got the opportunity to go abroad, and, but, at the time I was fluent it was, it was mainly just to, uh ... like I said, phrasal verbs, and idiomatic situations and pronunciation to loosen the tongue, and, I believe that, that answers their [inaudible] because after that they're like: "Oh, OK", and "teacher, how, why are you so tall?" ANI: @@@] and .... other questions like that, yes ...

AN: yeah, yeah ... students are always like that @@@ [I: @@@ yes they are!] yeah ... and well, about a topic that is quite controversial, [I: OK] Spanglish [I: yes!], you've probably heard of it [I: yes!] what are your thoughts on this phenomenon?

I: I believe ... that ... it arises from two kinds of people, one is the English student that is, that has gaps in his understanding or he's actually quite lazy to, uh, look up how things are actually said, and he says whatever comes to mind first, maybe jokingly, maybe seriously, but I think it comes from a lack of understanding of the language, or a, kind of like a lack of experience with it, which can always be dealt with, with practice, with classes, whatever. I believe that's one kind of people that speaks the language and another ... I actually learned this quite recently that TEX-MEX and 'Tejanos' with jota that's an actual thing I mean, those are people that have their own culture, their own art, their own kinds of backgrounds, they hail from DREAMERs, from people living near the border, I mean, that's a whole cultural, I don't know, like, two diff ... two very different cultures clashing and making a new one, and that I thought was quite fascinating, and this was revealed to me by a co-worker, who actually lives in Reynosa, so he's actually really near that kind of strip of 'Tejanos', yes ... And, uh, in that case and in that regard, I believe that when two very different cultures clash that is inevitable and that is respectable because it is a whole new cultural identity, I think. People that believe themselves American and that they also believe themselves Mexican. They take from both cultures, and that is reflected in the language like Spanglish, or they have English, stuff like that.

AN: And in your case, how would you define yourself in terms of having knowledge of two languages, having lived abroad, how does that impact your identity?

I: Well, I ... I love my country, I love Mexico because of the many beautiful things that it has to offer, uhm, but yet, again I do see how someone could strongly relate to both countries like America and the United States has all these opportunities for them to work in, for them to develop, work in education and Mexico has like all of the ... maybe, here don't have like the best job opportunities or the best study oportuni-, opportunities, sorry ... but still people feel like it's their home, and it is their home, so ... I mean for me it's never in question whether I identify myself as a Mexican 'cause I feel strongly that I, that's my identity and that's what I'm proud of being. But, still other ...let's be pragmatic about it, like, other countries are more developed,

they offer more opportunities and that for me is where the clash begins to happen, like, why not study here? Well, over there I get better opportunities, or why not work here? Over there I get paid more, so that is kind of like my own take on the subject like biculturality and all of that.

AN: OK. Very interesting ... uhm ... and how is it for you to be a bilingual in Mexico? Do you ever get comments like, like negative comments about speaking English or German or having a foreign girlfriend?

I: Uhm, not really ... I don't really get like, I mean most of the comments I get about that specific subject are mainly sarcastic and in a ... kind of like praising in a way like: "Oh, here comes the doctor in English" stuff like that , but it's never in manner to offend or it's never in derogatory tone like: "You know English" or "quit talking German" like: "Ewe" It's never like that. I mean, and I speak for both people that I have lear-, known here in Zacatecas and in Durango, and in, uh, many different places in Mexico like León, Monterrey, stuff like that, places where I have spent time. It's never in, with an intention to be offensive or rangy or ... uh, uh, offensive in general. It's never with that intention it is [AN: more like 'carrilla'] yeah ... like 'carrilla', like: "Ah, ahí viene el que habla inglés" or something like that. It's never with negative intentions. At least in my experience, I haven't known people like: "Oh, you're not Mexican" or stuff like that. But, I think that has to do with people who are known to have a connection with the United States or some other country like, maybe that friend that I mentioned [friend's name], maybe he suffers from some of that like: "Oh, here comes the 'pocho'" or the 'gringo' or you know derogatory terms ...

AN: ...because of his migrant background?

I: Exactly, yes, but maybe, maybe ...

AN: Alright, so to finish I don't know if you have any comments or questions any other thing that you've noticed about your bilingualism or the languages you speak?

I: Well, again, as I, as I mentioned English is a language, it's a tool that we use to communicate to each other with varying degrees of success, so, I, I, I see it as that as a tool, as a ... an ability that you can use to ah establish conversations with other people regardless of their background, I mean, I can go and talk with a New Yorker, I can go talk with a British guy, I can go talk with a South African, people from Honk Kong, stuff like that, I mean it's, it's a tool that opens up the world to you, and English nowadays I think it has that power, and, but, but it's the same case with other languages that's why I'm aiming to broaden my horizons and learn other languages because it opens up a who:le new hip of opportunities for you, uh, be it studying abroad, uh, getting a scholarship, be it personal realization or something, I mean, the reasons are there and they're many, many, many, many reasons why you would want to learn a language other than your mother tongue, but still I ... I always keep in mind that t's just that a tool that you can use to communicate, and, uh, definitely ... uhm, it is a tool that is hard to develop, it is a tool that is hard to study if you do not have contact with locals, like if you're not studying directly in the United States, if in your community you don't have people who speak it you would have some trouble, but there's nothing to be alarmed, there's nothing too severe, something that only time will improve I guess. That's my take on the language. It's a tool! Use it or not! @@@ It's ok, it's up to you!

AN: yeah, yeah ... alright ... well, thank you very much for your comments, this was really, really interesting [I: Thank YOU!] fascinating

Appendix 8
Writing composition sample: Sasha

I was 4 years old when I arrived to live in the USA. I was in my first year of kindergarten when my mom decided we were moving. It did not take long for mom to put me into school. I was so young I did not realize the change I was living. It was no easy learning the language, I remember myself several times crying because I didn't understood the language nor the classes and as a consequence there were some times that I didn't wanted to attend school.

As I said before, learning the language had its challenges, I can say that I learned English among crying and frustration, but because of my mom. She was always pushing me to do things right and to be ahead of my classmates. By the age of 4 I already knew how to write simple utterances in Spanish, could read easy sentences and also I was able to add and subtract up to number of two digits. I understood by visual contact what the teacher was saying and explaining nor did not comprehended the language in a hundred per cent. Something funny that happened after several months of attending school in USA, was that I was able to understand what the teacher was implying and was able to respond but not in English. I did not had the enough vocabulary to answer but I had already begun to familiarize with the language.

My last and first two years of kindergarten were great, with many complications towards language but never had problems interacting with my classmates or teachers. To be honest I liked more school in USA than in Mexico. According to cultural aspects, well, those were very different. For example I did not know that they were celebrations such as thanksgiving, Easter; never went seeking for eggs till I got to USA, even the teachers and the teaching method were totally different.

My mother tongue is Spanish, but sometimes I feel like if Spanish and English were both at the same time my mother tongue. I am 22 years old and as funny it may sound at times I forget or do not know how to complete and expression in Spanish and appeal for using English or vice versa. Something that is important to mention is that when I want to say things like emotions or desires I

use English, I feel more confident and comfortable. I have the impression that depending on the language I use will be the impact I will make. At home, I have always spoken in Spanish, but when I am thinking for myself I think in English then suddenly I change to Spanish, I can hear music in English and understand completely what it says, the same thing happens when hearing music in Spanish.

Social aspects that identify my generation in both cultures; Mexican and North American, I know them and can talk about them with facility. Aspects likes; music, TV shows, games, trending brands, etc. I have always felt that I can develop myself in both cultures and nations. I know Mexican history as I know North American history, I feel comfortable with both teaching methods and also feel secure writing in which ever language it is. To wrap up I must say that I did not realize the moment that I had learned English, much less I was learning another language. I never suffered from discrimination until I came back to Mexico; Sombrerete. My classmates and teachers treated me different because I spoke English, my fellow students did not liked me at all, and making friends was difficult for me living in Mexico.

My Experience

First of all I'll like to clarify that I have never studied in the United States, but I visit this country often at least two times each year. I grew up in Mexico in a town called Jerez from the state of Zacatecas; Spanish is my first language, however, English has always been present in my life. I live in a State were half of the population (or even more) lives at the United States, it is rare to found someone who does not have relatives somewhere across the border. I have half of the family over there and when I was a child they always brought movies for me and my sisters, mostly Disney movies that were all in English, of course it was difficult to understand them but the association with the animations and actions could easily tell what was going on even if the words were unrecognized. It was not hard getting used to them and there was always someone there to help us when we felt lost with the words, repetition was fundamental because we loved to sing or even just to say a simple phrase that it was catchy for us.

Video games were another element that introduce me more to the language, I was six years old when I got my first console the language of the games was English and I just had a few in Castellano (I personally preferred to switch them in English, I could not take the game seriously when it was in this variety, I laughed a lot I was a little girl that did not knew why Spanish sounded so different). In order to follow the sequence of the game I had to understand what the instructions were, what the characters said, and what the system's control, for a long time I just experimented with the game until I found out what it was asking but as a I grew started to like more complex games, with more dialogues than actual gameplay. This is when I sought for information wherever I could, maybe a translation for a word in a dictionary or on the Internet for a definition in English of the same.

I was in an English course when I was seven, three days per week in the afternoon, I was not good with the formal language I could understand what the teacher said to me yet I could not write properly (I always had a 'C' on my exams, I felt disappointed) I quit the classes after a month. Later during high school (both secundaria and preparatoria) my grades in the subject were always the highest, I felt more secure with the language I even started to read comics or short tales online. When I started the BA English started to be more serious a more professional level for the academic purposes, the first three semesters were all in Spanish except for the English class of course and it was during those periods that I traveled a lot to the U.S. I felt insecure whenever I spoke with native speakers. After having all the fourth semester in English I felt different, the class of Applied Linguistics gave me valuable information about variables in Languages and accent. That summer I went to Arizona my purpose was to get a job but now I was not afraid of English anymore, I even felt proud of my way speaking it is a part of me. I did encounter

myself in many situations where I could not understand what they were asking me, I realize it was a matter of time, as the days passed I noticed how I was getting used to their Englishes.

I am glad that I am learning a professional and academic English, it is an indispensable key for my future, I admit that before entering the major I believed that I did not needed to know all the grammar because my speaking was not bad, why would I need to know that? Then I realized that my writing was not good enough because the structures were not making sense, the formality of the language is required if you want to be in the professional world; that is why I have been practicing more to improve that skill. In LILEX I do not have issues with English, in fact, I found strange how I can easily understand the topics, writing is the skill that I enjoy the most since I feel that in English it is easier to express my ideas while writing in Spanish, however, I do not dislike to write in Spanish I just know that if I want to write something good in my first language I require more time. Finally, in Jerez people is used to Spanglish but not English, you can see clearly how the influence of the Mexican-American relatives is everywhere! One of the issues is regarding social status some associate English with a high status, people will admire or envy you because you know it or it can be the other way for those who do not know enough Spanish and they only speak English.