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Uncovering the delegitimized experience of non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as attending a predominantly white institution

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Uncovering the delegitimized experience of non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as attending a predominantly white institution

by

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ABSTRACT

Language is an integral part of the Latino/a community. For Latinos/as, language is a symbolic marker of ethnic authenticity; however, no higher education research exists describing the ethnic identity development of non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand how non-speaking Spanish Latinos/as understood their status within the Latino/a community and the larger campus community. Utilizing Torres's (1999, 2003) work on ethnic identity development to situate participants' ethnic identity development, three themes emerged as descriptive of student's lived experiences: (a) It is a Midwest thing; (b) I am not that type of Hispanic; and (c) family. Implications for student affairs professional are discussed. In addition, recommendations for future research are explored.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Since 2003, Latinos/as hold the distinction of being the largest minority group in the United States, constituting 46.8 million people-15.4% of the nation's population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Not only are Latinos/as the largest minority group but they are also the fastest growing. The Latino/a population is anticipated to almost triple by 2050, at which point one in three United States residents will be Latino/a (U.S. Census Bureau News, 2008). Latinos/as are comprised of several groups, the largest being Mexicans at 66%, followed by Puerto Ricans at 9%, and Cubans, Dominicans, and Salvadorians at 3% each; the remaining groups all consist of people from Central and South American countries (Pew Hispanic Center, 2010).

Latinos/as, an ethnic group, are not considered a race because they contain a mixture of races, such as Black, Asian, Amerindian, and/or white (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001). Frable (1997) suggested that "race is used by social scientists to refer to distinctions drawn from physical appearance (skin color, eye shape, physiognomy), and ethnicity is used to refer to distinctions based on national origin, language, religion, food, and other cultural markers" (p. 145), thus ethnicity is a more appropriate term to describe Latinos/as. However, although Latinos/as can be considered an ethnic group with some shared experiences, it is hard to define what it means to be Latino/a (Pew Hispanic Center, 2005). Furthermore, it is important to remember that part of the difficulty in defining what it means to be Latino/a is the diversity within the group. Latinos/as come from varied backgrounds, exist in all social classes, and speak different languages, although a preponderance of them speak a Spanish dialect (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001).

Latinos/as are mired in ongoing change; two factors contributing to this change are migration and language. Historically, Latinos/as have largely been situated in the Southwestern United States; nevertheless, Census 2000 data suggested significant Latino/a population growth in every region of the nation (Saenz, 2010). The Midwest experienced the largest growth with 81%, followed by the South, with 71%. An additional change in the Latino/a population is Spanish language mastery. Spanish language continues to be one of the first things Latino/a groups lose as they assimilate to mainstream culture, evidenced by the 24% of Latinos/as who exclusively speak English (Pew Hispanic Center, 2004). This study examined how non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as form their ethnic identity, specifically focusing on the ability/inability of non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as to form peer groups with Latinos/as who do speak Spanish. Language is an important part of Latino/a culture, giving Latinos/as a symbolic attachment to their heritage. The Pew Hispanic Center (2005) described language in the following way:

> Spanish is the dominant language of the Hispanic adult population because of the presence of immigrants. Even so, more than a quarter of the foreign-born population speaks some English. The language profile is very different among native-born Latinos. Nearly half of the second-generation only speaks English and the other half is almost all bilingual, meaning they can speak and read both languages. Virtually all Latinos/as whose parents were born in the United States speak English and none are Spanish dominant. (p. 17)

For many Latinos/as, Spanish provides them a sense of pride, which allows them to feel connected to their culture and ethnic identity (Baez, 2002; Garcia Bedolla, 2003; Milroy, 1982, Ono, 2002, Ramirez, 2005, Urciuoli, 1997).

In the United States, Spanish exists in a subordinate position to English. As a result, ethnic groups' relationship to their language has become paradoxical: Language remains a source of ethnic pride and solidarity, while also a source of stigma (Garcia Bedolla, 2003; Milroy, 1982). Consequently, "persons who speak the socially disfavored varieties [of language] frequently appear to become alienated from their own variety of language and to judge it as, for example, inferior, sloppy, ugly, illogical or incomprehensible" (Milroy, 1982, p. 209). Gonzales, (2000) provided an additional example of the social stigma that exists towards Spanish language in the United States, explaining that Latino/a communities have been forced to adopt English as quickly as possible through Americanization programs, such as English immersion programs, ensuring Latino/a youth are English dominant.

While the population of Latinos/as has risen, their higher education performance as a group has lagged behind that of other racial and ethnic groups (Ginorio & Huston, 2001). However, Latino/a enrollment rates in higher education have increased (Llagas, 2003). In 1980, 16% of the 18-to-24-year olds enrolled in institutions of higher education were Latinos/as; by 2000, this number had increased to 22%. While these numbers seem to indicate a positive trend, a closer look at Latinos/as' college graduation rates paints a drastically different picture. "Hispanics currently constitute 17.5% (4.7 million) of the traditional college-age population (18-to 24-year olds), yet they make up less than 10% (1.5 million) of the total student enrollment in higher education in the United States" (Benitez & DeAro, 2004, p. 39). In 2007, only 7% of bachelor's degrees awarded went to Latino/a students, compared to 72% awarded to Whites (U.S. Department of Education, 2008). Moreover, a disproportionate number of Latino/a students are enrolled in two-year colleges (Llagas, 2003). Community colleges are particularly

appealing to Latinos/as because the colleges provide a flexible schedule, affordable access to higher education, and open admissions policies (Fry, 2004). Nevertheless, Latinos/as' pathway to higher education through community colleges has resulted in a reduced number of four-year degrees.

It is important to explore the experiences of Latino/a students at four-year institutions in order to further understand factors contributing to the high attrition rates of the group. Furthermore, research on Latino/a students is focused on Latinos/as as a uniform group; conversely, this study highlights the experiences of a sub-group of Latinos/as, non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as.

Rationale

Past research studies have focused on the experience of Latino/a students attending predominantly white institutions (Garcia & Figueroa, 2002; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005; Nevarez, 2001; Ostrove & Long, 2007; Strayhorn, 2008), rarely focusing on the experiences of non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as. In the United States, Latinos/as, as well as other students of color, are expected by mainstream culture to conform to mainstream norms in order to be accepted, and ultimately be academically successful (Castillo, 2009; Gonzales, 2000; Schlesinger, 1992). The expectation to assimilate may place Latinos/as in danger of experiencing both intragroup marginalization and marginalization by European-Americans (Castillo, 2009).

It is important to acknowledge the heterogeneity within Latino/a populations in the United States in order to better serve their academic and social needs in the college setting. One aspect of this heterogeneity is language fluency. English is the preferred and dominant language

in the United States. Recent Latino/a immigrants, and their children, are expected to learn English as quickly as possible and give up their native language (Portes & Rambaut, 1996; Schlesinger, 1992). However, non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as, who are predominantly English monolinguals, still experience stress over not speaking Spanish fluently, which affects their success in higher education and puts them at risk for severe psychological disorders such as depression (Romero & Roberts, 2003). Moreover, individuals who are linguistically acculturated are also at risk for experiencing discrimination from European-Americans and have a difficult time persisting in college (Becerra, 2010).

The studies conducted by Torres and Phelps (1997), and the subsequent body of work by Torres (1999, 2003, 2004) have contributed to a further understanding of how Latino/a college students develop their ethnicity at predominantly white institutions (PWI). Torres's (1999) bicultural orientation model (BOM) exemplified the dynamic relationship between acculturation and ethnic identity formation for Latinos/as. Thus, the BOM is particularly appropriate to this study. However Torres's (1999) BOM has generalizability limitations. The BOM is context bound--she focused on the Southern region of the United States, her model does not measure movement, and does not acknowledge the dynamic nature of acculturation. Furthermore, she did not focus on non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as and/or the Midwest region of the United States, which are central factors to this study.

Past studies on Latino/a college students' ethnic identity and experiences at PWIs have focused on Latinos/as as a homogeneous group (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001; Torres, 1999, 2003; Torres & Baxter Magolda, 2004). Only one study of which I am aware has focused on the ethnic identity formation of non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as (Ramirez, 2005), but the study was

situated within the Southwest region of the United States and only sampled Mexican-American women from the greater Los Angeles area, which houses a critical mass of Latinos/as. Ramirez (2005) interviewed 10 women and found three themes: (a) language was a cultural marker of ethnic authenticity; (b) language was a mitigating factor in their marginality within social and familial settings; (c) language did not impede the participants from practicing "Mexican traditions"; and (d) social settings with predominantly Spanish speakers resulted in people assuming these women spoke Spanish. Additionally, Ramirez (2005) found the intersectionality of physical attributes like skin color and Spanish were important for non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as.

As previously stated, research exclusively on non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as is virtually inexistent in higher education, but scholar Linda Castillo has conducted extensive research on a topic intrinsically tied to non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as' experiences--intragroup marginalization (Cano & Castillo, 2010; Castillo, 2009; Castillo, Cano, Chen, & Olds, 2008). Castillo has explained that students who do not adhere to the Latino/a group's cultural norms, (speaking Spanish, dark skin, low socioeconomic status, and living among other Latinos/as) are more likely to experience alienation from their own culture, mental health issues like depression, and high college drop-out rates.

Past research about Latinos/as and language has compared Spanish monolinguals, bilinguals, and English monolinguals (Bejarano, 2005; Garcia Bedolla, 2003) and the factors affecting language maintenance or loss (Martinez-Ramirez, 2009; Ramirez, 2005); however, these studies have failed to elaborate and/or acknowledge the symbolic nature of language, language as a marker of connectedness to culture, language as a cultural token allowing entrance

to the pan-ethnic group, and the relationship language has on the development of ethnic identity. In this study, I was less interested in the contextual factors that contributed to these students' inability to speak Spanish and more interested in the symbolic barriers non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as face when interacting with in-group members. Rather than focusing on the actual language skills themselves, self-perceptions of sociological and environmental effects within the college environment were the focus of this study (Zentella, 1997). Garcia Bedolla (2003) provided justification for the focus of my study. She suggested that Spanish language is the metaphor through which participants understand larger socio-environmental dynamics.

Since the focus of my study was on the symbolic nature of language, I focused on Latinos/as who are theoretically unable to fully connect with their culture and/or embrace their culture because of their inability to speak Spanish; thus the concepts of intragroup marginalization housed in social identity theory are applicable constructs adding complexity to acculturation models. Language, for Latinos/as, has traditionally served a dual purpose: communication and marketability. Yet, Latinos/as hold a deeper attachment to their language. For Latinos/as, speaking Spanish has heightened value, not for communication only but for its emblematic connection to ethnic identity. Speaking Spanish is more valued than other components of language; however, I acknowledge that language usage and/or acquisition, in the United States, is complex, contextual, fluid, and often influenced by a secondary language (Valdes, 2005). Spanish language proficiency, for example, has been measured by testing multiple components of language: speaking, understanding, reading, and writing (Arriagada, 2005). In terms of communication, all four components are equally important; however, speaking holds additional value that transcends communication. Although non-Spanish speaking

Latinos/as may understand, read, and write in Spanish, their legitimacy within the Latino/a group is minimal because they are unable to verbally and symbolically communicate with other Latinos/as. Spanish speaking Latinos/as immediately view non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as as less than, regardless of their proficiency in understanding, writing, and reading the language (Garcia Bedolla, 2003).

Purpose

In recent years, Latino/a populations have begun migrating from Southwestern cities and/or urban areas to locales historically inhabited largely by European-Americans, such as the Midwest region of the United States (Millard & Chapa, 2004). With this change in demographics, Latinos/as in the Midwest need to receive more attention through scholarly inquiry. Latinos/as in the Midwest face unique challenges and more studies need to assess the environmental influences affecting Latinos/as' ethnic identity (Iowa Project EXPORT Center of Excellence, 2004). Thus, the purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand the experiences of one sub-group of Latinos, non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as, at a PWI in the Midwest region of the United States.

This research study provides student affairs professionals with further knowledge about the heterogeneity within the Latino/a group, while also adding to the larger literature base on Latino/a students. This study can reshape the way student affairs professionals work with Latino/a students; in particular, by increasing awareness about the issues with which non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as contend while trying to find a space where they "fit in." Non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as are a unique population, with unique needs, that should be distinguished from other Latino/a groups. Typically, non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as are

considered to be more acculturated to the United States mainstream and more likely to be successful in the academy (Ogbu, 1987; Torres, 1999). The limited current research on non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as is inconsistent and seems to be highly influenced by context. Issues may have been overlooked and it is important to explore some of the negative affects non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as must address.

Setting

This study took place in a large, public, land-grant, research extensive university in the Midwest. Midwestern University (MU) currently has approximately 22,000 undergraduate students and about 5,000 graduate and professional students. The campus is predominantly white (84.1%) and only 622 students identify as Latino/a, less than 3% of the campus's student body (MU Fact Book, 2010). According to U.S. Census (2000) data, the city in which Midwestern University is located has approximately 58,000 people, of whom 1.98% are Latino/a.

Research Questions

With this research study I hope to fill a void in the research on Latino/a students by shedding light on the experiences of a sub-group of Latinos/as. Currently, there is a lack of research on non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as, and the research in existence is situated within the Southwest region of the country. I was interested in knowing how non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as at Midwestern University, a PWI, developed their ethnic identity and "fit," in lieu of their loss of language and intragroup marginalization. More information is needed about Latinos/as in other regions of the country, specifically the Midwest. As a result, the following research questions helped frame this study:

1. To what extent and where do non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as believe they "fit in" at a PWI in the Midwest?
2. To what extent do non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as experience intragroup marginalization at a PWI in the Midwest?
3. How do issues of fit and intragroup marginalization affect the ethnic identity development of non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as at a PWI in the Midwest?

Theoretical Framework

In order to understand the experiences of non-Spanish speaking Latinos, I used Torres's (1999) bicultural orientation model (BOM) and her subsequent work on situating ethnic identity (Torres, 2003) as the guiding frameworks to situate students' ethnic identity. In 1999, Torres conducted a study in the Southern region of the United States to validate the BOM, which she first introduced in 1997. The BOM is represented by intersecting quadrants (see Figure 1.1). These quadrants are formed by the intersection of two constructs: acculturation and ethnic identity (Torres, 1999). Both acculturation and ethnic identity have an influence on Latino/a students and impact the way students situate themselves within the model. According to Torres (2003), acculturation and ethnic identity are defined as follows: "Acculturation looks at the choices made about the majority culture, whereas ethnic identity looks at the maintenance of the culture of origin" (pp. 533-534). Acculturation must be taken into consideration when looking at ethnic identity because one aspect of acculturation is adaptation to the dominant culture. An example of this adaptation, or lack thereof, is maintenance of the heritage language. The resulting four orientations in the BOM are: (a) Bicultural Orientation, (b) Hispanic Orientation, (c) Anglo Orientation, and (d) Marginal Orientation.

A person with a Bicultural Orientation has both a high level of acculturation and a high level of ethnic identity. In this orientation, a person is able to function competently in both Anglo and Latino/a culture. Students with a Bicultural Orientation avoid picking one culture over the other and try to balance both cultures. Second is a Hispanic Orientation, occupied by people with a low level of acculturation and a high level of ethnic identity. Third is an Anglo Orientation. Torres (1999) noted that "a person with a high level of acculturation and low level of ethnic identity has an Anglo Orientation, indicating a preference to function within the Anglo culture" (p. 286). Lastly, the Marginal Orientation is marked by a low level of acculturation and a low level of ethnic identity. Students with a Marginal Orientation have difficulty functioning within Hispanic or Anglo culture, and may have an internal conflict disallowing them from feeling comfortable in a different orientation.

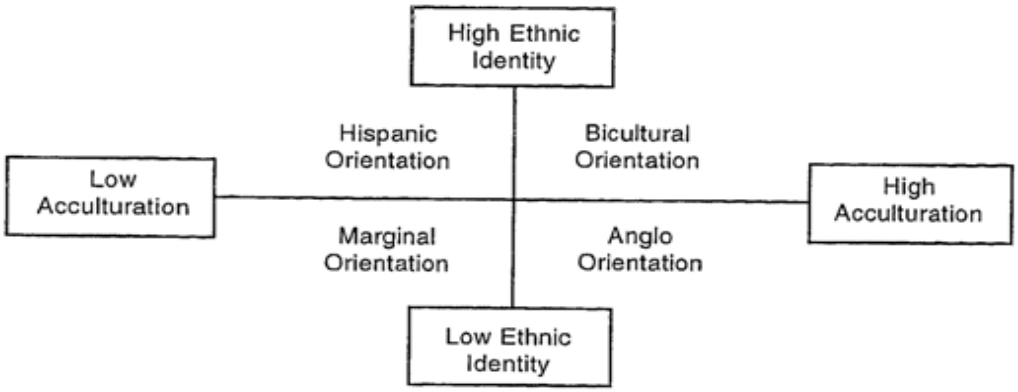

Figure 1.1 Bicultural Orientation Model (Torres, 1999, p. 287).

Torres (1999) found the concept of a low level of ethnic identity perplexing and stated:

> The low level of ethnic identity is most difficult to understand. None of the ethnic identity models address a lack of comfort in either culture. Phinney's (1993) Unexamined Ethnic Identity stage, suggests that a person at the lowest stage would

> accept the values and attitudes of the majority culture. If the individual, who self-identified with and was placed in the Marginal quadrant, was at the lowest stage, he or she would have felt comfortable with the majority culture. This finding suggests the existence of a missing stage that is interwoven into the acculturation process. This missing stage would incorporate individuals who are not comfortable in either culture. (p. 294)

Marginal orientation students can have a difficult time adjusting to the college setting and are students who need to be treated delicately.

Furthermore, Torres (1999) noted that 71% of the college students in her sample were either bicultural or Anglo oriented. Hence, Torres (1999) asserted that "Bicultural and Anglo-oriented students may seem more likely to attend college" (p. 295). Consequently, more intensive recruitment and special programs should be directed toward Hispanic oriented and marginal oriented students. Lastly, Torres (1999) suggested that all Latino/a students will eventually move into a Bicultural or Anglo orientation. Thus, it is important to provide an in-depth look at how students mitigate their choice of orientation and the experiences prompting students to explore their ethnicity in a context such as the Midwest.

The BOM is a two-dimensional model anchored by two opposing constructs: acculturation and ethnic identity. Torres (1999) stated that "two dimensional models incorporate both the relationship with the ethnic culture and the relationship with the new culture" (p. 287). For Latino/a college students, potential influences affecting their ethnic identity are endless. The interactions can come from within the Latino/a group, in-class, out-of-class, interactions with Anglo peers, etc. It is also important to note that the BOM is meant to differ from previous

linear models of acculturation. Acculturation and ethnic identity are independent and separate continuums, which allow for a more fluid model; however, Torres (1999) acknowledged that her model only provides a snapshot of a student's orientation, saying:

> This model only places individuals in a taxonomy; it cannot differentiate among individuals within a given orientation. Because quantitative measures of these constructs can only take a snapshot of where an individual stands on these constructs, this cannot measure movement within these constructs. As a result, whether one cultural orientation is more beneficial than another is difficult to determine. Incorporating a qualitative component to the research approaches used in this study would allow for further interpretations of the developmental processes involved in choosing a cultural orientation. (p. 296)

The limitations that Torres (1999) outlined are problematic. Latino/a students, especially those who are more acculturated, have demonstrated patterns of situational identity (Trueba, 2002) in line with the experience of multiracial students, as described by Renn (2004). Nevertheless, in 2003, Torres added a qualitative component to the BOM by conducting a qualitative study on the factors influencing the ethnic identity of Latino/a students during their first two years in college. Torres (2003), using a constructivist approach, interviewed 10 students on the Eastern coast of the United States. Two themes emerged from her study: situating identity and influences in the change of identity development (see Figure 1.2).

The first theme, situating identity, related to the conditions that determined individual students' starting point in their ethnic identity development, including three factors that

influenced ethnic identity: "the environment where they grew up, family influences and generation in the United States, and self-perception of status in society" (Torres, 2003, p. 537). The first factor for situating identity was environment where the student grew up. The major component of this first condition was the presence, or non-presence, of racial diversity in the environment where the student grew up (Torres, 2003). According to Torres (2003), "the diversity of the environment…[is] a continuous dimension rather than dichotomous" (p. 537). As such, students from diverse backgrounds had a stronger connection to their ethnic identity and were more likely to embrace cultures different from their own than students from less diverse environments. Furthermore, students who grew up in a predominantly Latino/a environment did not identify as a minority until attending college on a traditionally White campus. With this environmental change, these students developed stronger ties to their ethnicity. Conversely, students who grew up in predominantly European-American environments identified with their geographical location, rather than their ethnicity, and the diversity in the college environment caused internal conflict for them. The second condition, family influences and generation in the United States, influenced students' perceptions of appropriate terms with which to self-identify. Parents played an important role in the way students saw their ethnicity. Students learned about their ethnicity through their parents' stories. In addition, "the more parents participated in culturally relevant activities, such as speaking Spanish at home and attending Latino/a social functions, the more students identified with their ethnic identity" (Torres, 2003, p. 538). Furthermore, generation status of the participants and their parents affected the way students experienced college. First-generation students often had a

difficult time balancing the college's expectations with those of their parents. Consequently, students either tried pleasing their parents and/or hiding things from their parents (Torres, 2003).

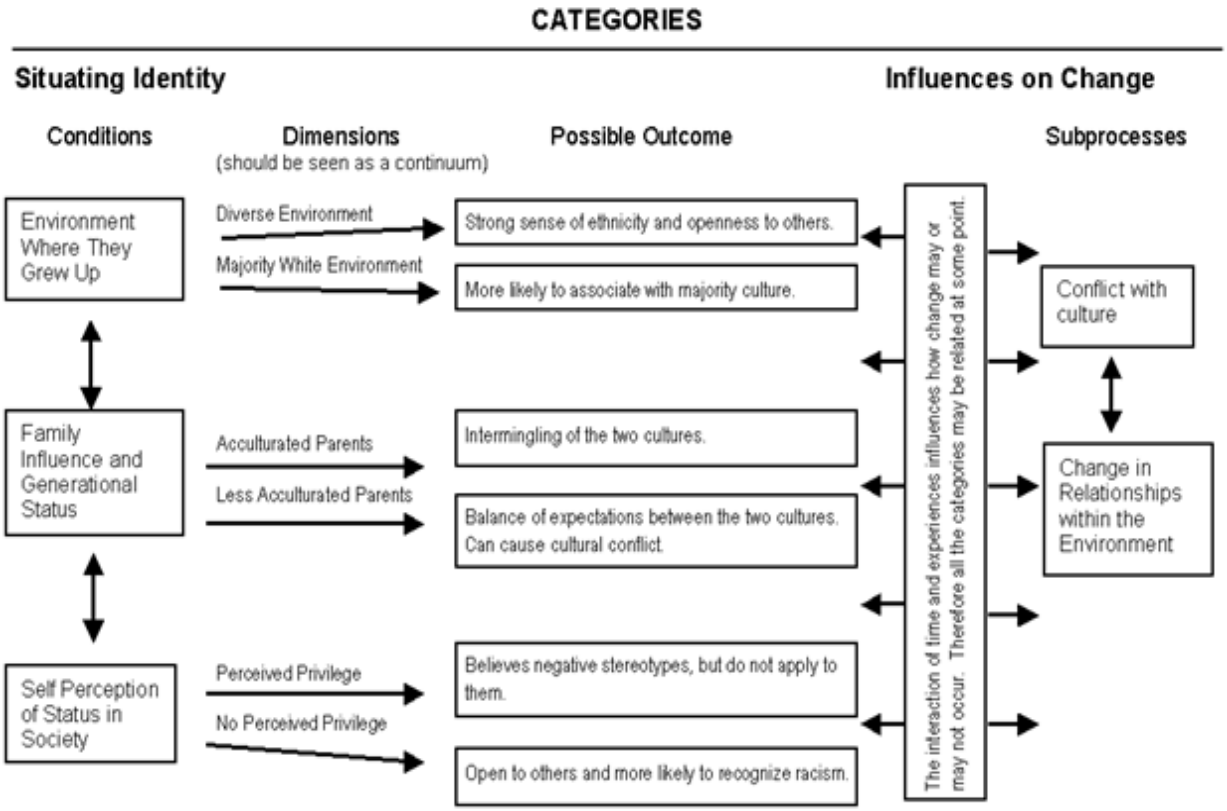

Figure 1.2 Factors Influencing Ethnic Identity Development (Torres, 2003, p. 241).

In opposition, Torres (2003) suggested that students in a later generation status had a vastly different experience:

> These students tend to have less conflict with parents and are comfortable with the role their parents play in their identification. This condition points out the unclear transition from issues of acculturation to development of ethnic identity. All of these students can be seen as highly acculturated and have no accent when they speak English. Yet, as in the case of the first-generation students, they were continuing to deal with issues of acculturation to the majority culture. (p. 539)

Although these students seemed highly acculturated, they were still struggling with assimilating to mainstream culture. The last condition, self-perception of status in society, was associated with perceived advantages and/or privileges. On one end of the dimension students refused to identify with the negative, stereotypical Latino/a, image. Conversely, students who did not view their social status as privileged embraced diverse others and were more likely to recognize racism.

The second theme, influences on the change of identity development, focused on how cultural dissonance and relationship building can be contributors to students developing their ethnic identity (Torres, 2003). In particular, students who experienced cultural dissonance during their first two years of college were more likely to explore their ethnic identity. Interpersonal relationships can also have a large role in the ethnic identity development of students; having a diverse group of friends can lead to a stronger sense of ethnic identity (Torres, 2003). One sub-theme that also emerged from Torres's (2003) study was that speaking Spanish was connected to the access to, and/or continued development of, Latino/a culture.

Reflexivity Statement

Part of qualitative research requires the researcher to be forthright with his or her assumptions entering the study. As a Latino/a who speaks Spanish and grew up in the Southwest region of the country, I hold multiple assumptions about the group I studied. My first assumption is that language contributes to individuals' ethnic identity development, although it is not the only contributing factor. Growing up in a predominantly Latino/a neighborhood, I learned that language was a symbolic marker of ethnic authenticity. Language was a paramount part of my life. I was the "language broker" for my parents, daily, sometimes about things that

were way past my cognitive development. Language was also the way to communicate with my family, because for the most part everyone was most comfortable speaking Spanish, not English. Year later I realized Latinos/as view language as more than just a communication tool; it is also a cultural marker and/or cultural certificate of authenticity, per se. Additionally, during my time at predominantly white institutions for both my bachelor's and my master's degrees, I have had multiple conversations with other Latino/a students who either do not identify as Latino/a or feel scared to do so because of the possible ramifications of not speaking Spanish. Second, I believe non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as face pressure from both whites and Latinos/as to maintain certain cultural norms. This pressure may cause non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as to feel marginalized by both populations and have an extremely difficult time developing a sense of belonging at a PWI. Third, I believe non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as are deeply affected emotionally and are scarred by negative interactions with in-group members who belittle them for not maintaining one of the group's norms—speaking Spanish.

I came to realize the assumptions I held about non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as through a series of events within my role as a Resident Advisor (RA), but the example that best illustrates my realization was leaving my predominant Latino/a community where mostly everyone spoke Spanish, and interacting first-hand with Latinos/as who did not speak Spanish, specifically, a fellow RA whom I will assign the pseudonym Journey. Journey and I met my junior year in college. By this time, I had served as an RA for a full year and was entering my second year of the job. At this point, three years into my undergraduate experience, I had met numerous other Latinos/as who did not speak Spanish; however, I intentionally did not form friendships with them because I viewed them as white and/or inauthentic Latinos/as. Later, I came to realize that

I equated their white skin color not only as their race but also as a marker of social class. Social class and race are not always mutually exclusive, yet I viewed white skinned, non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as as connected to a larger conceptualization of whiteness, one that involves skin color, social class, and privilege. It was not until my junior year, after being challenged by my supervisor to reflect on my network of friends and the barrier I was constructing between myself and non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as, that I realized I was implicated in the alienation of already marginalized people. This fact did not sit well with me.

I began to intentionally engage in conversations with Journey about her experience and she shared the reasons for her inability to speak Spanish. These reasons opened my eyes. After allowing Journey entrance to my life she has continued to be a great friend and a constant reminder of the narrow minded view I once held on a specific cultural norm. I realized that by alienating non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as I was no better than European Americans alienating people of color. My last two years as an undergraduate served as a time of growth and development in regard to my presumptions about who is a "true Latino/a." During this time of reflection I also realized the symbolic and metaphorical value of speaking Spanish. I valued people who spoke Spanish more highly because "we had shared experiences" in my mind; however, this idea does not always hold true. Similarly to Piper's (1992) concept of "the black suffering test," to which she was constantly susceptible, I realized I had also created my own sort of cultural test of ethnic authenticity for other Latinos/as, one which was impossible to pass if you did not have the golden ticket--speaking Spanish. Based on my previous experiences and the body of literature I reviewed, I believe language is not the *only* factor contributing to a student's ethnic identity development; however, it is a factor that deserves more attention and

may play a large role in the way students self-identify based on the negative perceptions they face when interacting with Latinos/as who hold similar beliefs to the ones I once held.

Definitions

In this section, I define various key terms that will be used throughout the study. Instead of defining every single term used in this study, I chose to focus on terms that often hold multiple meanings.

Acculturation: The process by which immigrants and their subsequent offspring learn and choose to adopt the norms and values of their new culture (Padilla & Perez, 2003).

Assimilation: Assimilation derives from the Latin words *simulo*, *simulare*, which means to mimic and involves the gradual process of becoming like the majority group (Abalos, 1998; Michaelson, 2001).

Ethnicity: will refer to Latino/a populations who are grouped together for labeling purposes and share their ancestry to Latin America and Spain. (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001; Frable, 1997). In this study, I situated the participants' ethnicity based on their having a Latino/a parent and their self-identified status as a Latino/a.

Ethnic identity: A continuum determining the extent to which Latinos/as maintain their attachment and cultural knowledge to their heritage group (Torres, 1999, 2003).

Intragroup: Within a particular group (Castillo, 2009).

Hispanic/Latino: Both terms represent any ethnic group who traces their heritage to one of the Latin American countries or Spain. Hispanic is often the term used by government agencies. The terms are frequently used interchangeably but I will use the term Latino/a

to acknowledge other countries that are not Spanish speaking (e.g., Brazil) but also from Latin America (Shorris, 1992).

Non-Spanish speaking: A person who is either unable to carry out a full conversation in Spanish or chooses not to use the language (Ramirez, 2005). This concept will be self-identified by participants and thus is susceptible to the student's interpretation and/or experiences (Weiss, 1994).

Race: Was narrowly defined as the socially constructed idea that phenotypical characteristics inherently make people different. Such physical differences, like eye shape, skin color, and hair, are varied within the Latino/a group, running the full gamut of phenotypical differences. Thus race will specifically refer to a person's skin color, not genealogical race (Frable, 1997).

Summary

The goal of my research was twofold: I wanted to shed light on the experiences of non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as attending a PWI in the Midwest and inform student affairs professionals and educators about this emerging population's needs. Torres's (1999, 2003) work has provided insight into the way students mitigate between acculturation and ethnic identity. However, through this research study I hope to shift away from seeing Latinos/as as a homogenous group by magnifying in-group differences, intragroup marginalization, and the impact these differences have on non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of literature pertaining to Latino/a college students. The chapter begins with a history of Latino/a cultures, followed by a review of relevant research about the current state of Latinos/as in the United States, including terminology used to label

members of the Latino/a community and factors that influence the situation of identity. Then, I review literature pertaining to history of the Spanish language in the United States, including a look at related legislation. Next, I summarize the current existing literature on intragroup marginalization, followed by a review of literature pertaining to acculturation and ethnic identity. Lastly, I review literature pertaining to Latino/a college students attending a PWI.

In Chapter 3, I provide a detailed description of the methodological approach used for this study, philosophical assumptions, research approach, participants, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, trustworthiness, and limitations.

In chapter 4, I present and summarize profiles of the four students who participated in the study. The profiles are important to contextualize how each student has experienced his or her life. Additionally, I describe how each participant self-identified using Torres's (1999) BOM and analyze how each student situated his or her ethnic identity using Torres's (2003) work on situating identity.

In chapter 5, I present the findings from this study. The emerging themes and sub-themes are presented, discussed, and developed using each student's words.

Lastly, in chapter 6, I discuss the findings from the study and connect existing literature to the findings. Also, I provide implications and recommendations useful for student affairs professionals' practice. To conclude, I offer recommendations for future research and my personal reflections.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

In order to understand the complexity within the Latino/a group, it is important to review their history, the influence of peer cultures on ethnic identification, and the role Spanish language has had for Latinos/as' educational experience in the United States. In this chapter I review relevant literature about: (a) the history of the major Latino/a groups in the United States; (b) the current state of the group; (c) the role and history of the Spanish language; (d) acculturation and social identity theories, (f) The Midwest and Latinos/as, and (g) existing literature about the experiences of Latino/a college students.

History of Latino/a Cultures

The difficulty with defining Latino/a culture is that there is no *one* Latino/a culture. Latinos/as originate from 26 nations, and each nation has unique sociopolitical histories that have led to different migration and acculturation patterns. Two commonalities between Latin American Latinos/as are: common language and Latin American heritage. Castex (1994) provided the following list of Latin American countries that are Spanish speaking:

> The countries included by the Census Bureau are in North America (United States, Mexico), Central America (Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Belize, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama); the Caribbean (Cuba, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic), South America (Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, French Guiana, Suriname, and Guyana; the last three, lacking Spanish origin, are sometimes referred to as non-Latino/a South America and the state language of Brazil is Portuguese), and Europe (Spain). (pp. 258-259)

As stated previously, each one of these countries has a unique history. For example, Puerto Rico became a United States territory in 1917 after the passing of the Jones-Shafroth Act. By virtue of this act, Puerto Ricans were awarded citizenship but also became eligible to be drafted into the armed forces, although they were not allowed to vote (Novas, 2008). In fact, Puerto Ricans are still not allowed to vote, which has resulted in some Puerto Ricans resenting the United States government. Nevertheless, Puerto Ricans are United States citizens who are afforded commonwealth status, which allows to them to travel to Puerto Rico and "return to visit or retire to the island" (Moore & Pachon, 1985, p. 35).

Latino/a history pre-dates the history of the United States; however, mainstream society's understanding of Latino/a people has been limited to a media representation of violent, uneducated, perpetual foreigners (Novas, 2008). It is important to discuss the differences between the three most prominent Latino/a groups in the United States, as I see these differences as imperative to understanding Latino/a students today. Similar to other groups of people, no two Latinos/as are ever the same and need to be treated as different individuals. For example, there are clear distinctions between Latinos/as who trace their heritage to Mexico and Latinos/as who trace their heritage to Cuba; although, collectively, Latin American people have adopted pan-ethnic terms, such as Hispanic and/or Latino/a, to have political and economical mobility. Subsequently, I will discuss the various histories of the major Latino/a groups in the United States.

Mexicans

Mexicans make up approximately 60% of all Latinos/as in the United States (Nevarez, 2001). The majority of Mexicans reside in the southwestern region of the United States in the

states of California, Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico (Moore & Pachon, 1985; Novas, 2008). A unique characteristic of Mexicans, in comparison to some Latino/a groups, is that they were already present in what became the United States when the European settlers arrived (Moore & Pachon, 1985). Mexicans, and Puerto Ricans, found themselves in the United States as a result of shifting borders and American imperialistic pursuits (Novas, 2008). A popular saying among Mexicans, which embodies the shifting borders, is: "We never crossed [the] border, the border crossed us" (Novas, 2008, p. 72). Since the early history of the United States, Mexicans and European settlers have been in conflict. Areas like Texas were highly disputed between the two groups and eventually were taken by European settlers who then proceeded to hire Mexicans as cheap labor workers (Moore & Pachon, 1985). Eventually, the European settlers took over additional territories that would later become New Mexico, Southern Colorado, Arizona, and finally California.

European settlement in the southwest region of the United States initially affected a small number of Mexicans (Moore & Pachon, 1985). However, California was greatly affected by the invasion of Europeans. Mexicans were living all along the stretch of the state unsupervised by the Mexican government. Two major events that affected Mexicans in California were the gold rush in 1848 and the development of the railroad around 1887. Tensions between Europeans and Mexicans continued brewing in California, and slowly, Mexicans became the minority in a state once owned by the Mexican government (Moore & Pacheco, 1985). Gonzales (2000) summarized the history of Mexicans in the United States by saying that:

> Anglo America continues to deny how much the social, cultural, political, and economic reality of the West and southwest have been shaped by Mexicans. They have been part of its creation and they will form an even bigger part of its future. (p. 107)

The Southwest's proximity to the Mexican border and unfavorable socioeconomic conditions in Mexico have contributed to the daily influx of new Mexicans. Most of these new Mexicans migrate to the United States in search of jobs in the underground economy.

Mexican-Americans educational achievement has lagged behind that of other Latino/a groups, mostly because second-generation and third-generation Mexicans perform significantly better than first-generation (foreign born) Mexicans, which Novas (2008) attributed to the large percentage of foreign born Mexicans in the United States. Furthermore, differing intergenerational educational achievement has resulted in significant generational wage disparity (Novas, 2008).

Puerto Ricans

The island of Puerto Rico was invaded by the United States on July 25, 1898. At that time, Puerto Rico was owned by Spain. However, after the Spanish-American War and under the Treaty of Paris of 1898, the United States was awarded the majority of the Spanish colonies, which included Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Philippines, and Guam (Gonzales, 2000). Constant war and poor economic opportunities forced 40,000 Puerto Ricans to migrate to New York City by 1946 and by the end of World War II more than 135,000 Puerto Ricans resided in the United States. The total number of Puerto Ricans in the United States was almost the same as Puerto Ricans living on the island (Gonzales, 2000). Due to their commonwealth status, Puerto Ricans

are allowed to travel freely between the United States and Puerto Rico without the need of a visa or a green card.

The people of Puerto Rico come from varying racial backgrounds as a result of a history of African, Amerindian, and Spanish intermarriage. Consequently, their skin colors run the full gamut of phenotypes. However, their culture, like many other Latino/a cultures, does not focus on these differences as much as Americans do. "Thus, for example, when a dark-skinned Puerto Rican--who may be classified as Black on the United States mainland--looks at a person with light skin--classified as White--he does not necessarily assume a different ethnicity solely on that basis" (Ferdman & Gallegos, 2001, p. 39). Puerto Ricans', as of 2008, preferred destination has been the east coast of the United States with the states of New York, Florida, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and Connecticut being home to the largest number of Puerto Ricans.

Cubans

The United States was awarded control of Cuba after the Spanish-American War in 1898, but shortly after, in 1902, it allowed Cuba to become independent. The United States still maintained control over Cuba until Cuba became an independent country in 1934, but under the leadership of Fidel Castro the country turned into a dictatorship (Novas, 2008). Mass migration to the United States quickly followed (Moore & Pachon, 1985). Cubans began arriving in the United States as refugees during the 1960s and 1970s (Novas, 2008). Many of the early Cuban refugees came from elite status, were white, and were welcomed openly by Americans under the Cuban Adjustment Act of 1966 (Novas, 2008). By virtue of this act, Cuban exiles became political refugees. This first wave of refugees did not experience overt racial prejudice because

of their fair skin, affording them quick assimilation and economic opportunities (Novas, 2008). However, in the 1980s a new type of Cuban began arriving in the United States: poor, dark skinned Cubans, which effectively ended the kind treatment (Gonzales, 2000). Immigration control for the Cuban population became an issue and the rights given to Cuban refugees deceased drastically under the Clinton administration, which ordered preferential treatment of Cuban refugees to come to an end (Gonzales, 2000).

Nevertheless, Cuban refugees "have long identified with European refugees who came to our shores fleeing Nazism, communism, and other totalitarian regimes, and like those refugees…have actively pursued the American dream" (Novas, 2008, p. 31). The first wave of Cuban refugees is now largely middle-class and they have assimilated into mainstream faster than most other Latinos/as (Novas, 2008). Of all Latino/a groups, Cubans have achieved the most formal education and consequently higher wages, which has allowed them upward economic mobility and helped them maintain prosperity (Novas, 2008).

Others

This category is not intended to diminish other Latino/a groups; instead, it simply illustrates the complexity of the Latino/a group, which I cannot hope to summarize within the scope of this paper. In addition, the first three groups are separate because they have the largest number of people in the United States who trace their heritage back to those particular countries. The remaining Latinos/as come from Central America, South America, the Caribbean, and Spain and also have their own distinct cultures (Gonzales, 2000). For example, Salvadorians, a fast growing population in the United States, have migrated because of the adverse conditions in their country (Novas, 2008). Now, more than 20 percent of its people have migrated to the United

States (Gonzales, 2000; Novas, 2008). By examining the histories of various Latino/a groups we gain some insight into the "baggage" some Latinos/as may inherit from their family members and eventually bring with them to our college campuses. With this fact in mind, in the next section, I describe the current state of Latinos/as in the United States.

Current State of Latinos/as in the United States

Latinos/as are attending institutions of higher education at a much higher rate than they did 10 years ago. Their graduation rates are the lowest of any minority group, however (Pew Hispanic, 2010). Current issues for Latino/a students revolve around what term best defines them, the role family plays in their education experience, and the role of cultural norms like collectivism, and skin color, in their lives.

Terminology

An ongoing debate about what term, Latino/a or Hispanic, best describes member of this community has defined stereotypes present within the Latino/a group. According to Torres (2004), the majority of the literature in higher education uses the terms Latino/a and Hispanic interchangeably. The literature has only predominantly contributed to the experiences of Spanish speaking Mexican Americans, however. Important to this study is Golash-Baloza's (2006) assertion that non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as are less likely to self-identify with a pan-ethnic label.

The term Hispanic was originally coined by the Nixon administration in the 1970s in an effort to racialize all Spanish speaking ethnic groups who, through colonization, were connected to Spain. Casas and Pytluck (1995) described the use of the term Hispanic by saying that:

> [Hispanics] opted to use the generic term Hispanic to include individuals of diverse Hispanic-based national origins including, Mexico, the countries of Central America (i.e., Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Panama), the Spanish-speaking countries of South America (i.e., Columbia, Venezuela, Peru, Chile, Ecuador, Uruguay, Paraguay, Argentina), the Spanish-speaking countries of the Caribbean (i.e., Cuba and the Dominican Republic), and the United States territorial island of Puerto Rico. (pp. 156-157)

Interestingly enough, Spain was left out as a country of origin for Latinos/as; yet, the United States Census (2010) defined Hispanics as people who trace their roots to Spain, Mexico, and the Spanish-speaking nations of Central America, South America, and the Caribbean. Not only does the term Hispanic have distinct definitions, but also, as a result of yearning for the categorization of people, the heterogeneity within the Latino/a group has been ignored not only in the college setting but also in the larger sociopolitical realm.

The term Hispanic is sometimes not seen favorably because it does not acknowledge the African and Indigenous heritage of Latinos/as and instead invokes memories of colonialism (Padilla, 1997). To some, Latino/a is a more inclusive term and reflective of Latinos/as' diverse histories. Hispanic is associated with Spanish colonialism and in an effort to resist continued colonialism, some modern day Latinos/as choose to steer away from the term Hispanic. Many people prefer the term Latino/a because it has less negative connotations, albeit still present, and is more inclusive and descriptive of a larger group of people. Latino/a refers to people who came from Latin American countries who were colonized by countries that spoke a Latin-based

language, such as Spanish and Portuguese. Latino/a is also a term that invokes memories of colonialism; however, the term is still seen more favorably.

Moreover, the term Latino/a is gendered (Novas, 1998). Spanish language rules are applicable to Latino/a, which is actually short for Latinoamericano, but not for Hispanic. As such, Latino and Latina are used to distinguish between males and females respectively. An additional factor influencing what term Latinos/as choose to identify with is geographic region in the United States. Shorris (1992) explained:

> Hispanic is preferred in the Southeast and much of Texas. New Yorkers use both Hispanic and Latino. Chicago, where no nationality has attained a majority, prefers Latino/a. In California, the word Hispanic has been barred from the *Los Angeles Times*, in keeping with the strong feeling of people in that community. Some people in New Mexico prefer Hispano. (pp. xvi-xvii)

Growing up in California I was taught at a young age that *Hispano* (Hispanic) was an appropriate term to define my particular background; however, Hispanic was not the preferred term in public circles. I learned this information through interactions with family. For Latinos/as, family typically plays an important role in their everyday lives.

For the purpose of this study I will use the term Latino/a, unless literature I choose to review used the term Hispanic or a participant preferred a different term. As noted in Chapter 1, Latinos/as are not a racial group; instead they are an ethnic group, grouped together through the creation of the pan-ethnic terms Hispanic and Latino/a. Throughout the study, I encouraged participants to self-identify with whatever term best described their experiences.

Family and Home

While there are numerous differences between Latino/a groups, one significant commonality is the strong connection with extended family (Hernandez, 2002). Latino/a students expect their family members to provide emotional support. Family members are often times integral to students' potential academic success, regardless of their own cultural capital (Hernandez, 2002). Although family is important, family support drastically depends on socioeconomic status (Zalaquet, 2005). Zalaquet (2005) discovered that successful first-generation, low-income students made educational decisions independently because their parents did not have the social capital to assist them, yet still wanted their children to succeed academically. Upper-and middle-class Latino/a students, however, had more structured family support and active parent involvement in their college going process (Zalaquett, 2005).

Torres (2004) further explored the role family influence has on Latino/a students and explained how Latino/a students situate their identity based on three parental conditions: acculturated parents, less acculturated parents, white parent or parents. Torres (2004) discovered that Latino/a students living in the United States had multiple labels that they used contextually. In addition to terms like Latino/a, Hispanic, and Chicano, students also claimed distinction from foreign born Latinos/as, disassociating from the immigrant communities in their neighborhoods. Torres (2004) attributed this selective dissociation to the presence of acculturated parents who have given their children the cultural means to negotiate the Anglo and Latino/a cultures equally. Furthermore, Torres (2004) described children of less acculturated parents as having more cultural conflict with their parents, because the parents lacked understanding of the campus climate. The last condition, white parent or parents, that Torres (2004) examined is of paramount importance to this study because three out of the four participants in my study came

from families that were half European American and half Latino/a. Using this condition as a theoretical lens, Torres (2004) found that these students used a variety of terms to self-identify in search of their own ethnic identity, which was unexplored. Students from European-American and Latino/a backgrounds described experiences in predominantly white environments in which people would mistake their racial/ethnic background. These experiences caused students to either explore their ethnic identity or ignore the experiences.

Regardless of family background, Latinos/as view family as integral to the sharing of cultural knowledge. Families disseminate information in the form of *enseñanzas* (teachings), such as the teaching of the "concepts of *familia* (deep connection and loyalty to extended family) and *respeto* (respect of elders)" (Ontai-Girzebik, & Raffaelli, 2004, p. 563). Additionally, family consists of more than the parents and children. Extended family members such as grandparents, cousins, nieces, nephews, and even godparents are often included in the Latino/a definition of family and it is not uncommon for all these family members to live under the same roof (Marin & Marin, 1991).

Arriagada (2005) argued that family and the home environment play an important role in the language maintenance of Latinos/as past the third-generation. Additionally, learning Spanish before English, geographic location, and school context were all factors found relevant to language and ethnic identity development (Arriagada, 2005; Torres, Winston, & Cooper, 2003). Latinos/as who grow up in areas where a critical mass of Latinos/as have settled establish closer familial ties and consequently acquire a positive relationship between their ethnic identification and self-esteem (Torres, et al., 2003; Umaña-Taylor, Diversi, & Fine, 2002). Moreover, Torres et al. (2003) discovered that "students in areas where Hispanic Americans do not have a critical

mass [are] adjusting to the majority at a higher level than students in critical mass locales" (p. 153). Additionally, students who grow up in areas with a critical mass of Latinos/as are more likely to speak Spanish and feel connected to cultural values (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2002).

Latino/a students have difficulty coping with the stress of leaving their family and home to attend college. Tinto (1988) asserted that students can only be successful after going through three stages: (a) separation, (b) transition, and (c) integration. The separation stage is often the most stressful for Latinos/as. They are forced to leave their family and their community in favor of integration to a new community--college. Transition to college, the second stage, involves students balancing their past communities and their present communities. The impact of this stage is often exacerbated if students perceive the new community to be drastically different than their past community. Consequently, Tinto (1988) suggested that "one would therefore expect persons of minority backgrounds and/or from very poor families…to be more likely to experience such problems than other students" (p. 445). The third stage, integration, parallels acculturation. Integration involves adopting or integrating the norms and values of the college setting through social interactions on campus. However, Tinto's (1988) model lacks acknowledgement of the importance of family for students and dismisses Latino/a students' need for their past community and family in order to be successful on campus. Instead, he proposed a need to assimilate to the college environment (Hurtado & Cater, 1997). Furthermore, Tinto's (1988) model does not explore the fact that Latino/a students may face struggles integrating into the campus community because often they are greeted by "racially tense environments" (Hurtado & Carter, 1997, p. 340).

Race and Skin Color

Although Hurtado and Carter (1997) suggested that Latinos/as arrived at racially tense college campuses, research on race and Latinos/as (Golash-Boza, 2006; Umaña-Taylor et. al, 2002; Urciuoli,1997) suggests that some Latino/s are more likely to experience the racial tensions. These racial tensions mostly affect dark skinned Latinos/as who "fit the stereotypes" of Latinos/as with regard to appearance. Urciuoli (1997) argued that Puerto Rican linguistic behavior must be understood within the context of what she calls racialization and how the value attributed to particular languages is intimately tied to larger understandings of race and racial hierarchy in U.S. society. Although external categorizations affect ethnic identity and varying levels of assimilation and acculturation, each individual can choose to accept, embrace, or reject these categorizations (Golash-Boza, 2006).

Latinos/as who appear white and do not have an accent are more likely to assimilate into mainstream society, become full "Americans," and have a symbolic attachment to their ancestor's nation of origin. "They, like immigrants from Europe, can disappear unnoticed into the melting pot, if they so choose" (Golash-Boza, 2006, p. 52). Additionally, these white Latinos/as have a facilitated path towards leadership roles (Lopez, 2003). Lopez (2003) described Latino/a leaders as white, not Anglo white. Instead, they have an internalized view of whiteness, which includes "class privilege, education, physical features, accent, acculturation, self-conception, and social consensus" (p. 1). Consequently, they see themselves, and are perceived by others, as white. Additional research has coincided with that of Lopez (2003), noting that for some Latinos/as their ethnicity is not salient because a privileged economic situation takes precedent over an ethnic minority status (Umaña-Taylor, et. al, 2002).

The relevance of skin color and the impact skin color has on perceived discrimination and ethnic identification, seems to play an important, but often times unconscious role in students' lives. A recent study released by the American Sociological Review (2010) concluded that race in the United States has existed as a dichotomy--black versus white—however, Latinos/as do not neatly fit into this historical view on race. The inability to neatly fit into a category has forced Latinos/as to begin identifying as racially white (American Sociological Review, 2010), thus becoming American (Golash-Boza, 2006). In fact the American Sociological Review (2010) found that 79% of Latinos/as who participated in their study self-identified as white racially, but Latino/a ethnically, and ascertained that fair skinned Latinos/as are accepted as white by mainstream society and are less likely to experience racial discrimination. Adding to the complexity of identifying racially for Latinos/as, Fergus (2009) found that Latinos/as maintain their ideal racial group by setting racial boundaries that determine who is allowed entrance to the group and who is excluded based on the preferred skin color of the group.

Golash-Boza (2006) suggested that the term American is intrinsically tied to whiteness, therefore, "white Latinos/as" have less difficulty assimilating in the United States than dark skinned Latinos/as who are not accepted as white or American. In support of Golash-Boza (2006), the American Sociological Review (2010) concluded that a new racial boundary will form allowing some Latinos/as to continue racially self-identifying as white, generating an emerging racial categorization for dark skinned Latinos/as who are not perceived to be American yet are also not really members of their ancestors' nation of origin, becoming foreigners in both their host country and the nation of origin. Ono (2002) highlighted the complexity of being a foreigner in both the United States and Mexico by describing the term Mexican as a label that

Mexican-Americans used to indicate not only Mexican heritage and Mexican cultural practices, but also an identity directly associated with a history of disenfranchisement and discrimination. Furthermore, although Hispanic is an ethnic term, Golash-Boza (2006) argued that the term Hispanic is used by Americans to describe Latinos/as both racially and ethnically. Golash- Boza (2006) explained:

> The ethnic label Hispanic refers to people whose geographic origins lay south of the Rio Grande, and is applied based on cultural characteristics. While the racial label, Hispanic, is applied based on phenotype to people who look like they have Latin American ancestry according to stereotypes that exist in North American imaginary. (p. 35)

As previously stated, Americans "view Hispanics as poor, uneducated, unclean, illegal aliens [who are] prone to teenage pregnancy" (Golash-Boza, 2006, p. 28). Dark skinned Latinos/as are susceptible to experiencing discrimination based on these stereotypes and are more likely to identify with an ethnic label (Golash-Boza, 2006; Ono, 2002). Discrimination discourages Latinos/as from "dropping the hyphen" from Mexican-American and becoming fully assimilated to "American" culture (Golash-Boza, 2006). Additionally, she suggested that white Hispanics experience ethnic discrimination but do not experience racism. Golash-Bozo (2006) established that Hispanics who are perceived to be Black face racial discrimination as other Black Americans do. Issues of racial stigma affect how Latinos/as relate to their language and their ethnic identity development (Urciuoli, 1997). Moreover, the linguistic hierarchy that exists in the Unites States is directly related to the larger racial hierarchy present in the United States. Latinos/as' relationship to Spanish, and by extension, immigrants, becomes hostile because it is

embedded within the larger oppressive racial hierarchy (Garcia-Bedolla, 2003; Torres et. al, 2003; Urciuoli, 1997).

Surely Hurtado and Carter's (1997) findings about racially tense college campuses are still pertinent today; however, it is important to acknowledge which Latino/a groups experience the racially tense campus first-hand. Nevertheless, during this time of racial tension and high stress on college campuses, Latino/a students look towards family members for support (Hurtado & Carter, 1997). Past researchers have identified family as a critical component of ethnic identity formation for Latino/a students and thus believe it is important to analyze the teachings students adopt from their parents, one of which is a collectivist mindset.

Collectivism

Hernandez (2002) noted that many of the participants in his study attended college not for personal gain but instead to position themselves favorably and assist their current and future family economically after graduation. This act of selflessness is often referred to as collectivism. Collectivism is the practice of highlighting "the needs, objectives, and points of view of an ingroup while individualistic cultures determine their social behavior primarily in terms of personal objectives, attitudes, and values that resemble little if at all those of the ingroup" (Marin & Marin, 1991, p. 11). Often times, Latinos/as struggle living out their collectivist values on college campuses because individualistic behavior is much more accepted. Nonetheless, acts of collectivism are evident through the establishment of clubs and organizations that result in lifelong friendships and support for Latinos/as (Hernandez, 2002).

History of the Spanish Language in the U.S.

Before the creation of the first colonies, present day United States was already inhabited by Mexicans. With the constant influx of European immigrants entering what would become the United States, a new conflict arose, and language differences became evident. As a result, language became an issue. Moore and Pachon (1985) suggested that as early as 1850, states such as California overthrew laws written in Spanish and passed laws that forbade school instruction in the Spanish language. Other languages already spoken in the United States were ignored by what would become European Americans. Gonzales (2000) described the groups already in what would become the United States as follows:

> The [group] least understood encompasses those people who were already living in the New World when their lands were either conquered or acquired by the United States: the Native Americans, the French Creoles of Louisiana, the Mexicans, and the Puerto Ricans. These latter groups became [United States] citizens by force. Congress declared them so without any vote or petition on their part. It did not care what language they spoke nor did it seek their public oath of allegiance. (p. 208)

Latinos/as and other groups were forced to learn one language, English. The prejudice and obligation to learn English stigmatized the Spanish language and still has an effect today. Many United States-born Latinos/as are unable to speak Spanish as a consequence of their parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents not being allowed to speak Spanish in school, and eventually at home (Abalos, 1998). It seems unbelievable that people were not allowed to speak the language of their choice, but it is a recent trend that Spanish language has become a symbol of pride for Latinos/as. However, there are still many Latinos/as who remember the stories of

their extended family members and are wary of learning and speaking Spanish in fear of re-living the ridicule and discrimination their family members once experienced.

Since the early 19th century, politicians, teachers, and staff members have forbidden Latinos/as from speaking Spanish in educational settings (Gonzales, 2000). Students who have not maintained this expectation, in some institutions and communities, have been reprimanded. The pressure to speak English over Spanish was not imposed haphazardly. The best way to describe which languages were suppressed (and continue to be suppressed) is using the word classism. One example that embodies the prevalence of this oppression is the use of accents in the spelling of Spanish last names. We often see proper punctuation and accent usage on names and words linked to European heritage (e.g., résumé) but not on names and words of Spanish origin (e.g., María or Limón). Consequently, after years of creating a stigma about Spanish language, people have placed less importance on the use of proper punctuation and accent use in Spanish (Giles, 1995). Accents are a vital part of a person's name and are important parts of the pronunciation and spelling of people's names. In addition, accents are also a source of pride (Giles, 1995).

The Role of Language

The use of Spanish, as opposed to English, is an important marker of identification among Latinos/as and is also a symbolic marker of cultural identity (Garcia Bedolla, 2003; Zentella, 1997; Zimmerman, 2000). The languages people speak are not just tools for communication but instead are influential in all aspects of life including attitudes towards children, marriage, and language maintenance or loss (Pew Hispanic Center, 2004). Baez (2002) reflected about his own linguistic experiences in relation to school, stating that "[language] gives

meaning to identity and culture (e.g., Puerto Rican or American), and to discrimination and oppression" (p. 129). As such, language could be an indicator of identification with a particular ethnic label (Ono, 2002).

Latino/a students who predominantly speak English are more likely to identify with the term American, rather than identifying with the term Latino/a and/or Hispanic. Furthermore, English monolingual Latinos/as agree more closely with European-Americans on sociopolitical and cultural issues (Pew Hispanic Center, 2004). Arana (2001) wrote about identity identification in relation to language and suggested, "Imagin[ing] an African American, a Native American, and an Arab American all defining themselves as the same ethnic group because they grew up speaking the English language. Imagine them calling themselves 'Anglos'" (p. 8). Moreover, language is important in symbolically maintaining and expressing one's ethnic identity. Language is key to how ethnicity is "recognized, interpreted, and experienced" (Fishman, 1989, p. 6).

In addition to the role language plays in selecting a term with which to identify, minority groups' language also plays a role in the way teachers perceive minorities (Garcia Bedolla, 2003). Spanish language is taught as subordinate to English, which relates to the power dynamic that exists in United States society and may influence a student's desire to learn Spanish if the student has an adverse psychological experience (Garcia Bedolla, 2003).

Language and Identification

Garcia Bedolla (2003) conducted a study in the greater Los Angeles area exploring the role Spanish language played in Latino/a communities' political and ethnic identification, using social identity theory and sociolinguistics. Garcia Bedolla's (2003) study is particularly relevant

to my study because: (a) she described in detail the importance of language; (b) she identified Spanish as a factor affecting to how some Latinos/as experienced their world; and (c) she identified intragroup marginalization between Spanish monolinguals and English monolinguals. Half of Garcia Bedolla's (2003) participants were non-Spanish speaking and indicated not learning Spanish because their predecessors had been physically attacked by authority figures, such as teachers, for speaking Spanish. Additionally, participants felt embarrassed and shunned in their communities because they did not speak Spanish. Non-Spanish speakers were insulted by Spanish speaking Latinos/as, resulting in their feeling disconnected from their culture. However, the desire of the families of non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as to help alleviate the social stigma attached to imperfect English skills created conflict for non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as with other community members. Community members who spoke Spanish viewed non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as' inability to speak Spanish as a denial of their ethnic identity. The ability to speak Spanish was a sign of being a true Latino/a, one who embraces their ethnicity.

Social Stigma

Additionally, Garcia Bedolla (2003) found that Spanish was an important part of Latinos/as' identity, but Latinos/as' relationship to Spanish was paradoxical. Spanish language was a source of ethnic solidarity and of social stigma. According to Garcia Bedolla (2003), speaking only Spanish was viewed as limiting and speaking only English was seen as a form of conforming; thus, bilingualism was the preferred language tendency. Spanish remained a source of ethnic pride and solidarity, yet it was seen as an obstacle to socioeconomic and social mobility. The perplexing part of her study was that Spanish monolinguals *also* experienced

negative attitudes directed towards them. Spanish monolinguals shared feeling defenseless themselves and could not take a prominent role socially, economically, or politically in their communities because they did not speak English. These participants also experienced embarrassment in the community for not speaking English. They felt insecure, frustrated, and powerless. Consequently, they taught their children English exclusively, and quickly, in order to protect their children and avoid the social stigma.

However, focus on English consequently made their children internalize a negative affect towards Spanish and underlines the "superiority of English." The feelings these participants experienced were not surprising considering they are living in an English dominant society; however, what is surprising is the frequency with which these negative experiences were the result of their interactions with other Latinos/as, not European-Americans. Intragroup marginalization or intergenerational conflict between native born and foreign born Latinos/as exists. This intergeneration conflict is further illuminated by language skills. Latinos/as are embarrassed to be Latino/a and speak Spanish, therefore native born Latinos/as treat immigrants negatively.

Spanish language in the United States is problematic and complex predominantly because of the racialized value attributed to English-language usage, the resulting negative value attributed to Spanish language usage, and the stereotyping that occurs for Latinos/as. Latinos/as' desire to distance themselves from these negative images has led some Latinos/as to disassociate from the immigrant members of their community. Exacerbating the negative image of Latinos/as, the media portrays Latinos/as as "gang members, wetbacks, illegal aliens,

uneducated, dirty, lazy, and stupid" (Garcia Bedolla, 2003, p. 279). European Americans internalize these images but so do Latinos/as who are native born and later generations.

Garcia Bedolla (2003) labeled the paradoxical relationship of Latinos/as and Spanish as selective dissociation. Latinos/as maintained their identification with the ethnic group but disassociated themselves from foreign-born Latinos/as and earlier generations who "perpetuate" the negative images of the group portrayed in the media. Additionally, native-born Latinos/as who are disconnected from the immigrant Latino/a communities only interact with foreign-born Latinos/as through the negative images they see in the media; therefore they are susceptible to internalizing those negative stereotypes and feel upset when they find themselves included in those negative images. Although the respondents in Garcia Bedolla's study grew up in a majority Latino/a area and they disassociated from the negative stereotypes attributed to Latinos/as, their outward appearance, for some, still led to unfavorable differential treatment by authority figures based on society's negative perceptions of Latinos/as.

Discrimination can negatively affect a community and in some ways get it to turn against parts of itself (Garcia-Bedolla, 2003). Participants expressed strong feelings of unhappiness about being judged before people got to know them, and feeling powerless to change how people reacted to them. Thus the native-born community members are using the little power they have to attempt and improving the negative views of the group as a whole, consequently improving their own image. One way they are trying to change the negative perceptions of the group is by steering the foreign-born to learn English and fit into the United States mainstream. Unfortunately the images are created by the mass media, which has complete autonomy in creating distorted images of the group.

Cultural deficit theory. By the 1950s, school failure of Spanish-speaking Latinos/as was attributed to Latino/a immigrants' inherent "lack of cultural values" that made them unsuccessful students and dominant white group members suggested that Latinos/as' school performance would improve if they mastered English and learned European-American values (Ovando, Collier & Combs, 2003). Cultural deficit theories were used by ethnocentric people who believed their language and/or their values were superior. Additionally, proponents of the cultural deficit theory saw schooling as the mechanism by which Latinos/as culture should be changed to be more in line with mainstream culture (Ovando, Collier & Coombs, 2004).

Proposition 227. Adding to the stigma about Spanish language, in June 1998, California passed proposition 227. Initially the proposition was met with controversy because of the close proximity to other political issues such as race, immigration, and poverty. Proposition 227 effectively ended bilingual education and was intended to provide students with limited English proficiency an expedited one-year English immersion program (Basterra, 1998). This legislation affected approximately one million Latino/a students, proficient in Spanish, who were now expected to learn English in one year in order to be allowed to enter the "normal" classes. The vast majority of Latinos/as voted against the proposition; however, there were some Latinos/as who voted in favor of the legislation. As a result of proposition 227, English-only initiatives were put in place and proponents of the law have stated that scores on academic measures such as the SAT have increased because of this law. However, this finding has not been substantiated by research (Basterra, 1998).

The majority of people affiliated with education also voted against this law, and dissenters of the law have stated that California is not watching out for the best interest of the

children. Proposition 227, along with 187 and 209 (discussed later), are only perpetuating the stereotypes of Latinos/as and are an effort to further divide majority and minority groups. Californians who voted against the law saw bilingualism as a positive rather than a negative and reacted in the following way: "At a time when the global economy and instant communication have business and industry clamoring for multilingual employees, it is sad that any Californian would vote to deny students the opportunity to compete for these high-paying jobs" (Basterra, 1998, p. 100).

*Proposition 187 and Proposition 209***.** In addition to proposition 227, proposition 187 and 209 are additional propositions showing intolerance for Spanish and Latinos/as in California. In November 1994, California passed proposition 187, the "Save Our State Initiative." This legislation denies illegal immigrants the basic right to public services such as social services, non-emergency health care, and public education (Martis, 1994). Two years later, proposition 209, the "California Civil Rights Initiative," was passed. The latter legislation promised to ban "preferential treatment based on race, sex, color, and national origin in public employment, education, and contracting" (Hadley, 2005, p. 6).

*Recent Legislation***.** Legislation targeting Latinos/as did not stop in the 1990s; most recently, laws in states such as Arizona (Proposition 203 and SB 1070) and Oklahoma (HB 120) illustrate the intolerance that still persists in the United States towards other peoples' cultures and languages. The most recent of these laws, SB 1070, otherwise known as the "Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act," makes it a Arizona state crime to be in the country illegally (Rau, 2010). Rau (2010) suggested that SB 1070 violates the First Amendment and makes Latinos/as especially susceptible to being targeted because of their language or accent.

Acculturation and Social Identity Theory

In 2003, Amado Padilla and William Perez proposed a new approach to the study of acculturation and argued that acculturation models should begin incorporating work in social psychology, using constructs like social identity. Padilla and Perez (2003) explained that views on acculturation are limiting because they are based heavily on three factors:

> (a) a static view of intergroup relations that does not address important concerns related to the motivation to acculturate; (b) a belief that acculturation is more or less a uniform process across all newcomer groups regardless of race, culture, or social status; and (c) a methodology that is limited to its reliance on self-reported language use preferences, entertainment practices, and friendship patterns. (p. 50)

Instead, proposing that both constructs, social identity and acculturation, work complimentary, since "acculturation [is] a mutual process in which both dominant and nondominant groups are involved…[and] it is necessary to take into account the cultural differences that distinguish the groups and their power relationship to each other" (p. 39). In this study I use both acculturation and social identity vernaculars to understand the lived experiences of non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as and the resulting ethnic identity identification of non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as. In order to understand said vernaculars I present literature on acculturation, specifically looking at the theories of educational anthropologists John Ogbu and Henry Trueba, as well as the work of Linda Castillo on social identity theory and intragroup marginalization. This review of literature on acculturation and social identity is by no means exhaustive; instead, it is intended to give the reader a working knowledge base of theoretical concepts.

Acculturation

Acculturation, originating in sociological and anthropological inquiry, is the process by which immigrants and their subsequent offspring learn to adopt the norms and values of their new culture (Padilla & Perez, 2003). Originally, acculturation was viewed as a unidimensional process; however, as research continued to develop, a multidimensional approach to acculturation has emerged. This multidimensional model, exemplified by Torres's (1999) BOM, discussed in Chapter 1, relies on two major constructs--cultural awareness (acculturation) and ethnic identity.

The two central components of acculturation are individuals' inclination to maintain their original cultural heritage, and to learn about cultures different from their own (Berry, 2003, Torres, 1999). Negotiation of these components, Berry (2003) proposed, results in four possible acculturation strategies: (a) assimilation, (b) integration, (c) marginalization, and (d) separation.

Assimilation is widely recognized as the most common acculturation strategy (Torres, 1999). The word assimilation derives from the Latin words *simulo*, *simulare*, which means to mimic and involves the gradual process of becoming like the majority group (Abalos, 1998; Michaelson, 2001). Michaelson (2001) suggested that one way Latinos/as often assimilate is by dropping or not using their native tongue. Latinos/as' countries of origin, unlike those of other groups, are in near proximity to the United States and therefore Latinos/as "are not isolated from their countries of origin…regular[ly] travel back to countries of origin when political conditions permit…[and enable] migrants to take advantage of technological advances to maintain contact" (Ontai-Grzebik & Raffaelli, 2004, p. 560). By maintaining regular contact with their nation of origin, Latinos/as are able to maintain a connection with their ethnic identity, once established, rather than completely assimilating into the dominant culture.

Interestingly, an up-and-coming phenomenon is the ability by Latinos/as to selectively assimilate depending on what context a person inhabits, thus making it difficult to define what assimilation looks like for the group (Ferdman, 1990). Trueba (2002) viewed this phenomenon as a positive, stating that "oppression and abuse can also generate precisely the opposite – resilience and cultural capital to succeed – which often creates the psychological flexibility necessary to pass for or assume different identities for the sake of survival" (p. 20). Although assimilation of Latinos/as is difficult to understand because of the intricacies of the group, Latinos/as are often seen as unassimilatable. This perceived lack of assimilation by Latinos/as is not entirely by choice and may be influenced by "generations of exclusion and discrimination[.] [F]ull integration into mainstream society has been barred to them, making issues of ethnicity and identity highly salient" (Ogbu, 1978; Ontai-Grzebik & Raffaelli, 2004, p. 560). Latinos/as realize at a young age that "Euro-Americans [see] Latinos/as as uneducated, dirty, lazy and stupid" (Ontai-Grzebik & Raffaelli, 2004, p. 276). Furthermore, because Whites have internalized these negative stereotypes of the Latino/a group, Latinos/as in the Midwest constantly encounter discrimination, although Whites in the Midwest think they are open-minded to Latino/a culture because they partake in the cultural practice of eating their food (Millard & Chapa, 2004).

Cultural-Ecological Theory

Educational anthropologist, John Ogbu, developed the cultural ecological theory of minority education achievement throughout his life. Ogbu believed larger social and economic factors prohibit minorities from fully assimilating into society and steer groups of minorities to view schooling unfavorably (Ogbu & Gibson, 1991). Ogbu (1997) also believed that minorities

are not a homogeneous group, and the heterogeneity within the group needs to be acknowledged and explored further. Since Ogbu did not believe in a homogeneous minority group, he distinguished between different types of minorities and grouped minorities in two categories: involuntary and voluntary. Involuntary minorities were brought to this country by force, have been obligated to "Americanize," and have faced discrimination. Examples of involuntary minorities are Blacks, Amerindians, Mexicans, and Puerto Ricans. Ogbu argued that involuntary minorities develop an oppositional, collective, cultural frame of reference--against European Americans--as a form of cultural resistance, which includes academic failure and/or dropping out. Involuntary minorities tend to view educators, and education, as a system that historically has excluded, subjugated, and oppressed them and their ancestors. Thus, they view education as an improper cultural norm. Involuntary minorities learn to value societal aspects in opposition to European-American values, also known as cultural inversion. Involuntary minorities do not give up cultural inversion because there are few incentives for them doing so when a culture of oppression and discrimination still exists.

Moreover Ogbu argued that involuntary minorities who do "succeed" in academia are not fully accepted and/or rewarded in the same way Europeans American students are (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). Additional characteristics of involuntary minorities include consciously, or unconsciously, viewing schooling as a detrimental process to their ethnic authenticity. In order to "fix" the oppositional view involuntary minorities adopt, Ogbu (1992) proposed the use of reform and shifting community and family norms by emphasizing academic achievement, celebrating those who do well, and pressuring those who lag behind to be academically successful. Lastly, Ogbu (1992) proposed that accommodation, or biculturalism, is the healthiest

acculturation strategy for involuntary minorities. Successful bicultural students, Ogbu proposed, act according to mainstream norms while in the majority culture, yet abide by the community (ethnic group's norms) while at home.

Voluntary minorities, conversely, reside in the United States entirely by choice. Examples of voluntary minorities include South Americans and Asian-Americans. These minorities view education as their path to success and a better life; thus, they have no problem accepting, and succeeding, in education because they have integrated education as part of their self-concept. Additionally, these minorities tend to have greater linguistic and cultural barriers to overcome, yet manage to succeed educationally because their mindset is congruent with that of European Americans. Moreover, voluntary minorities are surrounded by family, friends, and community members who pressure them to be academically successful.

Cultural Discontinuity Theory

Throughout his academic career, Henry Trueba openly criticitized Ogbu's cultural-ecological theory, stating that taxonomies of minorities' academic performance, such as Ogbu's cultural-ecological theory, are unfounded, simplistic, do not address changing affiliations, genealogies, loyalties, values, or attitudes of minority groups over time, and ultimately lend themselves to the stereotyping of minorities (Trueba, 1988a; 1988b; 1990). Trueba's (1987) cultural-discontinuity theory emerged in opposition to Ogbu's theory, asserting that Latinos/as are assimilating at the same pace as past immigrant groups (Trueba 1987, 1988a, 1988b, 1990). Trueba argued that minorities' academic failure is a result of teachers' and administrators' cultural incompetence. Furthermore, he proposed that dropout rates would dramatically decrease if alternative teaching styles were adopted and employed to accommodate the learning styles of

minority students. Chicanos, as described by Trueba (1990), do not see their ethnic identity jeopardized by engaging in "mainstream" society. Trueba defined mainstream as a set of cultural features, such as fluency in English, internalized American values, participation in American social institutions, and consciously accepting the mainstream as part of their identity (Trueba, 1990).

Trueba believed that socio-economic status within the nation of origin may expedite or retard acculturation, and had much more explanatory power than Ogbu's model. For example, a person from a high socio-economic class in Mexico would assimilate to mainstream culture much faster than a person from a working class in Mexico. Latinos/as' school performance has lagged behind because of "cultural discontinuity" between the learner and instructor, Trueba (1987; 1988a; 1990) proposed. Furthermore, he suggested that minorities' learning styles are not being catered to because schooling promotes middle-class values, and skills, resulting in the deficit of academic performance (Trueba, 1987). For Trueba, issues of group identity are irrelevant in the academic success or failure of minorities (Trueba, 1987). Success, instead, can be cultivated if new cultural patterns are employed in the classroom (Trueba, 1989).

Ogbu and Trueba had differing views on how generation status affects educational success. Fordham and Ogbu (1986) argued that later generations of involuntary minorities adopt an oppositional attitude to maintain their identity, resist schooling, and lag academically in comparison to first- generation involuntary minorities as a form of cultural resistance, while Trueba (1987) argued that second-generation minorities would perform better than first-generation minorities due to their greater level of acculturation. Additionally, Trueba (1987)

claimed that minorities have the ability to switch cultural norms to be successful in both school and their ethnic group, thus their ethnic identity was never being compromised.

Social Identity Theory

Current acculturation theories (Ogbu, 1978, 1987, 1992, 1997; Trueba, 1987, 1988a, 1989b, 1989, 1990) focus on how minority students react to particular stressors with the dominant group but place less emphasis on how others within the group react to students perceived as highly acculturated (Berry, 2003; Castillo, 2009). Members within the group can accept or reject individuals regardless of the individual's desire to be a member of the group (Castillo, 2009). This rejection is known as intragroup marginalization. Members of a group, such as the Latino/a group, are often marginalized by other Latinos/as when they develop characteristics associated with the dominant culture (Castillo, Conoley, Brossart, & Quiros, 2007). A form of cultural adaptation is the loss of one's heritage language, as is the case for non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as. Baez (2002) stated that "language not only creates the contours of identity, it also may set up the conditions for other kinds of inclusion and exclusion" (p. 129). Intragroup marginalization can be understood using social identity theory, Castillo (2009) suggested.

Castillo (2009) defined social identity "as an individual's self-concept that derives from knowledge of membership in a social group (e.g., Latino/a cultural group) and the values and emotional significance attached to that membership" (p. 4). Social identity theory is based on the premise of belonging (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). According to Tajfel and Turner (1986), people want to categorize themselves, and others, into groups but they want their own group identification to be a positive one. When persons belong to a group with a negative social

identity, such as Latino/a, their first reaction is to dissociate from the group. If they are unsuccessful in disassociating, individuals will embrace their ethnicity and work collectively with other group members to change the perception of the group (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Collective action is not an option until attempts to disassociate fail. Individuals whose physical characteristics disallow their ability to shed their identification with the racialized group are more likely to adopt collective action (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Being part of a group (e.g., Latino/a) helps to establish a sense of self and a feeling of inclusion; however, the heritage group itself decides what the appropriate norms are for membership. Norms of the heritage group are supposed to hold importance within a person's identity and group members are expected to adhere to the group norms (Turner, 1991). When a group member does not act in accordance with group norms, and displays characteristics associated with the dominant culture, intragroup marginalization occurs (Castillo, 2009). A group norm often associated with Latinos/as is speaking Spanish. However, scholars have noted that in order to fit in on a college campus, Latino/a students are expected to conform to the norms of mainstream society and assimilate to the dominant culture in order to be successful in college (Castillo, Choi-Pearson, Conoley, Archuleta, Van Landingham, & Pharmourath, 2006). Latino/a college students who assimilate to the dominant culture, however, are at increased risk for intragroup marginalization. Rodriguez, Myers, Morris, and Cardoza (2000), in their study of bicultural Latinos, discovered that highly acculturated students experienced intragroup marginalization as a result of not speaking Spanish or maintaining other Latino/a group norms.

Castillo (2009) pointed out that "interpersonal distancing occurs as a social sanction imposed upon an individual for exhibiting behaviors outside of the heritage culture group's

norms" (p. 3). Students upon whom this social sanction is imposed often experience being called derogatory terms that refer to their acculturation. A powerful illustration of the potential implications of intragroup marginalization is Murillo's (2001) personal ethnography. Murillo identifies as a Mexican American who was taught only to speak English. She spoke minimal Spanish but was not fluent. She described her experiences of intragroup marginalization when she worked in a grocery store frequented mostly by Mexican migrants:

> Some of the customers that came in the store were people from Mexico who didn't speak any English at all. At times it was difficult to communicate with some of the customers from this particular group of people. Some of these customers were real rude and mean to me. They would tell me things in Spanish like; I was stupid, that I was a coconut (brown on the outside but white on the inside), a dumb white girl, and other mean things. They told me that I should be ashamed of myself because I didn't speak Spanish. (Murillo, 2001, ¶ 2)

Murillo identified as Mexican American yet she was not accepted by other Mexicans regardless of her strong desire to be a member of that group.

The Midwest and Latinos/as

The constant growth of the Latino/a population is positively correlated with the number of foreign-born Latinos/as migrating to the United States (Millard & Chapa, 2004). Over 10 million Latinos/as migrate to the United States from Mexico, which is by far the nation contributing the largest numbers to the continued growth of the Latino/a population in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Migrating Latino/a people originally settled in the Southwest and the Northeast parts of the United States where a critical mass of Latinos/as still

remain; however, since the early 2000s Latinos/as have begun inhabiting areas such as the Midwest (Millard & Chapa, 2004). In fact, Latinos/as are the fastest growing ethnic group in the Midwest.

The Midwest has been identified as a gateway location for new immigrants, the majority of whom are immigrants from Mexico. Latinos/as in the Midwest experience blatant forms of discrimination daily, albeit these new host communities are actively trying to lessen race tensions between European Americans and Latinos/as (Millard & Chapas, 2004). The Midwest seems like an attractive destination for recent immigrants because it gives a perception of a higher standard of living and additional job opportunities, although discrimination is prevalent (Millard & Chapas, 2004). Second-generation Latinos/as born to Latino/a immigrant parents live in limbo, balancing their Latino/a culture and their Anglo experience with peers in predominantly rural areas (Millard & Chapas, 2004; Torres, 1999).

Adding to the complexity of Latinos/as in the Midwest is the value of niceness in the Midwest. Midwesterners are nice people who are "good hearted, salt-of the earth types, genuinely concerned about the well being of children, and dismayed about inequity" (Marshall & Theoharis, 2007, p. 1). Most Midwesterners live in predominantly white communities and do not interact with people of color daily. Consequently, Midwesterners describe diversity in a binary--non-white or white. They are reluctant to engage in political topics that make them feel uncomfortable or potentially perceived as racist. It is "not nice," within Midwestern culture, to talk about race. The Midwestern self-image is to value niceness; however, concepts of privilege and complicity in the oppression of minoritized communities contradict the value of niceness in the Midwest, putting Midwesterners at odds with minoritized communities like Latinos/as.

Additionally, racial apathy, and the general reluctance to engage in highly politicized topics, like race, fosters the adoption of colorblindness, the dominant post-civil rights racial ideology (Bonilla-Silva, 2002; Forman, 2004).

Colorblindness, mostly adopted by European Americans, is described as the avoidance of direct racial language, disregard of people's race, and overemphasizing of people's character and morals (Bonilla-Silva, 2002). Colorblindness, also known as racial apathy (Forman, 2004), exacerbates racist ideology and ensures the racial inequality that persists in the United States (Bonilla-Silva, 2002; Forman, 2004). People who believe in colorblindness attribute racist ideologies to minorities as a way of "feeling good about themselves" (Bonilla-Silva, 2002, p. 54). Colorblind people describe being a minority as a mindset rather than a state of being (Forman, 2004). Additionally, people who adopt a colorblind mindset describe racial minorities as self-segregators, living in segregated areas, who also benefit from affirmative action programs, which are reverse racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2006). Colorblindness becomes problematic for recent Latino/a immigrants and their second-generation offspring who settle in Midwestern communities where colorblindness persists. The avoidance of race in the Midwest also allows for lighter skinned Latinos/as, and other minorities, to "pass" for white.

Piper (1992), a Black, middle-class woman, reflected on her personal experience of passing in academia as white, and consequently facing alienation from both Blacks and whites. She felt pressure to prove her racial authenticity to other Blacks by passing "the suffering test of blackness" because of her apparent whiteness. The test was usually administered by working class, dark-skinned Blacks who had been discriminated against. Piper (1992) believed this test

was a barrier preventing her from bonding via shared experience with other Blacks; however, she realized that she would *never* be able to pass the test.

Interestingly, Piper (1992) found middle-class Blacks more accepting but problematized her acceptance within that community. She believed middle-class Blacks held a narrow understanding of blackness, believing they had an innate ability to recognize her otherwise invisible blackness by identifying stereotypical features of blackness. Moreover, Piper (1992) argued that people who pass as white do not actually do anything wrong. Piper's (1992) personal story ultimately describes a racial hierarchy for minorities who do not fit the stereotypes of the group. The racial hierarchy Piper (1992) described includes: (a) being viewed as white by whites, thus an inauthentic Black; (b) poor Blacks, or other poor minorities, viewing light skinned individuals as "watered down" versions of the authentic minority, thus shunned; and (c) middle-class Blacks viewing light skinned Blacks as authentic, but essentializing race and ethnicity.

Colorblindness and passing are particularly important for Latinos/as who grow up in the Midwest, or in rural communities where colorblindness persists, because they are susceptible to adopting a colorblind mentality and then essentializing race and ethnicity themselves. Additionally, Latinos/as who grow up in rural areas like the Midwest and then attend PWIs may be meeting more stereotypical Latinos/as for the first time and have issues situating their own identity.

College Environment

It is important to analyze past literature on Latino/a students to understand how non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as' experiences are similar and/or different. The majority of the

literature (Hernandez, 2000; Hurtado & Carter, 1997) on the experience of Latino/a students is focused on students' sense of belonging within the larger campus, not within the Latino/a community itself. Strayhorn (2008) asserted that research on Latino/a college students' sense of belonging has seen two waves of research.

Research was originally focused on establishing sense of belonging as an accepted theoretical construct; the second wave of research examined the relationship between sense of belonging and a variety of variables. Hoffman, Richmond, Morrow, and Salomone (2002) undertook the task of defining what sense of belonging, or fit, meant for minority students at predominantly white institutions, and discovered five themes: (a) empathetic faculty, (b) perceived peer support, (c) perceived isolation, (d) perceived faculty support and comfort with faculty, and (e) perceived classroom comfort. Learning communities have been proposed as a possible strategy to combat those feelings of isolation that are a product of a lack of sense of belonging for minorities (Hoffman et al., 2002; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Hurtado & Ponjuan, 2005). Additionally, a popular belief among student affairs practitioners is that increased student involvement leads to meaningful personal student development (Astin, 1984); thus, Latino/a students involved in cultural organizations are more aware of their culture, and their organizational involvement facilitates their ethnic identity formation (Guardia, 2006; Hernandez, 2002). Moreover, Johnson et al. (2007) determined that first-year students' social dimensions of college life (residence halls, and campus climate) were important predictors of sense of belonging. However, past researchers have not explored why some Latino/a students choose *not* to engage in those cultural organizations, as I have.

Many Latinos/as come from academically and socially unfavorable conditions and may not have the tools necessary to be successful in college; hence they are at risk to experience feelings of isolation and high attrition rates (Gonzales, 2000; Hurtado & Carter, 1997; Lopez, 2005; Nevarez, 2001). Additionally Latinos/as may be additionally stressed by feelings of alienation (Ramirez, 2005). Moreover, Latino/a students entering PWIs may feel a huge conflict between their current and former environment and have a difficult time coping (Lopez, 2005). As a result, they feel alone. These feelings are heightened when the campus environment is not welcoming. In addition, Latinos/as feel pressured to hide their Latino/a identity in order to fit in the new environment (Hernandez, 2002; Hurtado & Carter, 1997). Latinos/a who decide not to assimilate may be in danger of leaving the university early because of stress-related issues. Ostrove and Long (2007) conducted a study of Latino/a students attending a small liberal arts college and found that students' background variables had the most explanatory relation to sense of belonging. Social class, specifically, was a significant predictor of sense of belonging.

Summary

This chapter provides a review of literature pertaining to Latino/a college students' cultural history, Spanish language, factors influencing ethnic identity development and identification, acculturation theories, social identity theory, and the Latino/a college experience. A review of literature suggested a gap in the research on non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as' ethnic identity development.

The literature revealed the importance of language, social stigma, history, and family in the way Latino/as choose to identify and explore their ethnicity. In particular, language was revealed to be a symbolic marker of ethnicity, rather than purely a communication tool; however,

Latinos/as' relationship to the language is paradoxical. It is both a source of stigma and pride. Also, skin color and race for Latinos/as are complex and dynamic, which makes Latinos/as generally uncomfortable and unsure of what their race is, causing some Latinos/as to identify as white racially and facilitating their assimilation process to mainstream if they in fact are white skinned. White-skinned Latinos/as and dark-skinned Latinos/as have very unique experiences in the United States. One group can choose to pass as white and expedite assimilation and acculturation; while the other group is constantly reminded of the stereotypical and narrow bounded view Americans have of Latinos/as as a group, because of their stereotypical Latino/a physical appearance. Social identity theory and acculturation literature revealed that Latinos/as have to not only make decisions about the adoption of the cultural norms of the host nation but also the cultural norms of their own group while trying to stay authentic enough to be accepted within the Latino/a group. With the increase in Latinos/as in the United States, it is important to keep in mind that the Latino/a population continues to evolve and maintenance of some cultural norms may be an unattainable expectation for in-group members.

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences of non-Spanish speaking Latino/a students attending a PWI within the Midwest region of the United States. Much of the literature on Latino/a students' experiences in college is quantitative in nature and does not provide in-depth analysis of the role context plays in meaning making for individuals attending institutions of higher education. Additionally, research on non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as has been exclusively used in areas where Latinos/as are a critical mass, specifically, the "borderland" has served as the primary area for contemporary comparative research on foreign-born Latinos/as (Spanish monolinguals) and native-born Latinos/as (bilingual and English monolingual). Non-Spanish speaking Latino/a students have not received scholarly attention and it is important to know how their college experiences compare to the body of literature on ethnic identity development for the larger Latino/a group.

Since questions of language are subjective to people's experiences and feelings, and this study was focused on the symbolic nature of language and the effects of not speaking Spanish on ethnic identity, a qualitative inquiry was appropriate for arriving at a better understanding of these questions (Weis, 1994). Through the use of a qualitative research design I gathered rich qualitative data that enabled me to provide a more in-depth understanding of non-Spanish speaking Latina/o students' college going experiences (Merriam & Associates, 2002). Additionally, I used phenomenology as my methodological framework. This methodology is "generally seen as a study of people's subjective and everyday experiences" (Crotty, 1998, p. 83). In this chapter I present further rationale for a qualitative research design for this study, followed by the epistemology, methodology, methods, data analysis, goodness, and limitations of

the study. Prior to collecting data, I filed an application to conduct research involving human subjects with the Office of Research Compliance at Midwestern University and was approved on February 22, 2011.

Methodological Approach

In order to achieve the purpose of my study I chose to employ a qualitative methodology, which allowed me to hear students' voices and stories in regards to the phenomenon in question. Qualitative research has long been employed in fields such as anthropology and sociology (Merriam & Associates, 2002). It is no longer limited to these two fields; instead, it has gained widespread recognition as an appropriate method of inquiry in the social sciences and education disciplines. Qualitative methodology "refers in the broadest sense to the research that produces descriptive data--people's own written or spoken words and observable behavior" (Taylor & Bodgen, 1998, p. 7). Furthermore, "Qualitative approaches to research provide methods for raising and answering questions about college students through the investigation of their participation in socially organized interaction" (Patton, 1990, p. 393). Qualitative research allows for a more casual exchange, thus a more natural setting by which to understand a natural phenomenon (Glesne, 2011).

Manning (1992), described qualitative research as an appropriate method of inquiry for student affairs because, "qualitative research methods have much to offer the student affairs field. They can help make sense of complex questions, address the meaning present in a situation, and delve deeply into understanding another's perspective" (p. 135). Additionally, Patton (1991) noted that "qualitative approaches to research provide methods for raising and answering questions about college students" (p. 393). Moreover, "through qualitative research,

information completely unanticipated by those soliciting input about the quality of campus life can be collected. The resulting data are richly descriptive and faithful to students' perspectives" (Manning, 1992, p. 133). By using a qualitative approach for this study I was able to gather rich and descriptive data about how students made meaning about the phenomenon being researched.

For the purposes of this study, the perspective I wanted to further understand was that of non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as' ethnic identity development in relation to their status as non-Spanish speaking, within an ethnic group whose cultural norms include speaking Spanish. I became interested in the sub-population of Latinos/as upon reflecting on my life and searching for something to study (Esterberg, 2002). I chose a basic interpretive approach as my qualitative approach to research my area of interest. Merriam and Associates (2002) explained that in basic interpretive research, " the researcher is understanding how participants make meaning of a situation or phenomenon, this meaning is mediated through the researcher as instrument, the strategy is inductive, and the outcome is descriptive" (p. 6). Furthermore, a basic interpretive approach allows the researcher to identify common themes represented in multiple participants' lives (Merriam & Associates, 2002).

Philosophical Assumptions

In this study I used the epistemological perspective of constructionism. The philosophical assumption of constructionism suggests humans generate knowledge and meaning through their environmental interactions with a focus on understanding (Crotty, 1998). Researchers employing a constructionist perspective focus on "understanding and interpreting how various participants construct the world around them" (Glesne, 2011, p. 5). Crotty (1998) defined constructionism as "the view that all knowledge and therefore all meaningful reality as

such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context" (p. 42). Broido and Manning (2002) noted three basic assumptions of constructionism:

1. The researcher-respondent relationship is subjective, interactive and interdependent.
2. Reality is multiple, complex, and not easy quantifiable.
3. The values of the researcher, respondents, research site, and underlying theory cannot help but undergird all aspects of the research. (p. 436)

Constructionism was appropriate for this research study because I wanted to learn through discussion about the participants' experiences being non-Spanish speaking and Latinos/as.

Research Approach

A phenomenological methodology is the research approach I chose to guide this study. I chose phenomenology as my guiding framework because "a phenomenological study focuses on the essence or structure of an experience" (Merriam & Associates, 2002, p. 7). Moustakas (1994) explained that phenomenology "involves a return to experience in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for reflective structural analysis that portrays the essence of the experience" (p. 13). Furthermore, Moustakas (1994) noted that

> in phenomenological studies the investigator abstains from making suppositions, focuses on a specific topic freshly and naively, constructs a question or problem to guide the study, and derives the finding that will provide the basis for further research and reflection. (p. 47)

I acknowledge it was at times difficult for me to abstain from making suppositions and engage in these topics naively because of my status as Spanish speaking and Latino/a; however, phenomenology seemed to be the best fit for the research study.

Phenomenological studies involve the researcher and participant engaging in a friendly and casual conversation about how participants have experienced the phenomenon in their life. Creswell (2003) proposed five steps to phenomenological inquiry. The researcher: (1) needs to understand the phenomenological perspective being used; (2) creates questions that help explore the everyday lived experiences of the participants; (3) collects data from participants who have experienced the phenomenon; (4) develops themes using phenomenological data analysis techniques; and (5) reports the findings with an emphasis on the essence of the lived experience. Through this process outlined by Creswell (2003) the researcher further develops his or her own knowledge base on the topic and become an expert on the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). After completing this study I have developed a deeper understanding of how non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as develop their ethnic identity at Midwestern University, while also becoming more knowledgeable about past research studies on non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as, albeit not an expert like Moustakas (1994) suggested.

Participants

"Qualitative researchers usually choose research participants for the specific qualities they can bring to the study" (Esterberg, 2002, p. 93). Furthermore, Creswell (2009) described two typical sampling strategies in qualitative research: criterion sampling and maximum variation sampling. From the two sampling techniques, I selected criterion sampling, which guaranteed that students had experienced the phenomenon. By selecting only non-Spanish

speaking Latinos/as, I ensured they had experienced the phenomenon. Patton (1990) described a third sampling technique known as purposive sampling. Patton (1990) defined purposive sampling as "information-rich cases… from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research thus the term purposive sampling" (p. 12).

For this research study, I interviewed four non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as attending a PWI within the Midwest region of the United States. Hence, I used purposive sampling, which happens when researchers search for participants who have specific perspectives of interest for the research (Esterberg, 2002). In particular, each participant was chosen to fit the following criteria: (a) self-identify with either the term Latino/a or Hispanic; (b) self-identify as non-Spanish speaking; and (c) attend Midwestern University.

Seidman (2006) placed importance on the process of gaining access to participants noting that "because interviewing involves a relationship between the interviewer and the participant, how interviewers gain access to potential participants and make contact with them can affect the beginning of that relationship and every subsequent step in the process" (p. 34). Thankfully, access to participants was made easier by the fact that one of my colleagues worked for the Multicultural Student Affairs (MSA) office at Midwestern University and that person was able to help identify students who would fit the criterion I was searching for. Additionally, within my role as a staff member at Midwestern University, I had met students who also met the criterion for the study. I recruited the identified participants directly, a total of 8, via email (see Appendix A). Four participants responded back to me directly, demonstrating interest in the study. All 4 participants completed the three interviews and were also required to sign and read the informed consent form (see Appendix B) prior to data collection and choose a pseudonym for the study.

Data Collection Procedures

In this section I describe the data collection procedures I used to gather information from participants. The only method of data collection was a series of three face-to-face interviews. An interview is the "meeting of two person to exchange information and ideas through questions and responses, resulting in communication and joint construction of meaning about a particular topic" (Esterberg, 2002, p. 83). While interviewing participants I kept notes about the interview process. The interviews lasted anywhere between 45-90 minutes, with the longest interview being the second. I audio recorded, transcribed, and coded each interview.

Creswell (2003) noted that qualitative research allows for multiple methods of data collection, such as observations, interviews, audio materials, and visual materials. All these methods are viable options for qualitative research. However, "the phenomenological interview is the primary method of data collection wherein one attempts to uncover the essence, the invariant structure, of the meaning of the experience" (Merriam & Associates, 2002, p. 93). Several interview structures exist but I chose a semi-structured approach to Seidman's (2006) three-interview series. I wanted to explore the lived experiences of non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as openly and allow participants to share their opinions and ideas about the phenomenon.

The interviews were structured using Seidman's (2006) in-depth three interview approach in a semi-structured format and were phenomenological in nature. Seidman (2006) explained that "people's behavior becomes meaningful and understandable when placed in the context of their lives and the lives of those around them" (pp. 16-17); thus the interview series was focused on three areas: (1) focused life history, (2) the details of the experience, and (3) reflection on the meaning of the experiences. Although Seidman (2006) suggested that anything shorter than 90-

minutes was too short, I was constricted in my research process by students' schedules and conflicting personal and work commitments. Thus, the interviews ranged from between 45-90 minutes (see Appendix C). Seidman (2006) recommended spacing the interviews three days to a week apart but due to prior commitments I had to conduct some interview two to three days apart. All data were collected within a four week period. The first two series of interviews were conducted in a week for all participants. I interviewed a participant per day for two weeks, except Friday, Saturdays, and Sundays, and then waited until the fourth week to have the third interview with each participant. I transcribed every interview the same day it was conducted but did not begin coding until all the data were collected. Seidman (2006) noted that alternatives can be made to the three-interview series; however, the structure must always be maintained and allow for participants to reconstruct and reflect on their experiences. As previously mentioned, alterations to the three-interview series were made. Yet, I was still able to gather rich descriptive data.

Focused Life History

The first interview was focused on the person's upbringing and early life experiences, while also developing rapport and trust with the participants. The interview included demographic questions, questions about their identity prior to coming to college, and questions about their current home living environment. Seidman (2006) emphasized that during the first interview the researcher must focus on contextualizing the participants' experiences. Participants were asked about their childhood, college choice, student experience, and learned ethnicity growing up. Learning about the participants' life history helped contextualize their experiences and gain understanding.

Details of Experience

The second interview focused on the details of the participants' experiences as they relate to the phenomenon being studied (Seidman, 2006). As a researcher, my role during the second interview was to ask participants to reconstruct the details of their experience. Questions during the second interview focused on recreating stories about participants' experiences in the college setting in relation to their ethnic identity development.

Reflection on the Meaning

The third interview was reflective and required participants to connect their past experiences to their current experience and connect how those two experiences have played a role in the student's life (Seidman, 2006). As a researcher I needed to be wary of potential pitfalls during the third interview, however. "Even though it is in the third interview that we focus on the participants' understanding of their experience, through all three interviews participants are making meaning" (Seidman, 2006, p. 19). The third interview was also an opportunity to present emerging themes to participants as a form of member checking.

Data Analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research "is the process of bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass collected data" (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p. 111). Moustakas (1994) provided a step-by-step method for organizing and analyzing phenomenological data in the following way:

1. Using a phenomenological approach, obtain a full description of your own experience of the phenomenon.
2. From the verbatim transcript of your experience complete the following steps:

a. Consider each statement with respect to significance for description of the experience.

b. Record all relevant statements.

c. List each nonrepetitive, nonoverlapping statement. These are the invariant horizons or meaning units of the experience.

d. Relate and cluster the invariant meaning units into themes.

e. Synthesize the invariant meaning units and themes into *a description of the textures of the experience*. Include verbatim examples.

f. Reflect on your own textural description. Through imaginative variations, construct *a description of the structures of your experience*.

g. Construct *a textural-structural description* of the meanings and essences of your experience.

3. From the verbatim transcript of the experience of each of the other co-researchers, complete the above steps a through g.

4. From the individual textural-structural descriptions of all co-researchers' experiences, construct a *composite textural-structural description of the meanings and essences of the experience*, integrating all individual textural-structural descriptions into a universal description of the experience representing the group as a whole. (p. 122)

Moustakas's (1994) suggested method was helpful in coding, organizing, and analyzing the data I collected, but I did not follow the recommendation step-by-step. I began transcribing the audio-taped interviews immediately after the first interview and began coding, analyzing, and organizing data after the final interview; however, I reflected about the research process

throughout. Upon the completion of transcribing, I began open coding, which involves "working intensively with the data, line by line" (Esterberg, 2002, p. 158), noticed recurrent concepts and placed them into "invariant meaning units and themes" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 122).

Using epoche or bracketing, I was able to "set aside" my preconceived notions, allowing me to understand how participants experienced the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). Bracketing, as described by Denzin (1989), involves locating and interpreting one's preconceived notions about the phenomenon and then obtaining a first-hand interpretation of those phrases from participants. I was able to gather interpretations of bracketed phrases via email from all participants. Additionally, I specifically bracketed by using the comment function in track changes of Microsoft Word to take notes on the margins of each transcript and used the highlighter function of Microsoft Word to highlight and distinguish emerging concepts. I then placed each emerging theme into a column on a Microsoft Excel worksheet; this step could be considered horizonalization, which means data were divided into broad categories. The data was then clustered together to form a general description of how the phenomenon was experienced (Creswell, 2003). Each emerging concept/cluster had its respective column. I found Excel and Word to be useful tools because I was able to easily search key words, phrases, and sort data. Through inductive data analysis (Patton, 1990), these clusters of data were reduced and resulted in invariant themes (Moustakas, 1994).

Trustworthiness

Validity, or goodness, is a key aspect of qualitative research; thus, Lincoln and Guba (1985) explained four concepts to help maximize validity. The four concepts were credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility

Marshall and Rossman (1995) explained that the goal of credibility "is to demonstrate that the inquiry was constructed in such a manner as to ensure that the subject was accurately identified and described" (p. 143). Some examples of activities that enhance credibility are prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I used member checking and peer debriefing to maintain credibility. Specifically, I member checked by sending participants transcribed individual interviews, participant profiles, and findings via email and requesting they check the transcripts for accuracy of interpretation. Moreover, I used a classmate as my peer reviewer, allowing this person to read, review, and comment on the findings of the study (Merriam & Associates, 2002). This process also allowed my peer reviewer to explore other aspects of the study that I may have otherwise seen as implicit (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Transferability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) asserted that a researcher could not specify the external validity of an inquiry. External validity, or generalizability, is commonly critiqued in qualitative studies because it is often compared to quantitative research's methods of external validity (Merriam & Associates, 2002). Lincoln and Guba (1985) explained that the researcher "can provide only the thick description necessary to enable someone interested in making a transfer to reach a conclusion about whether transfer can be contemplated as a possibility" (p. 316). I maintained transferability by providing a rich, thick description of data and findings (Merriam & Associates, 2002).

Dependability

Marshall and Rossman (1995) stated that in order to achieve dependability the researcher "attempts to account for changing conditions in the phenomenon chosen for the study as well as changes in design created by increasingly refined understanding of the setting" (p. 145). Reliability, often synonymous with dependability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), is problematic in the social sciences because human behavior is never static and lived experiences are a function of the person and the environment in which they live (Merriam & Associates, 2002).

Confirmability

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that the major technique for establishing confirmability is an audit. Confirmability refers to whether the findings of the study can be confirmed by other people (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Through the use of technology I was able to keep an electronic audit on my laptop, which included records of audio-taped interviews, transcribed interviews, coded interviews, interview notes, theme development notes, and research memos. An additional aspect of confirmability involves the researcher's constant reflection (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For four weeks, during the data collection process, I journaled daily on my laptop.

Limitations

The principal limitations of this study are the low number of participants, and the resulting inability to produce findings generalizable to large groups of people. I only interviewed four students and their experiences were unique and may not be generalizable to other non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as. However, the extent to which these four individuals shared similar perceptions provided me some information regarding the experiences of this population.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine how non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as negotiate their status as non-Spanish speaking within a group who holds the cultural norm of speaking Spanish and the effect this resulting negotiation had on the students' ethnic identity development. In this chapter I provided the methodological framework, philosophical assumptions, research approach, participants, data collection procedures, data analysis, and limitations for the study.

In chapter 4 I present and discuss the profiles of the four men who participated in the study. Each student profile contextualizes each student's experience and allows the reader to gain understanding about each participant's lived experiences. Additionally, I situate these students' racial and ethnic identity using multiracial literature by Renn (2004), since all the students were also multiracial, and analyze the students' Latino/a ethnic identity using Torres's (1999, 2003) work.

CHAPTER 4. PARTICIPANT PROFILES

In this chapter I present and describe profiles of the four students who participated in this study. This chapter provides insight to the students' pre-collegiate experiences, as well as their experiences at Midwestern University. It is important to understand each one of these students' back stories in order to gain a deeper understanding of how they have experienced being a non-Spanish speaking Latino/a. During the first interview each participant chose a pseudonym, which I have used to identify them throughout this study. I present all four student profiles, which I present using salient quotations from the participants, followed by Table 4.1, where I list the 4 participants alphabetically and provide a profile snapshot of each student. Within each student profile I include a synopsis of the factors contributing to these students not speaking Spanish.

Group Ethnic Identification

After the first interview with each participant I learned that all these students who self-identified as Latino/a were multiracial students. In the United States, to be considered white a person must solely have white descendants (Renn, 2004). People who trace their roots to a mixed racial heritage are then susceptible to unfavorable treatment and are racialized based on apparent racial phenotype. Consequently, mixed-race students are unable to find a place where they fit in (Renn, 2004). Multiracial students who have a white parent and a minority parent feel pressure to identify with the least dominant race but when they try to engage with the least dominant communities, they face a lack of acceptance for being less than, or not minority enough (Renn, 2004). The experience of Latino/as is exceptionally different because almost all Latin American people identify as mestizo (Trianosky, 2003), adding to the complexity of the

Latino/a experience, which often times mirror's the experience of multiracial students within the United States. All of the students in this study where multiracial students who identified as either Hispanic or Latino/a. Throughout the study they described the historical racial heterogeneity of the Latino/a group and the struggle they face in the United States because the American culture is eager to oversimplify complex issues and categorize people into homogeneous groups.

Using Renn's (2004) five identity patterns for mixed-race students, I situated each student's multiracial identity based on information they shared during data collection. The five identity patterns that Renn (2004) described were: (a) monoracial, (b) multiple monoracial, (c) multiracial, (d) extraracial, and (e) situational. These five patterns as fluid and non-exclusive. A student with a monoracial identity chooses one race, typically choosing the non-dominant heritage if they have a white parent. Students who fit the non-dominant group stereotype are more likely to take on a monoracial identity. Multiple monoracial students equally balance their multiple races and take ownership of labeling their own race. Multiracial identity students used terms, such as mixed, to describe their racial heritage. Additionally, multiracial identity students believe they live outside the traditional single-race culture of the United States. Extraracial identity refers to students who do not identify racially and/or do not believe in the United States way of categorizing race. Additionally, students with an extraracial identity did not exclusively use this identity; instead they used a combination of identities. Lastly, situational identity refers to the participant's contextual identification of their race. For them, race is fluid and always affected by context.

Based on my data analysis, I found that all of the participants had identity patterns congruent with *situational* and *multiracial* identity patterns. They all mentioned not being able to acknowledge their mixed heritage in formal papers that involved the checking of boxes. Furthermore, the situational identity pattern was the most salient pattern of identity for all participants. All participants mentioned based their identity pattern on context, noting that in the campus environment they used whatever identity people perceived them as, while at home they were able to be their "true" self. Jessica was the only participant who would seem to follow the *extraracial identity* pattern. Multiple times during the interview process she mentioned her reluctance to "check one box." Anthony was the only student who indicated following a *monoracial identity* pattern. He chose his minority status over his white status, but did not acknowledge his mixed heritage. Lastly, the multiple monoracial identity pattern was exhibited by both Rae and Katelyn, who are also "white appearing." They struggled in the campus environment identifying racially because all their lives they have been treated and they have acted as white; however, they know they are not white and tried to internally balance their multiple races. Since I had no previous knowledge of these student's multiracial status within the United States context, I chose to situate their ethnicity based on their self-identification as Latino/a and/or Hispanic.

Rae

Rae is a 23-year old, self-identified Hispanic senior double majoring in business management and English and Rhetorical Studies with minors in Spanish and Performance Arts. Rae was born in a suburb of Milwaukee, and has an older brother who also attended Midwestern University. Her mother is of German, Polish, and Irish descent and was born in the United

States. Rae's father was born in Columbia and immigrated to the United States when he was five. Rae's fraternal grandmother was born in Colombia; however, she immigrated to the United States in search for a better life and had to leave Rae's father under the care of an aunt.

Rae's grandmother would send money to Columbia to help support her son, but eventually she realized her son was not being properly taken care of. Additionally, Rae's father had no recollection of his mother. He had never even seen a picture of her. When Rae's grandmother realized that the money she had been sending was not being put towards her son's needs she decided to immediately bring him to the states. Upon arriving in the United States they settled in New York, but eventually moved to the greater Milwaukee area.

Rae's grandmother helped Rae establish her ethnic identity. Not only did Rae learn about her ethnic identity from her grandmother, but she also inherited her passion to strive for the best. Rae's grandmother has had a tumultuous relationship with her family, which led to her coming to the United States. Rae explained:

> One of the reasons that she came to the United States was that her father got remarried and growing up with that second wife was a harsh experience. When her father died, her father's second wife re-wrote the will so that none of his children, from his first marriage, would get anything. The family down there--like grandma has been in litigation with one of my uncles because he sold a house that was half grandma's to one of his sons for one dollar. Then under his son's name he sold the house for several hundreds of thousands of dollars. That side of the family--and don't get me wrong; they are not all like this--they do all still have strong familial ties but they really don't care if they hurt other people. They are really self-focused and so grandma wanted to get out of that situation. Plus, they

> gave her a lot of grief about not being married and having dad. Though, I'm personally very grateful she decided to keep him.

For Rae, her grandmother's experience and her father arriving in the United States at such a young age influenced her inability to speak Spanish.

Her grandmother wanted Rae and her father to be "American," and to her grandmother, being American equated to being a citizen and learning English. Both Rae's grandmother and her father became United States citizens and speak the English language with ease. In fact, Rae's father's English is better than his Spanish. Rae did not need to speak Spanish, which is why she never learned. As she noted,

> Basically it boiled down to ease of use. With grandma's job--she worked in the medical field for a long time; now she's retired. So she had to be in constant use with English and she probably spoke Spanish to Dad at home but he spoke mostly English. My mother, when he met her, she only spoke English. My father has no resemblance of an accent. Actually, for the longest time he didn't have the best Spanish because his Spanish was that of a five year old. It's only recently--he took a couple of classes at our local university in Milwaukee--that he developed better Spanish and now he speaks very fluently. Growing up, neither Nick nor I were ever spoken Spanish to, and Spanish was never spoken in the house.

In addition to not learning Spanish, Rae did not learn any "Hispanic traditions." The "closest thing [they] had to a Hispanic tradition [was] their daily meals." Nevertheless, Rae has attempted to learn the Spanish language and learn about Hispanic culture through her high school

and college courses; however, her Spanish language skills are "not good enough to understand the flow of a conversation and understand all the intricacies of the language."

Rae attended a predominantly white high school in Cudahy, Wisconsin. While in high school she was heavily involved in theater, choir, local jazz, academic decathlon, and a magic group. In addition, she competed with the swim team. She became involved in the activities because she knew "they would look good in college applications" but she also had a huge passion for the arts.

The racial/ethnic makeup of Rae's high school was "maybe like ten black people and about eight to ten Hmong. Not Asian--Hmong. They were all Hmong." Additionally, Rae reflected on the number of Latinos/as and said "there were maybe like 20 Spanish people and I was not counted among the number of people that counted as Spanish because I look white, I take on to my mother." Because of Rae's light complexion, growing up she identified as white until her parents told her that her true race/ethnicity was Hispanic. Up to that point Rae had never thought about her race/ethnicity; she just assumed she was white.

Rae never had to think about her race and ethnicity because she grew up in an environment where "everyone was white and [she] blended right in." The community where she grew up was not very racially diverse and the only family who was not white was a Vietnamese family. The limited racial diversity in her community steered Rae to a predominantly white group of friends. The community's social economic status was predominantly middle-class, and Cudahy, Wisconsin is a residential community, with a plethora of homes and almost no apartment complexes. Growing up in Cudahy, Rae became very close with her white mother and

developed a strong bond with her during her toddler years. Rae's mother had a direct impact on Rae's ethnic identity development. She reflected,

> She let me know that I was different and she did it in a way that didn't make me feel like it was a bad thing. It really felt like they encouraged and they felt it was towards my advantage, you know? And I asked, "Why should I put down Spanish instead?" And she gave me, "financial reasons, basically," and the fact that I am Spanish. It's the truth!

Furthermore, Rae attributed her unexamined ethnic identity to her desire to be like her mother, who is white. However, Rae has struggled feeling comfortable claiming she is "Hispanic" because she has "never felt like a minority and has never been treated like a minority."

Further perpetuating Rae's uneasiness with accepting her minority status was the fact she received the Minority Scholarship (MS) to attend MU. MU offers the MS to high-achieving racial minority students who are at least 1/8 minority. Originally MU was her second college choice but after her first choice, Winona State, only offered her a mediocre scholarship she decided to attend MU because it offered the best package overall. Rae explained,

> I was really impressed with just all of the options available and the many majors that were offered here. And also this may not be best reason but I come from a neighborhood where we have lots of trees, so having a green environment, having a nice environment was very important to me and MU is just gorgeous. I love it. I felt very comfortable. It was one of those things where, yeah, I can go here, it was my second choice. Now I did get accepted by Winona State University but they only offered me, I got reciprocity because Minnesota and Wisconsin have reciprocity, but they only offered me, a ridiculous, like 2,000 dollar scholarship and I had to keep my GPA at 3.75…no at 3.8.

> And I thought that was a bit excessive. It would definitely make my time at the university not enjoyable because I would completely be and utterly obsessed with maintaining my grades and it was still pretty expensive for my family. I mean we're middle class, we really don't have money to burn, per say, and my parents have the mind that we're supposed to pay our way through college.

In addition to the financial scholarship she received, Nick, her older brother, was in his second year at MU. Rae was already familiar with the campus environment and knew she would have family support from her brother and therefore decided to attend MU.

While at MU Rae has become very involved in a variety of leadership roles as well as MU theater, a music fraternity, and an academic fraternity. She described her friend group as "academically focused." She also had the opportunity to study abroad in Italy for a semester and really enjoyed that experience. While in Italy she traveled to Spain. Rae was able to meet some of her family living in Spain and described not feeling away from home, but instead immediately accepted, although she had previously never met her family members.

Anthony

Anthony is a 21-year old, third-year student classified as a senior, and is majoring in Architecture. His mother is of Puerto Rican heritage and his father is of German descent. His maternal grandparents immigrated to the United States from Puerto Rico in search for a better life and settled in Pennsylvania. His fraternal side of the family has been in the United States since the 1900's but Anthony was not aware of the history of his father's family. Anthony's mom was born in Allentown, Pennsylvania, the capital of the city. Anthony's maternal grandparents lived in the United States but moved back to Puerto Rico recently. Anthony has

two younger siblings, a brother and a sister. Growing up he was raised by both his parents. Both of his parents shared the child rearing responsibilities equally; however, his father was most instrumental in his child years.

Anthony's father works in the post office and has traveled a lot to get established as an executive in the post-office business. Anthony grew up in Allentown, Pennsylvania and had constant interactions with her maternal grandparents but eventually his family moved to Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania around the time he started school. Elizabethtown is a much smaller, rural, predominantly white community. Anthony never learned Spanish although he grew up in a household where his mother and aunts would constantly speak Spanish to each other. Anthony described the experience of not learning Spanish.

> I guess more or less a lack of not needing to [learn Spanish], honestly. Like my mom and her sisters would speak Spanish quite a lot and when we were in big family gatherings they would speak Spanish. I just never really got into it. I started taking classes and I wanted to learn it but I had this whole weird feeling about, unfortunately because of where I grew up-the neighborhood was primarily white, but I felt weird getting corrected by how I was speaking my language that my mom was trying to teach me by someone that wasn't of Hispanic descent and so I just didn't continue in the education. I didn't see it as if it was really authentic.

Anthony's ability to connect with other family members has been affected by his inability to speak the Spanish language and he wishes he spoke the language because he would then be able to have a better relationship with his grandfather, who is monolingual and only speaks the Spanish language.

Anthony identifies as Puerto Rican and Hispanic but feels more connected with the Puerto Rican label and elaborated on why by saying: "When you go to like fill out cards or you know the little check marks--I mean if Puerto Rican is not there, sometimes it typically isn't; it's usually Latino or Hispanic." Because Hispanic was the term his mother used, he decided to adopt the term over Latino; however, he believes both Hispanic and Latino are generic terms and Puerto Rican is more specific. Furthermore, to Anthony, being Puerto Rican is about the religion he was raised in and the family values he learned. Anthony realized at a young age that he was "a little brown kid" and he "embraced it and thought it was great."

Anthony experienced some dramatic struggles while in middle school that affected his middle school experience. While in middle school he experienced racism from multiple people; first, from his neighbor, and second, from a classmate. He described the racism he experienced from the neighbor:

> We had a very racist neighbor right next to us. He really wasn't too fond of us. So I mean that kind of--that was annoying and it was a tough part of growing up right there having to deal with that. And having to listen to him say some things that were inappropriate from time to time.

Unfortunately for Anthony the racism extended to his experience in middle school:

> Middle school was an interesting time. I went to a Catholic school. At that point the governor's son was in my class. It was an interesting dynamic to have him in there. He was possibly the biggest prick in the face of the earth because his son had been raised as a white little spoiled boy that got everything he wanted. Me and him never really saw eye to eye on a lot of things. It was the case of he's the bully and I'm the little kid that's

> going to get picked on. He would take the bullying to the next degree and use my ethnicity. I was called things that were highly inappropriate. I didn't really understand a lot of it. It actually in the end ended up resulting in aggression and therapy and his expulsion. Middle school was just a very interesting time too. It was just in the forefront of realizing that there really are people that just don't understand things that are just not going to change. Where that comes from I don't know. It's obviously in how they were raised and in their ideals.

During this tumultuous time Anthony received support from his father.

His father influenced the way Anthony viewed his race and ethnicity and as a result of his father's support, Anthony was able to successfully cope with the stress he experienced during middle school. Anthony described how his father influenced the way Anthony saw his ethnicity:

> My brother, me, my sister, [and] my mother are brown and he's the only white guy in the family. With the last name Schmidt people immediately think they are going to be meeting this white person, which I think it's hilarious. I love to play with people. I think he was a big key role because he never really stressed that there was a difference and because of that, it never really played a big role in my mind that there is a difference.

Anthony's father also taught Anthony that people who "were ignorant enough not to see past the color line and actually just pay attention to the human wasn't really worth it and shouldn't be stressed over."

Anthony's parents are both college educated, which played a role in him determining at a young age that he wanted to attend college and become an architect. When he was in high

school he intentionally selected courses that would better prepare him for college classes in architecture. He described the classes he selected:

> I focused primarily on, well being an architect major I tried to get involved with the art programs and anything that dealt with computer drafting, human drawing classes, photography. So I tried to use my electives to focus on that.

The high school he attended was predominantly white and white "people thought of [him] as black." The high school was academically focused and had excellent athletic and music programs. In addition to being involved in architecture type classes, Anthony was also involved in athletics and music. He was in the drum line, concert band, choir, and musicals in addition to playing baseball, running track, and being involved in his community.

Anthony ultimately decided to attend MU after a long application process, in which he applied to a variety of schools. His "safety school" was Penn State; however, he never got into his safety school or any other school he applied to because his SAT scores arrived late. Since he had not received any college offers, he and his father wrote a letter to all the accredited architecture schools in the nation and eventually received three responses: Midwestern University, North Dakota State, and Woodbury College in California. Come May of his senior year in high school he had not made a decision and at random chose MU.

Once he began at MU, Anthony immediately began getting involved. He described his role on campus as "super important" and described "know[ing[quite a bit of the campus." Anthony has, "just in campus alone..a thousand people that [he] calls friends." He has met the majority of these people within his role as a Community Advisor and athletics representative. Anthony additionally knows a large number of people in his major. However, he has had

struggles on campus. Anthony applied for admittance into the Architecture program at MU but was originally rejected. It was not until his second attempt that he got into his major.

Jessica

Jessica is a 20-year old sophomore currently undeclared. Her mother is Puerto Rican and her father is Haitian. Her maternal grandparents were both born in Puerto Rico and moved to the United States, eventually settling in the Bronx, New York. Her fraternal grandparents were both born in Haiti and immigrated to the United States, settling in Washington Heights, New York. Jessica's parents married in New York, lived there for awhile, and eventually moved to Des Moines, Iowa in order to have a higher standard of life for their daughter and for her father to pursue a degree at Des Moines University. Jessica's parents divorced when she was 13. Soon after, her mother moved to Florida where she currently resides.

When her mother left for Florida Jessica had to decide whether to stay in Iowa with her father or leave for Florida with her mother. She decided to stay in Iowa because she already had an established network of friends in Iowa that she was not willing to leave behind. However, now she regrets not choosing to leave with her mother. "She obviously wanted me to go with her but I was too into 'oh my god, my friends and my school are here.' I was stupid. So I stayed here with my dad." Jessica's mother's first language is Spanish but Jessica never learned the Spanish language from her mother. Jessica described why:

> Back in her time in school, having a thick accent or not having English as your first language was something to be teased on. It was like a negative thing even though now it's amazing for her to get jobs, you know, it's like the best thing ever. Back then, she didn't want me to have it as hard as she did, as a kid. She decided to teach me English

> first and thought that Spanish would go along with it later. Obviously I got the English down but I don't know Spanish. Of course I understand my parents and my grandparents to a certain extent but I can try my best to speak it but it sounds stupid. So I usually just speak back in English. It kind of was like the complete opposite for me growing up. Now, knowing a different language is like, oh my gosh, so cool. You know it's like a plus, and people really appreciate it.

Additionally, Jessica has a difficult time communicating with her maternal grandparents because they do not speak English. When Jessica wants to talk to her grandparents, someone, typically her mother, must be present to serve as the translator. Language has played a key role in Jessica's life and she has been very aware of her status as a non-Spanish speaking Latina. In middle school she had a group of Guatemalan and Nicaraguan friends but their friendship did not work because Jessica was "different from them."

Jessica grew up in a predominantly white neighborhood in Des Moines but by the time she started high school the neighborhood had started to transform. Her father did not view the neighborhood as safe and decided to move to a different community. Jessica attended high school in Des Moines, Iowa in what she described to be "the most diverse high school in Des Moines." The high school "had everything: Bosnians, all different kinds of Asians, Latinos…everything." Jessica did not form peer groups with Latinos/as in high school. She instead was "friends with everybody." In high school she was a good student yet was not really involved on campus. She discussed why she was not involved:

> In our high school if you were in a club or in sports it took a lot of your time. It was either that or work. My parents always taught me to be independent and work. So I

> worked. I didn't have anybody else giving me money, so I had to. I didn't really do anything. Honestly I didn't really like school. I was a good student. I mean, I went to school when I had to, but once it was over I wanted to go home. Like that was it or go to work or go hangout. I just hated being around school. So I wasn't in that many clubs. I didn't feel like I fit. There was no clubs that interested me.

Jessica wasn't involved in clubs but wondered why she was not invited to join the Latino club. She described the invitation process and the aftermath:

> It was pretty much, since we were in a big school, people were invited to the clubs so they would know about them. They would send out these little notes that said "hey, you should meet with these people at this time." It would be just like an intro to the club and maybe you can sign up for the club. And you would get it in your class. What they would do is go through your transcripts and figure out--so the ones who were Latinos/as would get sent for all the Latino clubs but I never got one. I found out later that because on the transcripts I was put down as black or something like that.

When Jessica did receive an invitation it was for "the black girls and African Americans club." The fact that Jessica was only invited to the club for a racial group she did not identify with caused her to confront the administration in her high school and get her status changed to Latina/Hispanic. Jessica identifies with Latina, but Puerto Rican is more specific to her, although at times she also identifies herself as Caribbean. She grew up in what she described to be a "typical Puerto Rican home." She grew up with Spanish music, food, family, and religion all around her.

Yet Jessica has consistently been perceived as black. She recalled a story from her elementary school days:

> When I was in elementary school, it was my first day there and they set me up with a girl to help me get around the school and stuff like that. She was a black girl. She had crouches in. I didn't know what crouches were. I didn't even know what weave was. All my aunts have long beautiful hair.

Jessica has struggled with this constant assumption about her race and consequently dislikes being labeled. To her, "it's so hard to put everybody in their own little boxes and I feel like that's just what we are all trying to do just so we can all understand it better but the world is not black and white."

Jessica chose to attend MU because it was the most financially responsible decision for her. She received the Hispanic Scholarship (HS). The HS is offered yearly to 100 high school seniors who are students of color attending MU and residents of the state. The HS offers these students eight semesters of free tuition as long as the student maintains a GPA above 2.0. Jessica originally wanted to "get as far away from the state of Iowa" as possible but could not turn down the HS. She also looked at other schools like the University of Iowa, Spellman College, Pace College, and Drexel University. Her top two choice as a high school senior was Drexel University. She wanted to attend Drexel because she loved the music program there but after doing a short internship in a radio station, she realized that radio had become industrialized and people were being replaced by computers. Instead, she decided she needed a more practical career.

Since Jessica's arrival at MU she has struggled academically and is currently on academic probation. Her need to work constantly has not allowed her to be academically successful. Additionally, Jessica has not declared a major, which has caused her a lot of stress. One area where she has become involved on campus has been with the LGBTQ community. She has many friends on campus who identify as LGBTQ and mentioned enjoying going to drag shows and supporting her friends.

Katelyn

Katelyn is a 22-year old senior, majoring in Design. Katelyn's father is of Mexican descent and her mother is of European descent. Her fraternal grandparents are "100% Mexican." Her fraternal grandparents were both born in Mexico; however, they were brought to the United States at a young age. Her fraternal grandparents married at a young age and "had a lot of children." Her grandparents recently split up and she has lost contact with her grandfather but knows her grandmother lives in Northern California with an aunt. Her mother's side of the family has been in Minnesota for "a really long time" and Katelyn has no idea when her mother's side of the family actually arrived in the United States. Katelyn has two brothers: one older and one younger.

Katelyn and her father do not speak Spanish because Katelyn's grandparents did not want their family to struggle assimilating. Katelyn explained:

> So the reason I don't speak Spanish, and the reason that my dad doesn't speak Spanish was because when they [her grandparents] were younger and kind of getting married and having children, I know that they faced a lot of discrimination in California for being

> Mexican. I think the only one that knows how to speak Spanish fluently is my aunt who studied in school.

Furthermore, Katelyn's father spoke the little Spanish he knew with his brother but neither of them taught Spanish to their children because they were fearful their children would be discriminated against. However, her uncle adopted two children from Colombia who do speak Spanish. Katelyn's fraternal grandparents both speak Spanish fluently but very rarely spoke Spanish to Katelyn. Katelyn feels connected with her grandparents although she does not speak Spanish and mentioned that the only times she heard her grandparents speak Spanish were when they would "yell at my dad" or "usually like her pet names are in Spanish." Katelyn took Spanish for four years in high school but did not continue in college. Katelyn believes that growing up when and where she did had a large role in her inability to speak Spanish. She shared her experiences:

> When I was growing up in the military it wasn't chic then to have your children learn other languages like it is now. It's like "my kid is in Spanish immersion" but it wasn't like that. It's like "they'll learn it in high school if that's what they want to do" but now people are putting [their children] in it because they think it will help their kid get a job later in life.

Katelyn believes she "potentially…could have been very fluid in Spanish if circumstances had been different."

Katelyn's father is retired from the military therefore Katelyn traveled a lot while she was a child. Katelyn and her mother formed a close relationship during the time her father was in the military. Her mother was a "stay at home mom" and spent a lot of time with Katelyn.

Katelyn grew up on military bases and was born in California while his father was stationed on a base there. Katelyn's mom is her support network because her "dad is kind of crazy and he doesn't like to talk about things." Since her father is not one to talk about feelings or other happenings, she and her mother use each other for support.

A few years after her birth, her father's base closed and the family moved to Holland. Three years later the Holland base where they were stationed was closed down and the family moved to Germany. Katelyn's family lived in Germany for eight years until she was 12, at which point her family moved back to Minnesota. Katelyn explains the reasons why the family moved back to Minnesota:

> We moved back to Minnesota because my dad said that like my mom had followed him and like she didn't have a career and she followed him for 20 years in the air force so he wanted to be closer to her family because she had done that for him.

Katelyn lived in Minnesota for six years, attended high school in the state, and eventually left when she was 18 to attend Midwestern University. Her high school served approximately 1700 students in grades 10-12; there were no freshmen. Her graduating class was 535 and most students were of Norwegian background. She was heavily involved in tennis, yearbook, honors classes, drama club, plays, speech team, and diversity club for a year. She stopped attending diversity club because she did not have any friends that identified as racial minorities.

The biggest racial minority group was Hmong, in addition to "maybe three people that were black." Katelyn was one of the only Latinos/as in her high school. She talked about her experience being Mexican in high school.

> I was one of the few but most people don't identify me right off the bat as being anything. It depends; like I think some people can kind of sense something. But usually it's people who are a minority themselves. They can tell that I'm something. They might not be able to pinpoint it but they know that I'm something and then they'll ask.

Katelyn was not even classified as Hispanic or Latino until her senior year in high school when her mother changed her ethnicity "so that [she] could qualify for scholarships."

Katelyn identifies as Mexican or Hispanic. She prefers Mexican because she feels connected to a city in Mexico that shares the same name as her last name. She shared why:

> I feel like because Mexico is the actual country that my grandparents' families came from I identify with that country in general and there's a town, actually I think it's a fairly big city, a city in Mexico named after my last name. And so I feel like more connected to there. And then because both of like my grandparents speak Spanish-Hispanic. Like I don't speak Spanish but I identify with like the language part of it. Potentially I could have been very fluid in Spanish if circumstances had been different. And I don't know—Latino--I just feel like Latin America is so diverse that it's just what white people like to say--Latino. Because you are grouping a whole bunch of people together that really don't have that much in common.

Although Katelyn identifies as Hispanic, her ethnicity was not salient to her until she was in high school. In the military "everyone is so different there, and there's so many different backgrounds that [she] didn't feel like [she] stuck out as much," but in high school the sheer number of "blonde, very skinny girls" made her ethnicity and her body much more salient. Katelyn shared her experience:

> I just feel like being Hispanic you naturally just have more body fat. So I know that was like a problem and like junior high through high school, which is like--I know it kind of always evens out when people get older and their metabolism slows down, but I never had a very fast metabolism and so in high school it just would always bother me that there were these girls that were just like [thin]. Even if I starve myself I would never be that thin but it's just the way that they naturally are and I think, you know, it's just a genetic thing.

In addition to being aware of her body figure because of her ethnicity, Katelyn also became aware of her last name. Katelyn has a "Mexican" last name (Zamora) but she does not understand where other people perceive her last name to be from. Additionally, since her last name is at the end of the alphabet she would always be "picked last," along with "everybody who was not white" and this experience made her realize she was not white. During the time when her ethnicity became salient to her she turned to her mother for support. However, her mom did not really understand. Katelyn explained, "She's helpful but at the same time she's white and so I didn't always feel like she could identify with what I was going through because she's white."

Katelyn initially struggled to find friends in the United States. It was in high school where she found other people with similar interests and with whom she could have intellectually stimulating conversations. One of her best friends is Kelsey, who she is moving in with immediately after graduation. Within Katelyn's close group of friends her ethnicity often comes up. Katelyn discussed in what context:

> It's kind of weird. Like the people that do know that I'm Mexican it's just kind of like that thing, you know? There's always like that thing people like always like the jokes revolve around. You know that one thing? And with Kelsey it's like the fact that she is extremely uptight sometimes. And with my friend Ashley it's because she's a little white trash so we always make fun of her about that, but mine's always Mexican.

Katelyn often makes Mexican jokes about herself in order to prevent her friends from "getting the gratification…of the Mexican joke."

Katelyn decided to attend Midwestern University after her first choice, University of Richmond in London, did not offer her enough financial aid. She had previously met an admissions representative from Midwestern University who informed Katelyn she would be eligible to receive the MS. When Katelyn received her letter of acceptance from MU she was immediately informed that she had been selected for the MS. Katelyn is on the verge of graduating from MU and is really excited for the "real world." While at MU she was academically focused and involved in leadership roles like the Community Advisor role. She knew she wanted to be a Community Advisor prior to even arriving at MU. She explained seeing the Community Advisor position as a great leadership role that was perfect for her goals and strengths.

Table 4.1. *Student Profiles*

Pseudonym	**Age**	**Major**	**Class Year**	**Self-Identified**	**BOM Position**
Rae	23	Business Management &	Senior	Hispanic	Anglo Oriented

		English			
Anthony	21	Architecture	Senior	Hispanic/ Puerto Rican	Bicultural Oriented
Jessica	20	Undeclared	Sophomore	Latina/ Puerto Rican	Bicultural Oriented
Katelyn	22	Design	Senior	Mexican/ Hispanic	Bicultural Oriented

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to introduce the participants of this study and contextualize their experiences. Some of the commonalities that these participants shared are that most of the participants: grew up in rural areas, attended predominantly white high schools, were multiracial students, had supportive families, had a middle-class background, and were highly involved in college. Additionally, the participants shared the history of language in their families, one in which the use of Spanish had been stigmatized. Moreover, the participants saw language as a tool for communication exclusively. Lastly, for the majority of participants scholarships and money were large contributors to them attending MU.

In chapter 5 I discuss the findings from this study. The three emerging themes are discussed and further highlighted by the use of student's voices.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

Chapter five is dedicated to presenting the findings from this research study. The findings were derived through phenomenological data analysis (Moustakas, 1994). Three themes emerged as central to the students' experiences as non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as: (a) It is a Midwest thing; (b) I am not that type of Hispanic; and (c) family. One theme, *I am not that type of Hispanic*, encompasses three subthemes: (a) question, defend, and prove; (b) I'm not really a Hispanic; and (c) Minorities are cliquish. I discuss each theme and subtheme thoroughly and add supporting student quotations that illustrate each theme. Lastly, I provide a discussion of each student's self-identified BOM orientation.

It is a Midwest Thing

The participants described experiences in which European-Americans assigned them a race or ethnicity based on skin phenotype. Students attributed these presuppositions to a "Midwestern culture" that fosters ignorance and traditionalism. Additionally, students described the Midwestern culture as an environment in which race and ethnicity are not discussed, but instead, race is assumed to be white, and is ignored or assigned based on skin color, for non-whites.. Katelyn shared how white people assume she is white because "white is the norm," and subsequently described how she believes whites view race.

> I don't even have to say I'm white, people will just assume I'm the norm until I say that I'm different and that's where people's assumptions about, in general, that the norm is white. I think that's where the norm comes from and I don't know if you get that everywhere, like if in California it would be a lot different. People wouldn't assume you're white as much, but I don't know. I think it's an Iowa-Midwest thing.

White people constantly assume that Katelyn is white, which causes her frustration because "[she's] known people for years on end who don't know [she's] Mexican."

Additionally, Katelyn finds it frustrating that people do not connect her last name (Zamora) to her Mexican heritage.

> Having the last name that I do is a little bit different. I feel like Zamora obviously sticks out to me as a Mexican [last] name but I don't think it does to other people and I don't really know where they think it comes from. If they think I'm just white because I don't really know any white people with that last name.

Furthermore, Katelyn shared that in college "less people know that [she's] Mexican than they did in high school" and attributes this phenomenon to the fact that "white people in the Midwest just never meet non-white people." However, in high school she also experienced peers making assumptions about her race.

> [In high school] there would actually be these kids, when I would walk into chemistry class that they would be like, "you look Mexican today" or "you look Spanish today." Apparently I would change races every day and just look like a different [race] every time they saw me. So they would just tell me "you look Amazonian." I was like, "What does an Amazonian look like? But [in college], it's just maybe because we are in the Midwest but people just assume I'm white."

Katelyn's feelings of being perceived as white because of her skin color were echoed by Rae.

Rae explained that "most people, definitely Caucasians, look at [her] and can't tell [she's] Hispanic." Rae dismissed these occurrences because "Midwesterners are nice people

who can see past race." Rae mentioned that her perceived whiteness sometimes has even led to confrontations.

> One of the most potent experiences I remember was when I was training to be a lifeguard. I was going through the training and there [were] these two girls. They felt very entitled to whatever they wanted, which was interesting I thought, because one of them was white. I had put my stuff in the locker and I had lost my token. I had put it in too soon and it locked so I was going to go get another one. Another girl had just lost her token and had forgotten to get one and I offered to get one for her because I had to go out anyway. And so I went out and I brought two tokens and I gave the [token] to the girl. I'm changing and one of the girls, who [is] being unprofessional, lost her token. She looked at me expectedly, like she expected me to go get her a token. And I'm in my swimsuit, I'm not fully packed away, I have my mother's and my cell phone, plus the car keys, and my wallet. And I was trying to lock the locker so I said, "I'm not going to get it" because they are looking at me like they want me to go get it. She goes, "Why? You got it for that other white girl."

The assumptions that others made about Rae also manifested themselves as early as her elementary school days when "[student affairs administrators] did not count [her] as Hispanic because [she] looked white."

Jessica, who grew up in Iowa, shared a similar experience of "not being recognized as Latina within the system" in her high school. Jessica was "never asked what [her race] was by the administration." Instead, they assigned racial labels based on students' appearance and last

name. Since her high school assigned racial labels to students, Jessica was never invited to join the "Hispanic club."

> Since we were in a big school, people were invited to the clubs so they would know about them. [Administration] would send out these little notes that said: "Hey, you should meet with these people at this time." It would be just like an intro to the club and maybe you can sign up for the club. And you would get it in your class. What [administration] would do is go through your transcripts and figure out [what your race was] so the ones who were Latinos/as would get send [invitations] for all the Latino clubs, but I never got one. I found out later that [I never got invited] because on the transcripts I was put down as black, or something like that. I had to fix that, right before I graduated just so I can get some of my scholarships. But I would never get an invitation and I remember everyone around me getting it but I wouldn't get it. I remember that I actually got one. I forgot what the club was [exactly] but it was for like black girls and African Americans.

Since Jessica was coded as being Black, she was invited to the club designed for Black students. Jessica shared that "most people don't know [her] ethnicity" but "people assumed [she] was black or biracial."

Of additional frustration for Jessica is that her friends, specifically her white friends, do not take the time to be more culturally aware. She was especially frustrated during the Haiti earthquake. She shared her frustrations and the emotional toll the natural disaster had on her.

> When Haiti had the earthquakes and there was all this crazy stuff going on, the school started doing some things so that was pretty sweet. It kind of made me realize how many people are ignorant because they didn't even know where Haiti was, or like anything

> about it. I actually had like really close friends and they knew about my ethnicity, and it's crazy because in my dorm room I had both of my flags, and they saw them like every single day but they never connected the flag to the country so during that time, obviously for a certain amount of time I didn't even know if my family was ok or not. We had no connection with them. I kind of just shut myself off and stopped going to classes. I was just going crazy and my friends didn't understand why. I didn't want to watch the news. I didn't want to see any photos or footage and they didn't understand. Finally I told them and they were like "I didn't know you were Haitian" and it's like "Do you not hear me talk about it or my dad or my flag and stuff like that?" I guess that is one thing that made me think about stuff. But I mean that's the Midwest. I mean it's diverse but not that diverse.

Jessica also shared her frustration by saying:

> I'm not black and people think I'm black. It drives me crazy. It just really sucks that I am not recognized for what I really am. So like to white people I'm exotic and stuff like that. It's kind of weird. To them I'm just something different, something out of the ordinary, instead of another white person.

Jessica's description of being othered was shared by all participants, but Anthony also had the experience of being perceived as black.

Anthony, who grew up in a predominantly white racial environment, spoke about being considered black by his peers because "that's how white the town was." Anthony has especially seen his perception of race play a role in his ability to be an active campus leader.

> I get annoyed when people assume I'm black, and then they find out that I'm not black, but then when I stand up for like minorities or black people they say, "You can't do that." And it's like I've been through things where people have referred to me as black and I've been called things and I know to a degree what they go through. I just find it very disrespectful when people just assume they know you.

The racial assumptions people make about Anthony have also carried into his role as a CA, where some of his residents who he has known for two years just found out Anthony was not black.

The experience of people assuming a participant's racial identity stripped these participants of the ability to self-identify racially. Consequently, these students were left feeling confused, angry, and frustrated about their true racial and ethnic identity.

I am Not that Type of Hispanic

None of the participants felt that they were fully accepted within the Latino/a community and as a result defined themselves by what they were not, rather than by what they were. I constantly heard "I am not like them," referring to other Latinos/as and other minorities but the participants had a difficult time articulating what they were racially and ethnically. The easiest way for the participants to describe what they were ethnically was by describing what they were not. Jessica described this experience of not fitting the stereotyped idea of Latinos/as and refusing to define herself as Latina.

> Latinos/as are a certain way and I don't fit into that category so they push me into another category. I'm never associated with them. I'm always associated with mixed or just black, even though I'm technically not black. I don't feel like I'm a part of the Latino

> community on campus because they just try to put me in the black box. I don't know; I'm just doing my thing.

For these students, race was not a defining characteristic of who they were but instead it was an additional characteristic. Anthony described this experience.

> Race isn't that bad. Even though you can tell you are different and that other people know you are different and that there is a clear distinction. Race wasn't a factor in a lot of ways. Even though [people's race is] different, people's willingness to just kind of go with it and not really put those differences in front of anything [were important for me].

Rae also shared Anthony's sentiment.

> Race has never really been a big issue because I guess most of us are pretty the same and those of us that are different is no big deal. It was just like, "Oh you're black? Ok." It was just like, "I have red hair." It's just sort of another trait. I never really thought about it.

Furthermore, participants had a stereotyped idea of what a "true minority" and a "true Latino/a" is. Katelyn described what a Latino/a is by describing what she was not.

> I don't know. I don't speak Spanish and I look white, you know? I'm a Hispanic but I don't know that much about Mexican culture besides like the food that my Grandma makes. I am not dark and I did not grow up in the ghetto. I grew up in a suburb of Minneapolis.

Katelyn does not define what she is but instead lists out stereotypes of Latinos/as to identify who they are. She is even reluctant to include herself in the group because her experiences as Latina are somehow not as legitimate. Jessica also described this idea of legitimacy that is connected to

location and experience by saying, “They are mostly from Chicago, which is fine but I’m from Iowa.” She further explained her experiences.

> Some of the people in [PRSA] were pretty nice to me but then they would talk to me and people would be like, “Where you from?” And they were from like Philly and New York, and straight from the island [of Puerto Rico] and I’m from Des Moines, Iowa. And they were like, “oh.” After that I just didn’t feel like I belonged because they were all from the actual [place] and it’s not like I’ve ever been to Puerto Rico or anything like that. I still consider myself part New Yorker because I go there a lot, but they still were kind of like, “You are from Iowa.”

Somehow not being from a place with a critical mass of minorities gave Jessica’s experiences less legitimacy.

Three subthemes emerged in support of the overarching theme (I am not that type of Hispanic) as salient to the student’s lived experiences within the phenomenon being researched. The subthemes are each presented separately to further illuminate the participant’s feelings and experiences but are also connected and discussed in relation to the overarching theme.

Question, Defend, and Prove

Question, defend, and prove refers to the participants feeling pressure to prove and defend their status as a minority, generally, and as a Latino/a, specifically. Fair skinned participants (Rae and Katelyn) felt pressure to prove their status as a minority whereas darker skinned participants (Anthony and Jessica) felt pressure from Latinos/as to prove their ethnic authenticity. Participants consistently expressed the importance of language and appearance as automatic tokens “proving” their minority status and ethnic authenticity. Additionally, the

pressure to prove and defend their status was initiated interpersonally by peers who questioned students' racial and ethnic status.

Rae experienced pressure to prove and defend her Hispanic authenticity from her Columbian grandmother. Rae shared that "the only reason [she] started taking Spanish was to sort of prove to [her] grandma that [she] cared about being Hispanic." Rae's feelings of inadequacy also manifested themselves in the classroom while interacting with other MS scholars, who, although fair skinned, had the ability to use language to prove their ethnic authenticity.

> There were several people who were from like Cuba or from South America or came from families who spoke Spanish and even though they didn't look "Hispanic," they were fluent, and then there's me. I don't look Spanish, I don't speak Spanish, at least very much of it.

Rae felt pressure to prove and defend her Hispanic authenticity but she did not have the ethnic capital to do so successfully.

Jessica also felt pressured to prove and defend her Hispanic authenticity. Jessica described feeling pressured to prove herself "because of the way [she] looked." Jessica further described the pressure to prove and defend herself:

> Some people would think that I was lying because of the way I look. If you see my mother she looks like a Puerto Rican. If you see my mother and me we look exactly the same, but if you see just me you see like a *morena* (dark skinned person). It's so hard to prove [my race] because I don't have much family in Iowa so I can't like…if I take you to a wedding, oh for sure you'll know that [I'm Hispanic]. Or if you meet my family,

> yeah, you will know that I'm just the same; I do the exact same things; listen to the exact same music; eat the exact same food. It's just like hard. I don't feel like trying to prove it.

Jessica proceeded to talk about the intersection of language and skin color in relation to feeling pressured to prove and defend her ethnic authenticity while interacting with other Puerto Ricans.

> So it's like "prove yourself" and you speak Spanish fluently and it's like, "Oh of course, you obviously didn't learn that in class. That's natural to you." To me, it's just harder because I don't even have like an accent [when I speak Spanish] or anything like that, and I mean they're from Puerto Rico, and I know they know of like Afro-Boricuans (dark-skinned Puerto Ricans) so they know that there are people that look like me. Darker than me [actually] and look like they are straight from Africa, like fresh off the boat. It's the Caribbean. But they speak Spanish. It's like they look [Black] but look at my language. It kind of proves it. Like with me, I don't even have the language. I don't know. It's just like kind of hard. Language really is a big factor.

Jessica felt that by speaking Spanish she would be able to prove and successfully defend her ethnic authenticity, although her authenticity would still consistently be questioned because of her appearance.

Anthony, like the other participants, was also questioned, but his experience is slightly different. His peers questioned him as a minority, suggesting that he could not speak out about "minority issues."

> People have questioned my morals, my reasons, people have questioned who I hang out with, who I associate myself with, they've questioned my work ethic, my passion…so I

> would say the struggles overall in [my] college career have always been people doubting me, to a degree.

Anthony felt inadequate as a minority and described feeling pressure to prove his ethnic authenticity to other Latinos/as.

> Since we don't speak Spanish and it's not really like at the forefront when we are interacting with other Hispanics, I feel like to a degree we have to kind of show that even though we can't speak it we still understand what's going on and we can still communicate and are still a part of it. We do kind of to a point have to prove ourselves to those individuals even though I'm not fully to a point where you're at. I'm still the same as you. But we're different. Yeah, I'd say that I do try and prove myself . I don't know if that is just trying to go out and get more acclimated with those things or it's just how we interact with people of those natures.

Anthony believed that Latinos/as have expectations of what a Hispanic should be. These expectations are often associated with experiences he does not share (Spanish language, skin color, working class, uneducated) with other Hispanics.

For Katelyn, the pressure to prove and defend her ethnic authenticity has been ongoing, and particularly salient in her college experience; hence, she explained her lived experience in great detail throughout the three interviews. She began feeling pressure to prove and defend her ethnic authenticity the first day she met the other MS scholars.

> I actually remember the Minority Scholarship banquet at the beginning where like my mom dropped me off in school and we went and had dinner with all the other MS scholars. I remember we were walking in and she was just like "Ok. I'm glad you went

> tanning because you look a little bit more Mexican." And I was like "Why?" And she's like, "Well, they're giving you a lot of money and I know you are only half but they have never seen what you look like and you don't look that Mexican and I'll wonder if they say anything."

After realizing her fair skinned complexion in comparison to other Hispanics, Katelyn became cautious about revealing the fact that she was a MS scholar. She instead decided to avoid telling people she was a MS scholar in order to avoid feeling pressure to prove herself. She further elaborated,

> I think I've always been like nervous telling people that I am a MS scholar because like I don't speak Spanish--you know I'm a Hispanic but I don't know that much about Mexican culture besides like the food that my Grandma makes. And so some people are kind of taken aback by that and I don't know--getting into conversations with people before I've gotten like a lot of resentment

Katelyn described herself by speaking about the parts of Mexican culture she was not familiar with, and like Rae, feeling insufficiently equipped with ethnic capital to successfully defend her status as a minority, thus, not disclosing the fact that she was a MS scholar to other students, especially white students.

Katelyn's minority status in the above interaction was actually challenged by a group of white male students. In fact, she often finds herself in discussions with white males about her minority status. She described the consequences of constantly having to prove and defend her minority status as "not knowing how [she] feel[s] about minority scholarships now." Moreover,

she identified envy as a reason why white males question her race and described interactions in which she defended her scholarship.

> I'll run into some white males that get kind of defensive, "Well that's not fair. There is no scholarship that I applied and qualified for." But at the same time I'm just--maybe this is just me--but the only two other people that I know got full ride scholarships were both white males. So there [are] some available. You can get full tuition if you are a white male, not because you are a white male but because you're a good student and a hard worker. And one of my friends went to the Naval Academy and so his education cost 250,000 dollars but it's all paid for because he was a hard worker and he interviewed with them and you know he puts in that time. Even mine is not technically all expenses paid because, you know, I have to pay for room and board but I put in the effort working while I'm here as a CA. It's not like I sit back and don't do anything.

Katelyn proceeded to defended the scholarship she received by describing accomplishments throughout her high school career.

> Nobody knows me from high school. They didn't know that I would sit there and cry over getting an A not an A+ in my class because an A+ was more than 4.0 and so it would bring me up and it's been my goal since 8th grade to be valedictorian and that was going to happen. No if, and's, or but's. And I would go to teachers and be like, "You gave me an A--that's going to completely bring down my grade point." I was the first yearbook editor to turn in a complete full yearbook without any missing pages, all on time and meet every single deadline. But I was also in tennis, and I had a life, and I took honors classes, and I was in plays, and I went to state speech, so it's like, you don't know

> what I went through. It wasn't--like my parents wanted me to have good grades but they would have been fine with A's and B's and you know getting into college. That's a good student, someone that gets A's and B's but no, I had to have my A+ or it was like I was going to figure out how to get my grade up to that.

While Katelyn shared the above story she was visibly shaken, she resisted tears, and was visibly angry that she had to prove and defend her scholarship.

I'm not really a Hispanic

The pressure to prove their ethnic authenticity caused some participants to feel inadequate as Hispanics. Participants coped with these feelings of inadequacy, initiated by feeling pressure to prove and defend their status, by hiding their non-Spanish speaking status and not "coming out" as non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as. For all of the participants, these feelings of inadequacy made them feel they were "not a true minority." Moreover, these feelings manifested themselves in the activities participants chose to *not* get involved in.

Katelyn coped with being challenged and consistently having to defend and prove her status by choosing not to disclose she is Mexican and letting people assume she is white.

> I feel like some people think that because I do not speak Spanish I'm not really Mexican and that's why I don't disclose it often. I just let people think I'm white. To be a minority you have to--well it's really just Latin American minority because no one expects, I don't think, black people to speak any kind of African, I don't know, other language. I feel like when I meet people that's the first question they will ask me usually after I say that I'm Mexican is "Do you speak Spanish?" And it's kind of like the

> affirming, are you really Mexican? Like, do you speak Spanish, because if you don't you are just like a mutt.

Katelyn described being Mexican and not speaking Spanish as "being a stealth Hispanic, in secret." Unless she discloses her status as Hispanic she is not perceived as Hispanic and she "feel[s] like [she] has the power to let people know and so [she's] like a secret agent. [She] looks white but actually [is] stealthly [Mexican]."

Rae also described the experience of hiding her non-Spanish speaking status but she described the experience as a "big secret" and the fear of being "found out" prevented her from being involved.

> I wanted to be a part of the Latin Heritage club but as I didn't really feel like I was accepted. I didn't really feel Latin--I'm Hispanic, I identify more with that term. I guess just even the use of Latin really made me feel uncomfortable of going. It was almost like this fear that I would be found out that I didn't speak Spanish. My inability to speak Spanish prevented me from exploring my culture and my heritage here at MU.

Rae continued,

> I felt like I was hiding the fact that I couldn't speak Spanish. I spoke more Spanish than the rest of my friends. It never really bugged me that I didn't speak Spanish. But when I went around people who spoke Spanish I didn't really want to mention the fact that I was Hispanic to them because then a question I would get a lot would be "Oh, you speak Spanish?" And I'd say, "Just a little." It felt like I went down in their esteem because I only spoke a little. But it still felt like I was being discovered from this big fat deep secret of "Oh, I don't speak Spanish." It felt like something I had to hide.

Rae's secret is twofold. She is a Hispanic who appears to be white, but is also a Hispanic who does not speak Spanish. Rae, "for the longest time felt completely unnatural [marking herself] down as Hispanic." She struggled with receiving a scholarship for minorities because she "did not feel like a minority" and she "does not consider herself a Hispanic." Furthermore, Rae said,

> I almost view myself as white. I mean I know I'm Hispanic and I'm proud to be Hispanic but there's that conflicting sort of feeling of "Yes, I'm Hispanic" but I was so rejected by the Hispanic community I came in contact with that I kind of pulled away and I have little to no daily interaction with anyone who is a minority really.

Rae felt rejected by minorities and "felt like [she] couldn't speak up" because she "wasn't sure if [her] opinion counted" among the MS students. Rae further elaborated by describing her internal struggle accepting the MS.

> I would not have been able to come to MU if I hadn't been able to get the MS…Being given those financial reasons, to consider myself Hispanic was the reason that it took so very long for me to consider myself Hispanic because I felt almost as if I was taking advantage of the system and lying.

Rae described "true minorities" as people who have felt oppressed and have been "treated as Hispanic." The only time that Rae started feeling oppressed was via her classroom experiences with MS students. She also described feeling uneasy with the class because she was unsure what the professor's agenda was. She felt as if she was being taught how to be "racist or reverse racist." Jessica described having difficulty accepting herself as minority because of her non-Spanish speaking status. She elaborated by saying, "I guess I don't want to say it but I kind of

feel like I don't feel like a Latina. Even though I am; of course I know that I am." Jessica felt pressure via her interpersonal interactions with other Latinos and described the experience:

> The rare times that I would meet another like Latino, other than Mexican, especially if they were Puerto Rican, I was like "Oh my god, be my best friend." They obviously had thicker accents and I talk like a white girl compared to them. They would try to speak to me in Spanish and I would answer back in English or I wouldn't understand everything. I wouldn't follow along their conversations and then they *found out* I wasn't Spanish speaking and they took that very negatively. They kind of just pushed me away and they used to call me a watered down Puerto Rican. I guess speaking Spanish makes you like a full Latina, which I don't understand because I still have the heritage and stuff like that. I was just kind of like shunned. I wasn't a true Latina to them because I didn't speak Spanish.

Once her new friend group found out she did not speak Spanish, language became an immediate barrier.

Anthony also shared the belief that his inability to speak the Spanish language was a barrier. He described the barrier as an "unspoken friction" between native speakers and him but the unspoken friction is also related to how salient a student's ethnicity is. He described minorities on campus.

> I've met a couple of minorities who have been quite extreme in the way that they act. You can definitely tell that they carry the influence a lot more than I have. They are really engrained in it, in the way that they are quite outspoken about their cultural beliefs, the attitudes of the culture, and how they interact with other people and some people are

> really in tune with it, which I appreciate but I really don't. I really don't find it that beneficial to me because I didn't carry that much over.

Anthony felt uncomfortable speaking for minorities and therefore did not get involved in multicultural organizations. He further described wanting to get involved but feeling unequipped to do so.

> I think I would have tried to get involved, honestly. Because a couple of years ago when they were redoing the multicultural center and they were restructuring that whole program I think I would have gotten more attached to it and more involved with it because I think I could have made an impact there. I think I just couldn't see myself in that role because of the barrier that existed so I just kind of abandoned it. It's there but I'm not equipped enough to do it

Moreover, Anthony shared that feeling ethnically authentic is important when you are in that type of leadership role.

> I'm not really around it. It hasn't been too immersed in my daily activities. Because of that I wouldn't feel completely sound in judging some things I would make. I would feel to a degree that I was being fake almost, and that's not something I would want to communicate to other people

Anthony felt that a "real minority" could do a better job representing that group and decided that "someone who knew more what they were doing" would be much more successful in the leadership role.

Minorities are Cliquish

The participants felt that minorities were cliquish and only stayed within their small peer groups. Additionally, the participants wanted to be more multicultural and have friends from varied racial and ethnic backgrounds. Katelyn shared that she likes to have large groups of friends and did not feel like minorities shared her desire.

> I get really frustrated with groups of friends that don't branch out and I felt like all the people that really identified as being minorities, in my high school, were just very cliquey. Maybe that's like not their fault and that's the way they felt like they had to be because they didn't feel comfortable with anybody else, but just for me I can't hang out with the same three people constantly. I like people who can go and meet new people and be around. Like my close friend group was 17 people and we were all really good friends. So I needed something like that, whereas with those groups it's just always smaller. The only people that were minorities that I was really good friends with were people like me, who just kind of blended in with everyone.

Katelyn felt more connected to minorities who were similar to her and liked having large groups of friends.

Jessica explained the "cliquey" nature of minorities by describing minority groups as protective.

> Minorities are like, "This is my circle this is my group. This is my language. You don't understand it because you are not part of this group." This is what it is. You are kind of in that group but you are outside that wall. You are just lost and you are trying to find your place. You honestly are trying to find your place in the group but they can easily block you off and easily go into Spanish and you just have to stand there and look stupid.

> I don't know why it's so important. I guess it's just usually their parents don't speak very much English.

Jessica was particularly critical of minority groups because "they spoke about other ethnicities" ignorantly.

> I've always just been a part of different groups. Whenever I hung out with minorities I noticed how they speak about other ethnicities. I noticed they don't really hang out. They would speak stupidly to me. You shouldn't ever assume unless you know. I hang out with people from Chicago and they are in their own group and everyone else is a local. Being a local is like a negative thing and since I'm a local, they are still cool with me, but sometimes I won't understand stuff and they will be like "Oh, it's because you are a local." I just realized that they all stick together and they don't really let other people in because they are different and they expect other people to know them, act just like them, and we aren't all alike.

Jessica found it frustrating and instead adopted a friend group encompassing various racial and ethnic backgrounds. Rae described everything she does as "completely [racially] mixed." However, she acknowledged that "people tend to bond with people who are like them" but she has never felt pressure to only have minority friends.

All the participants adopted a larger friend group, not bound by race and ethnicity. Anthony described his group of friends:

> In terms of network of friends, not to sound like I'm super important but I do know quite a bit of this campus. I'm lucky to know quite a bit of this campus. I have my core group of friends that I hang out with and I talk to them and that I truly just indulge and let them

> know everything about me, but I would say just in this campus alone I have a couple thousand people that I would mutually call friends that know me and that would be able to speak of me and would be able to talk about me in conversations and that's just because of the involvement that I've had and continue to have. I'm definitely out there as a public image, so, people know me.

Anthony, like the other participants, felt more comfortable with a large group of friends who were not just of one racial background.

Family

Family was an important factor that helped the participants' establish their ethnic identity. Specifically, family was the avenue in which participants learned about cultural traditions like food, music, and religion. Anthony described the paramount importance of religion in his household.

> Catholicism has been a huge impact and influences everything. Everything on my mom's side and everything we do, in prayer, in all our daily activities, if I'm not going to church, if I'm not being a good Catholic in any way, my mother will just rail on me.

Anthony proceeded to explain the importance of religion for Puerto Ricans.

> Religion in general is very important in Puerto Rican culture. So I'd say some of those practices that I've picked up, and just the determination. This year like I must commit myself to this, and say these prayers, and I must follow these upbringings, the strict upbringings that my parents gave me. I must follow that, those have probably sticked.

Anthony learned the practice of religion via his parents, specifically his mother more so than his father.

Rae described the welcoming environment of her family while she was visiting and meeting some family members for the first time. She was amazed that instantly she was accepted as a family member although they were essentially strangers.

> The instant you meet, you are family. "I may not know you but you're family." It was different, it was very much a Hispanic kind of idea because I look at Caucasians and other families, you come to visit you're still kind of a stranger. But no, you go visit them and you're instantly family. You're part of the group, you're one of us. And I went to go visit them and I loved it. It was fantastic! I had never had such a good experience not only with the family from my grandmother's side but also with like the Hispanic culture…I quite enjoyed it. It kind of made me proud to be Hispanic.

Rae is very connected to her family and misses them while she is away for school. She tries to maximize the little time she has with her family.

> Family is a big thing, more so than people I've met on campus. I'm extremely attached to my family. People say "What are you going to do for spring break?" and they say, "I'm going skiing in the mountains, I'm going to Cancun," and I say, "I'm going home… because I want to see my family and I haven't seen them for a few months and I want to go." It's kind of like what happened when Nick [her brother] went to Boston for eight months for an internship, [my] parents got to visit him for a few weeks. I didn't get to visit him. I missed him terribly. We talked a bit but you can tell that by the end of the eight months he was feeling lonely because there was no family there. Family is such a huge thing. I talk with my mother almost every day and I'm not--people are like, "You

> talk with your mother every day?" –yup. "Don't you wish you had such a good relationship with your mother?" She's important.

Rae continued talking about the importance of her family and shared that a cultural value she learned was the value of hard work.

> My family is very hard working. We have a good work ethic. School is very important… But my parents pushed us to be the best we can be, to do the best we can. They really encouraged us and they told us that dedication to your school work is very important. Plus, not only working hard for your school work, but just working hard in general. My father has been a roofer for over 30 years and its hard work. It's really rough on your body, but he does it. He doesn't complain--works hard. I get it from my mother too but I definitely can see it from my father. He worked hard so that we wouldn't have to. He doesn't want us to have to work the way that he does. So he works very hard. I guess that kind of work ethic I've always brought to a job. I try to do the best that I can and really work at it.

Rae found family to be the most important thing and the ultimate support network.

Katelyn found family to be extremely important and shared that food is "a huge deal for [her] family." In addition to learning about Mexican food, Katelyn learned about strict gender roles through her grandparents.

> Both of my grandparents, and even my parents for a very long time, there was very distinguished role separation. Like only very recently did my family become a two income household and I feel like I prefer the one income household, if you can do it. It's like really hard to do now and the military is one of the only real jobs that support that.

> Specially, my dad was an officer so he made a lot of money and there was a lot of stuff for my mom to do, but both my grandparents were like in debt, you know? And, I don't know, I feel like that has affected me a lot because that's kind of how I see who I want to be. And for me it doesn't specifically have to be that the woman stays home. I don't care if the woman does it or the man, you know? It's not about that, but I do think, especially that when you have children who haven't gone to school yet, that there should always be a parent in the household but that's the way that I was raised and that's how pretty much all of my family was raised, was in that way.

Katelyn has been criticized by peers for favoring a one-income household because "people think [she's] trying to reverse feminism" and "bring down all the stuff [women] have accomplished so far." Katelyn finds it frustrating that she is misunderstood.

> I'll meet people here and I'll say that one of my aspirations is to be a housewife and people just kind of look at me like I'm completely backwards. I'm not living in the 60s where there is inequality in the relationship and I'm not just going to sit around and do nothing all day. I'm a very intense person so that means as a housewife I will be a very intense person. I'm going to coupon clip until my hands fall off, you know.

She continued by describing the tension she feels when meeting others in the academy.

> A lot of people, here especially in academia or women, come to get an education. That's something that I bump heads with a lot of people here. They get very defensive about that, especially if their mom worked too. I think they feel like I'm judging them but it's just like I know what I want to do and that's fine if that's what your thing is.

Katelyn would even be willing to work a few years to put her family in a position to have a one family household.

Jessica talked about family being important in developing her ethnic pride. She said, "I have a lot of pride for my family." Jessica described that "no matter what, you are always there for family, even if they screw you over." Jessica also talked about family being important in her passion for music, especially her father who played the drums.

> Music has just always been a huge part of my life. I mean it still is. Even though it isn't very diverse here, it is still a huge part of my life. When I was a kid I used to get made fun off because I didn't even speak Spanish and I would like Spanish music and people would be like, "How do you even understand?" You don't have to understand it to love it. And I mean, yeah I understand some of it, but not all of it. So like I still love it. That's still my music; that's what I grew up with. That's what I'm used to. It reminds me of home. It's like that homey feeling when you hear it.

Jessica described the "homey feeling" multiple times, usually in reference to feeling comfortable with her ethnicity.

> My mother was the first one to marry outside of her race so they used to call me negrita (black) and they would take pictures and they all looked Hispanic. I was always different but no matter what, its family. That's how most Hispanic families are. Family is family no matter what. It's just like my family in general just being really supportive even though they're like far away in New York, Tampa, or Puerto Rico, they always just told me, "You are who you are."

Jessica has felt the most comfortable and supported by family, which evoked feelings of home.

> My family was always the one to reassure me and say, "No, you are what you are." It's kind of hard for someone to get to me when they say I'm not Latina, because then I go home and I know I'm Latina. With this whole family, yeah, I know.

Regardless of Jessica's appearance she was always supported at home and by family.

BOM Analysis

Using Torres's (1999) BOM, a person can be in one of four quadrants of ethnic orientation. The four quadrants: Bicultural, Anglo, Hispanic, and Marginal, are taxonomies of student's orientation and do not measure movement. The quadrants are byproducts of intersecting axes of acculturation and ethnic identity. I asked all students to identify what orientation best described them. Everyone but Rae described themselves as bicultural. A bicultural oriented person is able to competently balance both, their Anglo and Latino/a culture, and avoid picking a culture (Torres, 1999). Rae, however, identified as Anglo oriented saying she was much more comfortable operating within Anglo culture. Anglo oriented students are more comfortable in Anglo culture (Torres, 1999).

All the participants, except Rae, described themselves as bicultural, however throughout the interview process all shared feeling uneasiness with their ethnicity, exemplified by the findings of this study. Specifically, the subtheme *I'm not really a Hispanic* suggests that for these Latinos/as their inability to speak Spanish made them feel uncomfortable with their Latino/a counterparts in the college setting, although, they felt like "real Latinos/as" with family. For all participants, their family and home environment allowed them to be bicultural; however, within MU they felt pressure to be their apparent race. Torres's (1999) model is unable to measure how a student's identity shifts and how negative and positive peer interactions also

influence the ways students develop ethnically. Although the participants identified as bicultural, it was clear that, because of their lack of ethnic authenticity, in college they were uncomfortable with other Latinos/as on campus who spoke Spanish. I argue that these students' orientation is contextually driven, similar to Renn's (2004) *situational* identity pattern. The students who identified as bicultural are in fact bicultural, however, their bicultural orientation is predominantly present in the home environment and/or away from other Latinos/as who speak Spanish.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the three themes that emerged. The three themes, It's a Midwest thing, I'm not that type of Hispanic, and Family, provide a collective understanding of how non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as experience the environment as college students. Through my conversations with these Latino/a participants, I was able to analyze their BOM orientation and problematize the stagnant nature of Torres's (1999) model.

In chapter 6, I provide a summary of the study, present the findings as they relate to existing literature, and discuss the findings in relation to my research questions. Lastly, I provide implications for student affairs professionals, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

In this chapter, I summarize the study, discuss the three themes in relation to existing literature, answer the research questions guiding this study, provide implications for student affairs professionals, identify recommendations for future research, and share some personal reflections from my research.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the experiences of non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as within a PWI. Language is a symbolic marker of ethnic authenticity for Latinos/as and I was interested in how these students negotiated their status as non-Spanish speaking but also Latino/a. Specifically, I was interested in exploring how issues of fit and intragroup marginalization affected these students' ethnic identity. The study was conducted with four Latino/a students attending MU. Using a phenomenological perspective, I interviewed each participant three times. All of the interviews were audio-taped, and transcribed. Also, I coded and analyzed the transcribed interviews. The four participants of this study all identified as Latino/a or Hispanic but also identified with a specific Latino/a nationality.

Discussion of the Findings

The three themes that emerged from this study were: It's a Midwest thing, I'm not that type of Hispanic, and Family. The first theme, *It's a Midwest thing*, emerged as participants described how their race was assumed based on their appearance because of the Midwestern culture in which they were attending school. Further, participants described a Midwestern culture unaware of diverse others, which leads to ignorance. However, the participants

dismissed the Midwestern way because people were inherently nice and had a lack of contact with racial minorities. The Midwestern culture the participants described was a coded way of referencing a larger white culture. These participants' experiences can be understood through the work of Marshall and Theoharis (2007). Marshall and Theoharis (2007) described a Midwestern culture that is predominantly white, nice, and limited in opportunities to interact with people of color. Midwesterners' inherent niceness prevents them from engaging in conversations about race because they are fearful of being perceived as racist (Marshall & Theoharis, 2007). The participants in this study described the limited interaction between Midwesterners and people of color and expressed frustration and anger about the level of unawareness prevalent in whites, confirming Marshall and Theoharis's (2007) description of Midwesterners. Furthermore, the participants described Midwesterners who instead of engaging in conversations about race assumed the participants' race based on skin color, also confirming Marshall and Theoharis's (2007) description of Midwesterners.

The second theme, *I'm not that type of Hispanic*, refers to the way students understood their race and ethnicity. Participants described themselves by describing what they were not, instead of what they were. They all had internalized a view of stereotyped Latinos/as, stereotypes that they did not share. This experience adds to Garcia Bedolla's (2003) research, which found that later generations of Latinos/as distance themselves from the earlier generations of Latinos/as. Similarly, non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as distanced themselves from stereotypical Latinos/as at MU by choosing to not get involved in cultural organizations. Garcia Bedolla (2003) explained that this distancing occurs because of the negative images that persist about the Latino/a community in the media. The later generation does not want to be associated

with the negative stereotypes of the group and choose to not associate with them. Garcia Bedolla (2003) called this distancing *selective dissociation.* The participants considered themselves Latino/a privately, yet chose not to engage with the larger Latino/a community.

According to Tajfel and Turner's (1986) social identity theory, the next step for these Latinos/as who are selectively dissociating is to embrace their ethnicity and turn to collective action to change the negative perceptions of the Latino/a group; however, this outcome is contingent upon not being able to shed their association with the group. Based on Tajfel and Turner's (1986) findings, Katelyn and Rae will continue assimilating to mainstream because of their apparent whiteness, whereas Anthony and Jessica will be unable to dissociate from the group because of their skin color and will eventually turn to collective action, attempting to change the negative stereotypes of the group.

For these participants race was not a defining characteristic of whom they were; instead, it was an additional characteristic like hair color. This finding was not supported by previous research on Latinos/as, instead, this viewpoint would suggest a colorblind mentality. Bonilla-Silva (2002) described colorblindness as the dominant ideology post-civil rights. Colorblindness involves an avoidance of direct racial language and an overemphasis on people's character (Bonilla-Silva, 2002). Additionally, the participants viewed minorities as cliquish and only maintaining friendships with a small group of friends. The assertion that minorities are cliquish is not new. Fergus (2009) found that Latinos/as establish boundaries that prevent others from entering the group; however, his work was in direct reference to skin color. Similarly, Bonilla-Silva (2002; 2006) and Forman (2004) suggested that colorblind people describe racial minorities as self-segregators, living in segregated areas, and people who benefit from

affirmative action programs, like scholarships exclusively for minorities, which are reverse racist, providing further reference that the participants in my study had adopted a colorblind mentality. Further support of the adopted mindset of my participants was their uneasiness receiving minority scholarships and feelings uncomfortable with the rationale behind said scholarships. Moreover, Rae and Katelyn, as described in Chapter 5, explained feeling that the program awarding the MS was reverse racist. Evidently, the participants did not view their ethnicity as a central part of their life, except for Jessica, because they had not been oppressed, further exemplifying a colorblind mentality. Colorblind people describe being a minority as a mindset rather than a state of being (Forman, 2004).

Further, these feelings of not being oppressed reinforce and contradict Ogbu's (1978) work on minorities. Ogbu proposed two different types of minorities: involuntary and voluntary. Involuntary minorities are in the United States by force, adopt an oppositional cultural frame of reference against whites, and share a history of disenfranchisement. Examples of involuntary minorities are Puerto Ricans and Mexicans. Voluntary minorities are in the United States by choice, have no problem internalizing and learning mainstream values, and believe education to be the path to success. Examples of voluntary minorities are Colombians and Asian Americans. Based on Ogbu's (1978) work, Rae was the only person who should have exhibited characteristics of voluntary minorities, however, *all* the participants exhibited a voluntary minority mindset. A potential reason why these students are exhibiting a voluntary minority mindset as opposed to an involuntary mindset may be that these students view their status in the United States as completely voluntary. Ogbu's (1978) work did not account for migration

patterns and immigration, suggesting that immigrants, regardless of nationality adopt a voluntary minority mindset.

The participants' experiences as Latinos/as lacked legitimacy in the eyes of Spanish speaking Latinos/as. This lack of legitimacy was not explained in the literature I reviewed, thus this is a unique contribution to the body of literature on Latinos/as. As a result of this lack of legitimacy, when interacting with other Latinos/as, participants were reluctant to disclose their non-Spanish speaking status. The participants felt the need to hide their non-Spanish speaking status because of previous experiences being shunned by Latino/a community members, as previously discussed by Castillo (2009) and Golash-Boza (2006). Moreover, the students felt the need to hide their status as a minority, instead passing as whatever race they were perceived to be. Passing was previously described by Piper (1992). For Piper (1992), passing had a dual meaning: passing as white and passing a suffering test. Passing as white involves choosing to accept and embrace the external categorization others have assigned to a person (Golash-Boza, 2006). All of the participants decided to pass as whatever race they were perceived to be because it was easier than fighting people's perceptions. Always correcting people's perceptions became a draining process. Additionally, these participants felt pressure to pass a suffering test of sorts, except their test involved being able to prove their ethnic authenticity to other Latinos/as. The participants believed that had they spoke Spanish, their authenticity as Latino/a would be legitimatized.

As described in Chapter 5, participants felt inadequate and inauthentic as minorities because Latinos/as had excluded them from the group for not maintaining the group's norms. This exclusion is called intragroup marginalization (Castillo, 2009). Intragroup marginalization,

otherwise known as a social sanction, occurs when the group's cultural norms, which are supposed to hold importance, are lost in favor of cultural norms in line with the majority (Castillo, 2009; Tajfel, 1991). Castillo (2009) suggested that norm maintaining group members, in this case Spanish speaking Latinos/as, hold the power to allow and/or disallow membership of members who not adhere to the cultural norms of the group. The participants in my study detailed feeling powerless and disallowed entrance for not maintaining the cultural norms of the group, specifically speaking Spanish. As a result, they were susceptible to being questioned to defend and prove their status as a minority. The participants felt that speaking Spanish would have allowed them to prove their ethnic minority status and not experience intragroup marginalization. The idea of speaking Spanish as a token that allows entrance to the larger Spanish speaking group has previously been explored via personal stories (Baez, 2002; Murillo, 2001), thus these findings support the literature.

Lastly, the third theme, *family*, refers to the participants' assertion that family was the ultimate network of support and acceptance. Family has long been understood by researchers to be an important aspect of ethnic identity development (Hernandez, 2002; Marin & Marin, 1991; Torres, 2003, 2004); however, Ramirez's (2005) findings suggested that non-Spanish speaking Latinoa/as are unable to form meaningful relationships with their extended family because of their inability to speak the language. My findings contradict Ramirez's (2005) work. All of the participants identified family as their unconditional support network and the place where they sought support to understand their ethnic identity.

Discussion of the Research Questions

In this section I examine how the findings of this study relate to the primary research questions guiding this study.

To what extent and where do non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as believe they "fit in" at a PWI in the Midwest?

The non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as who participated in my study felt the most comfortable with their close group of friends, which were from a mixture of diverse backgrounds. The participants felt less comfortable around other minorities, specifically Latino/a students. Their inability to speak Spanish prevented them from feeling comfortable with other Latino/a students and also contributed to other Latino/a students perceiving them as inadequate Latinos/as. Additionally, the participants found their "fit" within activities they were passionate about. For some, Rae and Katelyn, those activities included their major. For Jessica, her support for the LGBTQ community directed her to a support network within that particular group. Lastly, Anthony found his fit by being over involved on campus and getting to know a lot of students and administrators affiliated with MU. Although participants did not find a fit within the Latino/a community on campus, they still maintained a strong bond to their families.

To what extent do non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as experience intragroup marginalization at a PWI in the Midwest?

The extent to which the participants experienced intragroup marginalization was directly related to their level of interaction with Latinos/as who spoke Spanish. At MU, it was easy for the participants to not engage or interact with other Latinos/as because of the low number of Latinos/as in general. However, the more they tried to connect with the Latino/a community the more they experienced intragroup marginalization. Conversely, even when they did not engage

with the Latino/a community they still realized the implicit barrier that existed within the group. Additionally, they all acknowledged that language was a symbolic barrier preventing them from connecting with Latinos/as who spoke Spanish. Jessica and Rae experienced intragroup marginalization the most because of their desire to be members of the group.

How do issues of fit and intragroup marginalization affect the ethnic identity development of non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as at a PWI in the Midwest?

Experiences with fit and intragroup marginalization were of paramount importance for these students. Their inability to speak Spanish and their subsequent marginalization from the group tainted the students' ability to develop their ethnic identity free of external pressures. As a result, the participants decided to selectively dissociate from Latinos/as. They self-identified as Latino/a for the purpose of scholarships yet steered away from the larger Latino/a group because they did not want to constantly prove their ethnic authenticity. The participants chose to *not* get involved with cultural organizations because they felt as if they lacked ethnic authenticity. Consequently, they preferred to engage with a larger group of friends who did not perceive them as negatively. By disassociating from the group, their ethnic identity becomes stagnant, unexplored, and even rejected, in the college setting. The only place where they could effectively explore their ethnicity was in their home environment with their families. Family taught the participants about being Latino/a but, as Anthony reflected: "There is no real way of practicing your ethnicity." For these students, family taught them a set of values that they used privately. Being a minority to the participants was not about how they externally acted and/or what they were interested in, instead, being a minority was a private matter that informs the way they interact with other people.

Implications

The findings from this study suggest various implications for student affairs professionals (SAPs). Non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as are stripped of the ability to self-identify ethnically and feel powerless and angry about experiencing intragroup marginalization. SAPs, specifically multicultural student affairs offices, can provide large scale programming targeted at educating other Latinos/as about the diversity within the Latino/a group and the socio-historical factors that have contributed to Latinos/as' loss of language.

Non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as are susceptible to adopting color blind mentalities, historically exclusively held by whites only. Adopting this mindset is dangerous and ensures the continuation of the racial hierarchy that exists in the United States. White students who interact with non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as are reinforced in their view that minority scholarships are reverse racism. SAPs can help these students negotiate their colorblind mentalities by problematizing their thoughts in a developmental way. Specifically, MSA practitioners can engage in conversations about race and ethnicity with all of their students. SAPs at predominantly white institutions need to find a way to bring together the small number of Latinos/as on their campuses and be able to serve the entire group's needs. One way SAPs can achieve this goal is by being aware of the cultural organizations available on their campus and ensuring intragroup marginalization does not occur within the organizations. It is important for SAPs to understand what the mission and goals of each of these organizations is and not just blindly refer students to an organization that seems to be the "right fit" for Latino/a student needs.

These participants are excellent leaders who could be valuable assets to cultural organizations and help bridge the gap between cultural organizations and the larger campus community. Advisers of cultural organizations can take more active roles in promoting an environment of inclusivity for all types of Latinos/as.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research about non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as should further explore how skin color and socioeconomic status impact students' ethnic identity development. Ethnic identity development seems to be a product of these two factors in addition to language and needs to be further researched. Also, language needs to continue to be explored. Specifically, further research needs to look at how non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as develop their ethnic identity within higher education in different geographic areas. Language should also be further researched from a critical perspective that critiques the racial hierarchy that exists in the United States and its relation to language. Other appropriate methods to study this population can be case study and/or ethnography. Furthermore, multiracial Latino/a students with a white parent, growing up in a predominantly white rural area seem to speed through the acculturation process. Further research is needed to explore why and how students make these acculturation decisions. Additional research should also explore why non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as choose to avoid getting involved in cultural organizations. Researchers should also try to understand what factors lead Spanish speaking Latinos/as to view non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as as "sold out" minorities. Lastly, researchers need to distinguish between white appearing non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as and dark skinned Latinos/as. Each group has a different path for negotiating

their ethnic identity and the consequences and choices each group makes needs to be further explored.

Personal Reflections

Through my research I have learned about the experiences of non-Spanish speaking Latinos/as. My conversations with each participant made me realize the effects of not speaking Spanish and the regret these students experience for not being able to speak Spanish. They all understood the symbolic attachment that other Latinos/as had to Spanish; however, they were not able to share the symbolic attachment. The more I learn about this topic the less I know. I felt overwhelmed and at times sad for these students. Their stories of intragroup marginalization make me want to educate other Latinos/as about these students' experiences. Originally, I chose this topic because of my life experience; however, I have inherited these students' stories and experiences and now feel obligated to educate others.

APPENDIX A. RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Dear (Participants Name):

My name is Hector Limon and I am a graduate student at Iowa State University. I am writing to let you know that a research study is being planned that may be of interest to you. This study is supposed to explore the experiences of non-Spanish speaking Latinos at a predominately white institution in the Midwest. You have been identified as a potential candidate for the study and it is possible that you may be eligible to participate in this study. Your eligibility can only be determined by the investigator of this study, me.

Please be aware that, even if you are eligible, your participation in this or any research study is completely voluntary. There will be no consequences to you whatever if you choose not to participate, and your regular academic endeavors will not be affected by that choice. If you do choose to participate, the study will involve a series of three interviews focused on your experience in college in relation to not speaking Spanish.

In order to determine your eligibility and your interest in participating, you can email me back at halimon@iastate.edu you may choose not to respond to this email. If you do respond, any questions you have about the study will be answered.

Of course, if you have any questions for me, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Hector A. Limon
Department of Residence
Graduate Hall Director
1205 Roberts Hall
Ames, IA 50013
515.294.7638
halimon@iastate.edu

APPENDIX B. INFORMED CONSENT

Title of Study: Latino Identity: A phenomenological study of how non-Spanish speaking Latinos experience college

Investigators: Hector A. Limon
This is a research study. Please take your time in deciding if you would like to participate. Please feel free to ask questions at any time.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to understand the experiences of one sub-group of Latinos, non-Spanish speaking Latinos at a predominantly white institution (PWI) in the Midwest region of the United States.You are being invited to participate in this study because you have been identified as meeting the following criteria: (a) identify with either the term Latino or Hispanic, (b) not fluent in Spanish, and (c) a student at Midwestern University, a PWI. You should not participate if you are under the age of 18 or are currently enrolled in graduate level coursework.

DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURES

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in a series of three in-depth interviews. Each participant will be asked to participate in all three interviews. The interview series is focused on three areas because each interview is intended to serve a unique purpose: (1) focused life history, (2) the details of the experience, and (3) the reflection of meaning. The first interview will focus on the person's upbringing and his/her experience. The interview will include demographic questions, questions about the student's identity prior to coming to college, and questions about the student's current home living environment. The second interview will focus on the details of the participants' experiences as they relate to the phenomenon being studied. My role during the second interview is not to ask for the participants' general opinions, instead I will ask participants to reconstruct the details of their experience. Lastly, the third interview will allow participants an opportunity to reflect on the way they have made meaning of their ethnicity and the experiences that contributed to their ethnic identity development. The third interview will require participants to connect their past experiences to their current experience, and discuss how those two experiences together may have played a role in the student's life Your participation will last for approximately two weeks after the completion of the first interview. After your initial interview, you will be asked to return for a second interview four days later, and then return four days later for the last interview. Each interview will last between 30-90 minutes with the second interview being the longest.

BENEFITS

If you decide to participate in this study there may be no direct benefit to you. A benefit is defined as a "desired outcome or advantage." It is hoped that the information gained in this study will benefit society by filling a void in the research on Latino/students by shedding light on the experiences of a subgroup of Latinos. This group is non-Spanish speaking Latinos. More

information is needed about Latinos in the Midwest region of the country. Participants will gain an opportunity to make meaning of their lived experiences and share their stories.

COSTS AND COMPENSATION

You will not have any costs from participating in this study and you will not be compensated for participating in this study.

PARTICIPANT RIGHTS

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or leave the study at any time. If you decide to not participate in the study or leave the study early, it will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You can skip any questions that you do not wish to answer.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Records identifying participants will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by applicable laws and regulations and will not be made publicly available. However, federal government regulatory agencies, auditing departments of Midwestern University, and the Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves human subject research studies) may inspect and/or copy your records for quality assurance and data analysis. These records may contain private information.

To ensure confidentiality to the extent permitted by law, the following measures will be taken: All data will initially be recorded on audiotapes. The facilitator will keep the tapes in a lock-box until they are fully transcribed. Once they have been transcribed, the tapes will be destroyed and thrown away. Each participant will be assigned a number (1-4) that will correspond to the interviewee's recorded audio tape. The numbers will be used only for the purpose of keeping track of the participants' interviews. The transcribed interviews will be saved on a password protected private computer to which only the facilitator has access. Once the study has been completed, all transcriptions will be held in a lock box separate from the individual consent forms. If the results are published, your identity will remain confidential.

QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

You are encouraged to ask questions at any time during this study.

- For further information about the study contact Nancy Evans at 515.294.7113
- If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515) 294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515) 294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, Midwestern University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE

Your signature indicates that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study, that the study has been explained to you, that you have been given the time to read the document, and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered. You will receive a copy of the written informed consent prior to your participation in the study.

Participant's Name (printed) _____

_____ _____

(Participant's Signature) (Date)

APPENDIX C. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

These interviews are guiding questions for my interviews; however, based on the semi-structured nature of the interviews follow up questions may be asked.

Interview 1: Context

1. Tell me about your family background (generation status). How large is your family? Where were you raised and by whom? How long has your family been in the country? What factors contributed to you not speaking Spanish?
2. Describe your high school. What is the ethnic make-up of your high school? What is the size of your high school?
3. What clubs were you involved in High School, and what was your experience like? If not involved, what prevented you from being involved?
4. How would you identify ethnically? What does the word ethnicity mean to you?
5. Why do you choose to identify with that term?
6. In your experience, what does it mean to be a (self-identifier)?
7. When did you realize your own ethnicity? How old were you? Who or what experience introduced you to thinking about your ethnicity?
8. Describe your family and friends in the community in which you were raised? What role did ethnicity play in that community? What was the racial/ethnic makeup?
9. Who had the most influence on you before attending college and in what way did this person affect your ethnic identity, if at all?

Interview 2: Experience at a PWI

1. Why did you choose to attend the campus? What is your major? What year are you in? How many more years?
2. Tell me about an event while on this campus that caused you to think about your ethnicity?
3. Has the perception of your ethnicity changed since attending college? If so, how has this perception impacted you? Your family? Your high school friends? Your college friends?
4. Describe specific cultural values or beliefs that are significant to your ethnicity.
5. How have you been able to maintain some of those cultural values and behaviors on campus? If so, how and where?
6. Being (self-identifier) what struggles and challenges have you encountered on campus?
7. What is it like to be a non-Spanish speaking (self-identifier) here?
8. How are you treated because of your status as non-Spanish speaking (self-identifier)
9. Describe your network of friends and acquaintances on campus? Has your ethnicity impacted your ability to connect with people? If so, how?
10. Has the community of people influenced how you identify yourself in relation to ethnicity? If so, how?
11. Are you able to connect with all people equally? Why or why not?
12. What types of activities are you involved in on campus? Do you participate in any campus organizations? What communities of people are involved in those organizations?
13. Where do you feel the most comfortable on campus?
14. Does your ethnicity play a role in the activities you choose to get involved in?

15. Have your experience as a non-Spanish speaking (self-identifier) been hindered whatsoever by not speaking Spanish?
16. As a non-Spanish speaking (self-identifier), how would you describe the racial climate on campus?

Interview 3: Follow-up and member check

1. This interview will consist of additional exploration of information offered in the first two interviews that may not be clear or that may need more elaboration.
2. Students will also be presented with preliminary themes from the data analysis and will be asked to verify that these themes are an accurate representation of their background and experiences. They will have an opportunity to correct any misinterpretation or add additional information.

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