

## **Cultural Immersion Project Progress Report Group 10**

**10/13/2018**

**Description:** We hope to learn about the linguistic challenges that arise within our community and how those language barriers can limit economic opportunities. To address this pressing issue, we will be working with the Lafayette Adult Resource Academy to have the opportunity to interact with individuals within the Lafayette Latino community, learn their story, and communicate that message in a broader way. In addition, we will be learning more about the Latino community and culture by participating in events through the Latino Cultural Center . This will help us in identifying the values that their culture upholds. Finally, we will be interviewing members of the local Latino community to get a sense of how linguisticism affects the Latino community, how they feel about recent events in the news surrounding linguisticism and Latinos, and how they feel we can help break down barriers to prevent future events such as these.

**Purpose:** We are doing this project in the Latino community because we hope to learn about the language barriers hidden within our own communities that we may not come into contact with on a daily basis. We hope to help improve the situation facing many people in the Latino community who cannot speak English but need it as a second language to earn a living. The non-Latino perception of use of the Spanish language in immigrant Latino communities has created stereotypes which “limits the types of identity work available to US Latinos” and “construct Latinos as ‘separate’ from mainstream US society (Carter, 2014). Additionally, according to Vassei (2011), 67% of Latin American immigrants in the United states have limited English proficiency, however many adult English language

learners leave ESL courses after less than two months of classes. This influences Latino immigrant adolescent self-esteem (Contreras, 2008), Latino parents' ability to be involved in their children's education, which in turn affects Latino student success (Carreira, 2007; Skroback-Heisler, 1998), and the development of occupational skills (Huerta-Macias, 2003). Our purpose is tied to these visible constraints on the local Latino community as we look to understand and alleviate the issue. The cultural community we have selected is the Latino community in north central Indiana as represented by people both in urban and rural settings. We selected this community because we saw the dichotomy between the Latino and English-speaking communities especially when addressing the rural/urban divide. In addition, according to Elorriaga (2007), when college students participate as ESL tutors for local Latino families, not only did the English reading skills of the Latino families improve, the students "developed strong relationships with families and improved their Spanish skills and cultural awareness" and we look forward to gaining new cultural skills. We will work with LARA for our Latino urban community and Latino agricultural workers for a rural setting.

**Outcomes:** Our group hopes to leave behind an improved community as we work to help individuals learn English as their second language, and at the same time be open to learning from the individuals we interact with and the Latino community in general. If we are not able to meet with the same individuals each time we serve, as is most likely, then our anticipated outcome is that 10-15 people in the Latino community will improve their communication skills over the semester in a way that brings direct benefit to their lives. We will measure their improvement with a survey given before and after each session

asking the participants to self-report their level of English speaking and listening skills on a scale of one to ten, their confidence in their English skills on a scale of one to ten, and any areas they want to improve in (i.e. vocabulary for their profession, listening and understanding various American accents, etc.). We hope that after each session we can help our conversation partner move toward one of their improvement goals and increase their confidence in this area by at least 10%. Once the project is complete, there is a plan to have a presentation chronicling our work as we try to further others' understanding of this issue. We hope to learn about and experience their culture in a natural way without forcing our project on them by the personal interactions we will have the opportunity to experience. More specifically, we want to better understand who they are; their traditions, family values, views on current events, beliefs, and more because the Latino community has been and continues to be marginalized with the larger community of Lafayette. Hopefully our group can be a channel through which the voice of the Latino community can be heard.

**Cultural Immersion:** This will be a cultural immersion in that each of our team members will be completely surrounded with the Spanish language during our activities and this will help us learn more about the Latino culture in a hands-on manner. This is going to make us be active participants as we interact with those in the Latino community face to face. It can be easy at times to be silent observers in a large group setting, but because this is a face-to-face activity, that will not be the case. All of our members will be part of working with LARA and the urban Latino community while Kyle will be the main outlet for

working with the rural Latino community because of his direct contact with them on his home farm.

In addition, we plan to attend events hosted by the Latino Cultural Center on campus in order to learn more about the values that the Latino community holds. Through observation, we can identify differences between our individual cultures and the Latino culture as outlined in Chapter 4 of the textbook. Using the text's suggestions for navigating these differences, we can learn the best ways to communicate with our conversation partners at LARA in order to best help them gain confidence in their English skills.

Finally, we will be conducting interviews with members of different Latino communities. Kyle will be interviewing members of the rural Latino community. Kathryn will be interviewing Dr. Cecilia Tenorio, a Spanish language professor on campus who specializes in translation and interpretation. Dr. Tenorio works within the community to interpret interactions between Spanish speakers and non-Spanish speakers, including parent-teacher conferences and doctor-patient conversations, and translate reading materials between English and Spanish. These interviews will give our group a better understanding of the linguistic challenges that the Latino community faces in different scenarios that we take for granted.

**Team Membership and Roles:**

	<b>Title</b>	<b>Email</b>

<b>Kyle Fogle</b>	Investigator - Works with the other investigator in order to be immersed in the English learning experience. Takes detailed notes when in the environment and communicates with the team on what is found. Will assist in write up of findings with the rest of the team.	Fogle1@purdue.edu
<b>Kathryn Ather ton</b>	Coordinator - Coordinates tasks with the rest of the team and ensures good and open communication between team members. Will keep team on track with deadlines and act as	katherto@purdue.edu

	<p>timekeeper if necessary. Will assist investigators when necessary.</p>	
<p><b>Stephen</b></p> <p><b>Schwartz</b></p>	<p>Proof-reader - Ensures that the work done by the investigators are presentable in an academic paper. Will work with investigators in synthesizing findings in a coherent format for presentation. Will ensure there are no spelling or grammar issues in deliverables. Will assist investigators when necessary.</p>	<p>Schwar76@purdue.edu</p>

<p><b>Anthony</b></p> <p><b>Park</b></p>	<p>Investigator - Works with the other investigator in order to be immersed in the English learning experience. Takes detailed notes when in the environment and communicates with the team on what is found.</p> <p>Will assist in write up of findings with the rest of the team.</p>	<p>park718@purdue.edu</p>
--	---	---------------------------

## Data Collection

### Interviews:

- Members of the Latino community at LARA
  - Why are the participants looking to improve their English language skills?
- Members of the rural Latino community
  - What are the effects of linguisticism on the Latino community?
- Dr. Cecilia Tenorio
  - What are common linguistic challenges for members of the Latino community? What are solutions to these challenges?

#### Observations:

- LARA Immersion Activity: Conversation tables
  - Improvements made by participants
  - Common goals of participants
- Latino Cultural Center events
  - Cultural differences
  - Values of the Latino community

#### Survey:

- LARA Participant survey (questions will be written in English and Spanish so that people of all levels of English reading and writing proficiency can participate)
  - On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate your proficiency in speaking English?
  - On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate your proficiency in listening to spoken English?
  - On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate your level of confidence in your English writing skills?
  - On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate your level of confidence in your English reading comprehension skills?
  - (Question for beginning of session) Please list a couple of areas in which you want to improve your English skills (i.e. vocabulary, listening, speaking formally, etc.).



- (Question for end of session) On a scale of one to ten, how much improvement do you feel you made toward your English skills goals today?

#### Other Services

Purdue University: Latino Cultural Center, LaFaSA (Latino Faculty Staff Association)

Lafayette, IN: Lafayette Adult Resource Academy, they provide educational services for people in the community facing linguistic challenges

Research Papers: see Works Cited

#### **Timeline:**

Complete the CIP Plan by 9/13.

Meet with LARA on 9/23 for training and orientation.

- Orientation and planning for October 16 and 23
  - At this meeting we discussed our intentions and goals that we are working to accomplish while working with the English as a second language class. We scheduled two evenings that the investigators are going to attend and help out in the course. The investigators are going to see how it works and see where they can affect the class the most during the first volunteer session and the second they will be implementing what they found out would help from the following week with surveys of before and after.

Set up meetings with Latino Cultural Center by 9/20.

- Dia de los Muertos event: November 1

- At this event, our group will experience the Mexican celebration of life and death by attending this event at the Co-Rec. By attending and interacting with members of the Latino community, we hope to get a better understanding of the values and respect that Latinos have for family and life.

Complete activities and interviews by 10/20.

- Rural Latino community interview: October 12
  - Kyle has scheduled an interview with members of the Latino community that work on his home farm to discuss how they are impacted by linguisticism and how they have been affected by learning English
- Dr. Cecilia Tenorio interview: October 15
  - Katie has scheduled an interview with Dr. Tenorio to discuss her work in translation and interpretation for the local Latino community. Dr. Tenorio will be asked about the impact of her work on the lives of those she helps and her opinions on the effectiveness on our project and any improvements she might have to make our impact even greater.

Project is finished by 11/16.

### **Other References**

Carriera, M. (2007). Spanish-for-Native-Speaker Matters: Narrowing the Latino Achievement

Gap through Spanish Language Instruction. *Heritage Language Journal*, 5(1), 147-171.

- Carter, P.M. (2014). National narratives, institutional ideologies, and local talk: The discursive production of Spanish in a “new” US Latino community. *Language in Society*, 43(2), 209-240. doi:10.1017/S0047404514000049
- Contreras, S.V. (2008). The effect of language program type on Latino immigrant adolescent self-esteem (doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts Database.
- Elorriaga, M. (2007). College Students As Tutors: Learning from the Latino Community of Adams County. *Hispania*, 90(3), 533-542.
- Huerta-Macias, A.G. (2003). Meeting the challenge of adult education: A bilingual approach to literacy and career development. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* 47(3), 218-226.
- Skroback-Heisler, L.R. (1998). A Critical Analysis of Barriers that Inhibit Latino Parent Involvement as Students Make the Transition from ESL to Mainstream Classrooms (doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts Database.
- Vassei, N. (2012). Bridging the gap: Transitioning Latino immigrants from ESL to higher education (master’s thesis). Retrieved from Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts Database.