**Cultural Immersion Project Plan Group 10**

**9/14/2018**

**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. We believe that by immersing ourselves within the Lafayette Latino community, we will have the opportunity for organic and authentic interactions where learning will come naturally. While some projects working with marginalized cultures may target the student population, we believe that it is important to understand a wide range of perspectives with different degrees of life experience especially as we delve into economic opportunity. By working with not only college age students but also adults, our hope is that we will have a broader understanding of the entire Latino community and therefore a more precise vision of the struggles that come with a language barrier.

**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. 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 by 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.

**Team Membership and Roles:**

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|  | **Title** | **Email** |
| **Kyle Fogle** | 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 |
| **Katie Atherton** | 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 timekeeper if necessary. Will assist investigators when necessary. | katherto@purdue.edu |
| **Stephen Schwartz** | 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. | Schwar76@purdue.edu |
| **Anthony Park** | 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. | park718@purdue.edu |

**Other Information**

Search systems

Google Scholar

Purdue Libraries

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

Forms of Inquiry

Emails asking for meetings and information about available programs

Face-to-Face meetings at LARA with community members

Research Paper

Research Question:

Bibliography:

Carriera, M. (2007). Spanish-for-Native-Speaker Matters: Narrowing the Latino Achievement Gap through Spanish Language Instruction. *Heritage Language Journal, 5*(1), 147-171.

This paper makes the argument for different strategies that will aid in narrowing the Latino achievement gap in American secondary level education, including socializing Latino students and their parents within the American education system. To do so, schools should offer bilingual college informational and financial aid materials. In addition, teachers should collaborate with teachers in other disciplines, including ESL teachers, to bring support to both parents and students.

This is useful for our project in that it shows that if Latino families have resources in Spanish and support in the English language, they will be more successful in the American education system, meaning that they will have less limits on their career development and socialization with other communities.

Elorriaga, M. (2007). College Students As Tutors: Learning from the Latino Community of Adams County. *Hispania, 90*(3), 533-542.

This paper studied how Latino migrant families and college students interacted with each other as the college students tutored the families in English and computer skills to help them integrate into their new community in Gettysburg, PA. The authors found that the Latino families were able to gain skills in the areas of technology and English reading, which they could use in their professions as well as to support their children in school. In addition, the college students gained academic, social, and cultural benefits from the Latino parents, including improving their Spanish skills and cultural awareness.

These findings support our claim that our project will be useful for members of our community and that we will also obtain useful cultural skills and experiences to reference for the rest of our lives.

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.

This paper addresses the needs of Latino adults who are looking to improve their English language skills. He notes that the Latino population is growing faster than the total US population, but that their dropout rate, not only from formal education, but also from ESL classes, are higher than any other segment of the population. ESL classes can often be expensive, which means that members of the Latino community may struggle to find a well-paying job without mastery of English language skills.

This paper shows us how important our project is for improving the lives of members of our community. Just by having a conversation with someone, we can help them obtain the skills they need to achieve their professional or educational goals.

**Timeline:**

Complete the CIP Plan by 9/13.

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

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

Complete activities and interviews by 10/20.

Project is finished by 11/16.

**Community Partners:**

LARA (Lafayette Adult Resource Academy): We have already arranged a meeting with them on 9/18 and moving forward we will create a schedule from our face-to-face interactions. Both our team and LARA will benefit from our project objectives as we have the opportunity to meet and interact with people in the Latino community and LARA gains active volunteers to help further their mission of equipping people for success. When our project has been completed, we will meet with a representative from LARA, discuss our activities, and explain that our project/time with LARA is completed for the time being.

**Planning Information:** It will be a challenge for the group to work together effectively because we are not meeting in a class on a regular basis. The distance learning aspect of this class will definitely make this project difficult. Also, because this project calls for service-learning off-campus apart from our normal class schedule, this may create problems when it comes to completing the activities in the community.

**Other References**

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.

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.