

NEPANTLA IN GEORGIA AND OAXACA: USING CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS
AND LINGUISTIC ETHNOGRAPHY TO UNDERSTAND MULTILINGUAL AND
MULTILITERATE PEDAGOGIES IN ELEMENTARY CLASSROOMS

by

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(Under the Direction of MELISA CAHNMANN-TAYLOR)

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a methodological combination of critical discourse analysis and linguistic ethnography that explored critical multiliterate pedagogies in superdiverse classrooms. Drawing Anzaldúa's concept of nepantla, I explore what nepantla pedagogies in my own classroom as well as what it may do for teachers and students. I weave nepantla theory and pedagogy through a critical discourse analysis of ethnographic data collected in a public, Oaxacan, elementary school. The analysis revealed pedagogical discourses that silenced the indigenous languages in the monolingual Spanish classroom. A final analysis of a student's narrative, which documented the arrest, and deportation of her mother from Georgia, showed how students' real language and literacy practices are often at odds with the official language and literacy practices promoted by schools and standards. Additionally, the analysis of her story revealed how narratives written from the perspectives of nepantleras have the potential to rewrite truths, possibly changing what society considers moral and good.

INDEX WORDS: Nepantla; Critical Discourse Analysis; Linguistic Ethnography; Critical Pedagogy; Critical Literacy; Multiliteracy; Georgia; Oaxaca; Mexico; Migration; Immigration

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my former students. The ideas found here would not be possible without having known and taught them.

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With so many people to thank, I'll try to go in order. Mama, thank you for buying me all the books I wanted, for that I have become a lover of words. Daddy, thank you for the stories about the Black Stallion, for that I have become a lover of stories. Shaun, thank you for riding the bus to church that day, if not for you I would not have learned ASL, and I may never have gone back to college. JoBeth, thank you for your back porch, my time spent there has forever changed the way I think about race, poverty, pedagogy, and my life in general. Stephanie, for being so honest about your life, it has helped me be honest about mine. Ruth, for CDA, SFL, and laughter! Misha, for saying, you know I think you'd make a great doctoral student, before that I had never thought that I could. Y gracias Toño, por el español, por Oaxaca y por tu amor.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

I was always a good student. Straight A's. AP Classes. National Honor Society. With high hopes that my hard work would pay off, I planned on going to a great college, far away from my hometown in Georgia. Reality set in when I received my acceptance letters and the expected cost of attendance. With no money to pay for college, I enrolled in a state university, got two part-time jobs, and used HOPE¹ money to fund part of my college expenses. I declared finance as my major, thinking that working in an office and using lots of numbers would lead to the middle-class lifestyle that I so desperately wanted. My college classes were easy and superficial, mostly memorization of dates, formulas, and filling up blue books in a two-hour testing window. After two semesters of classes, I was bored and overworked, so I dropped out. I took a full-time job as an assistant loan officer, processing mortgage applications and mountains of paperwork. But making copies and asking over and over, "How long have you lived at that residence?" was monotonous. I hated going to work each morning.

While I processed mortgages during the day, I started working in the Deaf ministry at my church on the weekends. Fascinated with learning American Sign Language, I enrolled in a community college to work on an associate's degree in Deaf Studies. Eventually, I became an interpreter for two Deaf second graders in a public elementary school. Interpreting was difficult

¹ In 1998, the state of Georgia offered tuition scholarships for Georgia high school graduates who completed high school with 3.0 GPA or higher to attend a Georgia public college or university.

which also made it fun and interesting work. I enjoyed looking for ways to sign and show fractions and the causes of earthquakes. Amidst this, I was angered by some of the treatment that the Deaf students received at school. Their resource room was a closet; their classroom teacher yelled at them as a means to make herself heard, and one Deaf student was labeled “multiply disabled” by his resource teacher without any evidence because she couldn’t understand what he was signing. Frustrated with these realizations, low pay as a “para-professional,” and lack of respect, I eventually re-enrolled at the university for a degree in elementary education with the hopes of a better salary and more freedom to practice a different pedagogy in my future classroom.

When I finally became a teacher, my classrooms were full of diverse students. My students spoke lots of languages: Mexican Spanish, Southern American English, Appalachian English, African American English, and Vietnamese. They lived in public housing, trailer parks, apartment complexes, and single-family homes. Some had been born in Mexico or Guatemala or Vietnam, and some were bilingual in Spanish/English or Vietnamese/English but had never been anywhere other than the state of Georgia. There were students and families that attended Baptist churches, non-denominational churches, mosques, temples, and flea markets on Sunday. My students lived with two moms, single moms, single dads, grandparents, and aunts and uncles. Alonso loved skateboarding. Kamesha loved to braid. Jesus loved The Weather Channel. For a snack, Margarita ate chili powder right out of the container. Barbrey organized everyone else’s desk. Deaquan read Wikipedia, especially the pages about past presidents. Julian virtually walked our neighborhood using Google Maps. Esmeralda taught me to make *pupusas*. And Rey drew portraits in pencil while I explained the relationship of circle’s circumference to its radius.

They are some of the best and most interesting people that I've had the pleasure of meeting in my life. I loved teaching them.

And I was a good classroom teacher. I did all the strategies that I had learned in my undergraduate program: using base-ten blocks to teach addition and subtraction, cooking together to make fractions real, and Readers Theater to work on fluency. And I loved, loved to read aloud to my students. Everyday, after lunch, the students knew to come back to class and get comfortable because they were about to listen to *Charlotte's Web* (1952) or *The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe* (1950) or *The Tale of Despereaux* (2003). My students loved these books, begging me to read one more chapter and fighting over who got to read it by themselves when we finished. When the book was over, they would run to the nearest computer to Google if and when a movie would be made about it. And when Despereaux finally made it to the big screen, my students declared that my voice for Despereaux was way better than Matthew Broderick's. I whole-heartedly agreed.

When Pedagogies Fail

But as I continued my education in graduate school, I began to understand that in some ways my "good" pedagogy and these "good" books weren't "good enough" and were possibly harmful. The characters in most books I read were White, middle-class children and families, sometimes royal families with beautiful, blonde princesses, and every now and then, a furry critter was thrown in. Although the stories were well-written and fun to read, I had never before considered what it must have been like to never see anyone that looks like you in the books that your teacher shares. Or when you *do* see someone that has a similar skin color or hair texture, they are depicted as slaves or a warring emperor. What happens when students only see large, single family homes displayed in picture books, where each child has their own lovely bedroom?

To never see families resembling your own? Or characters that never speak like you do at home? But the books I chose to read to my students stemmed from a deeper failure in my pedagogy, a failure to see that the ways of living, being, and speaking that I promoted were rarely the ways my students lived.

Finally, I made a connection between my lived experience of coming from a working-class family, growing up in a trailer, and having never read about a trailer in a book. My family's life didn't exist in the books I read in school. Instead, I read about a hard-working poor, clean, and salt of the earth people (Allison, 1988). While, these stories are true, *sometimes*. They didn't show the deeper realities of growing up poor in the United States. They didn't show the stress that comes with being poor: the addictions, the bills, and the eventual evictions. As no one in my life had drawn attention to these injustices, neither was I drawing attention to any other injustices, especially those experienced by my students and their families. Not even injustices, I wasn't recognizing that my students' ways of being, doing, and speaking as ways that should even *be* included in my pedagogy. If there was a student who lived in a trailer in my classroom, neither did they see trailers in books or hear me talking about living in trailer. As my way of being and living hadn't been included in school, neither was I including my students' ways of being and living in school. I could not acknowledge the poverty in my past without having to admit that I too had been poor, something I had spent my life trying to get away from, trying not to *be* poor. It was only when I accepted that it wasn't bad that I had lived in a trailer, instead it was bad that my society had shamed me for it, that I could see how my pedagogical ways were "violating" the ways my students knew their world (Anzaldúa, 1987).

My first well-documented endeavor to change my pedagogy was a teacher action research project that I called, *Bringing in Biliteracy in the English-Only Classroom* (Abraham, in

review). It was inspired by Dworin's (2006) Family Stories Writing Project, a classroom project where he, the researcher, and the classroom teacher read family stories to the students, in both English and Spanish, and the students collected their own family stories in whichever language they felt comfortable to take through the writing process. I took up this idea, and I wanted to explore how I, at that time a non-Spanish speaking classroom teacher, could develop Spanish biliteracy among my "emerging bilingual" students (Garcia, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008). Just as I had learned to hide and forget my rural Georgia dialect, so, too, my students were learning to forget their languages and dialects of home. Despite not being fluent in their languages, I was determined to help them emerge as bilinguals rather than assimilate to Standard English monolingualism. So, in my classroom I added more dual language books, starting reading aloud with all my faults and stammers dual language poetry, and initiated the collection of family stories, as one of their assignments for narrative writing. The success of this project was overwhelming; students who could write very little in Spanish at the beginning of the year were producing long narratives in Spanish. Students were actively code-switching to Spanish in their English narratives about their personal experiences, and mono-lingual students fought to have Spanish speakers read dual language books with them.

However, I may have learned more from the failure of this project than the success. On the last day of school, this failure became evident to me when a student asked to use my cellphone to call his dad. I dialed the number and handed him the phone.

As Juan began to speak, a language other than Spanish or English came out. When he hung up the phone, I asked Juan, "What language were you speaking?" He answered with, "Oh, that was the language of my father." We talked a bit longer, and I realized that Juan spoke Spanish, English, and two Guatemalan indigenous languages, which he called

the languages of his father and mother. At that moment, I realized that in one way my “project” had been a failure, because I had failed to ask about what other languages, besides English and Spanish, that my students knew. I had lost the opportunity to include the indigenous languages that Juan knew and used. (Abraham, in review)

Furthermore, I failed to include the African American English that was so prominent among my students’ everyday speech in the classroom, or the Vietnamese spoken in the home of one student. From this project, or more so the failure of this project, I began my search for a better pedagogy that would have opened a space in my classroom for Juan to say, “But I don’t only speak English and Spanish,” a space where it is expected and valued to say, “But that’s not how my life is.” As connections between texts had been a part of my usual pedagogy, it was disconnections (Jones & Clarke, 2007) that led to a more critical pedagogy (Baker, 2011). From this practice of student disconnections, I sought a pedagogy that would create spaces where students could connect and disconnect their lived experiences, which led me to Anzaldúa’s (1987) concept of *nepantla*, a state of situated betweenness, of not knowing.

Nepantlan Pedagogy

Nepantla is a place of tension. Nepantla is the place of the border. It is situated on the tensions between epistemologies. In nepantla thoughts are expected to shift, heterogeneity is normal, and dissent always happens and should happen. It is where we are thrown into a space of no longer knowing what we thought we knew, reconsidering what we thought was true and moral; and then remaking it to create new truths. It is the space between discourses, where in the chaos things become clearer, where discourses are rendered transparent. Where disruption is good because without it, in the perfection, we cannot imagine the world otherwise. Nepantlan

pedagogies and theories are emerging, and they “reveal fruitful tensions for exploring how we might experience transformative teaching and learning” (Prieto & Villenas, 2012, p. 425).

Language

Language was my entrance into a critical perspective of the world. Moreover, it was my learning of another’s language, American Sign Language, that brought my attention to social injustice, and the power that language has to include or exclude. My thoughts on how language and languages work were heavily shaped by Bakhtin’s (1975/1981) work on language and discourse. Languages are alive, breathing, moving, and changing. His term, “heteroglossia,” is where real language lives, in the “open spaces of public squares, streets, cities, and villages, of social groups, generations, and epochs,” or perhaps in the open spaces of cafes, comic books, subways, Twitter, and Facebook is where our languages rage and come alive with use and meaning (p.259). As real language grows and changes, its counterpart, what Bakhtin termed the “authoritative discourse,” works to stiffen and normalize it. Bakhtin argued that this discourse is “not something given but is always something posited—and at every moment of its linguistic life it is opposed to the realities of heteroglossia” (p. 270). The authoritative discourse controls and centers language, like the perfect circle that can never exist, neither can this discourse; it is always in a continuous struggle to reign in the heteroglot. These concepts of authoritative discourse, heteroglossia, and Nepantla complement one another. A person in the tenuous state of nepantla sees the pushes and pulls of discourse, recognizes it, and attempts to listen to the voice of the heteroglot and change the authoritative path. Theoretically and methodologically, in this work I sought to reveal just how students go about consuming and accepting authoritative discourses, performing heteroglossic ideas, and their unique situatedness among the tension between the two.

Critical discourse analysis & Linguistic ethnography

Additionally, in my journey as a scholar and the development of methodological expertise, I had been drawn to two traditions of research, critical discourse analysis (Bloome et al.; 2005; Fairclough, 2010; Rogers, 2004) and Linguistic Ethnography (Creese, 2008; Rampton et al; 2004). Moreover, I had read studies combining these two traditions in educational research that focused on language and literacy practices and pedagogies (Harman, 2007; 2013; Rogers, 2003). These two traditions were so appealing because both fore fronted the power of language in shaping our social world, and they could be used in educational contexts to explore how this happens in schools, especially in language and literacy pedagogies. Those working in these traditions had made calls for using this methodology in superdiverse settings to look at language and literacy practices and pedagogies, in an effort to better understand them. Critical discourse analysis allowed me to take my critical framing of the world and complement it with macro analysis of larger discourses, along with the microanalysis of linguistic choices made by participants in these studies. Further situating critical discourse analysis, alongside linguistic ethnography provided me with a way to “collect” the discourse that I wanted to analyze. This combination of methodologies is meant to provide context to CDA’s as well as to provide more rigorous analysis to linguistic ethnographies in revealing how power works in the daily language that we practice.

Literacy

Finally as a teacher and researcher, I focused these theories of discourse and language, and the methods of CDA and linguistic ethnography around the idea of literacy. James Gee (2003) comically refers to literacy as the parasite of language; instead it’s in spoken language where the real life occurs. Although hypocritical for a teacher of literacy and a writer to agree

with this, I can see his point. I contend that his comments are appropriate when we imagine narrow illustrations of literacy as only what is valued or reproduced in schools: the reading of a classic novel along with its multiple-choice test, the five paragraph essay, and learning to read by repeating, da, de, di, do, du. Yes, in these instances “literacy” appears parasitic, sucking the life out of language.

However, scholarly work grounded in The New Literacy Studies (NLS) (Heath, 1983; Purcell-Gates, 2007; Rogers, 2003; Street, 1984) has done much to break open these parasitic ideologies surrounding language, literacy, and the classroom pedagogies that historically governed the teaching of them. This movement “problematiz[ed] what counts as literacy at any time and place and asking ‘whose literacies’ are dominant and whose are marginalized or resistant” (Street, 1994, p. 77). Here, educators and researchers have begun to question long-held beliefs about how people should learn and how they should be taught. It presents literacy as multiple and varied, changing through time, and always caught up in relations of power (Street, 2003).

From this work emerged a pedagogy of multiliteracies (Cazden et al., 1996), which greatly influenced how I viewed literacy as a person, teacher, and scholar, as well as how I framed literacy in this dissertation. Multiliteracies are better shown than explained, so an example from two of my nephews seems appropriate. Chase lives in Georgia, he’s White, 2 ½ years old, and speaks only English. Axel lives in Oaxaca, Mexico, he’s 3 ½ years old, and speaks only Spanish. Both Chase and Axel love to play with my iPad; seamlessly they navigate finding my videos, my photos, and YouTube to look up the *Transformers* videos. Their literacies exemplify what a pedagogy of multiliteracies claims, that literacy is not *only* reading and writing letters and words, but is about making meaning from texts. Another example comes from my

study of Mixtec, an indigenous language still used in Oaxaca. Mixtec was originally written in characters and images, without a phonemic alphabet. Like my iPad, their writing system could be read by many people, not only speakers of Mixtec, but also speakers of the many indigenous languages who occupied the regions now known as Oaxaca. So in this way it seems that we have come full circle, recognizing or perhaps remembering that literacy, has always been more than letters and words, but has been the ability to create and draw meaning from texts that has made its function so interesting and necessary.

These ideas of nepantla, languages, literacy, critical discourse analysis, and linguistic ethnography I have brought together to explore questions about multilingualism and multiliteracies in classrooms and in pedagogies from Georgia to Oaxaca and the spaces in between.

The Contexts

The articles that make-up this dissertation are based on data collected in two classroom contexts. Some data comes from my classrooms in Georgia, as a fifth grade teacher navigating a classroom full of linguistic, culturally, and economically diverse students in critical pedagogies that explored their multiple languages and literacies (Abraham, 2012; Abraham, in review; Baker, 2011). Recalling the conversation with Juan about his indigenous languages, it was that realization that brought me to the other context in these studies, a public school in Oaxaca, Mexico. About one year after talking with Juan, I found out that I won grant to study history, art, linguistics, and education in Oaxaca, Mexico. Near the Guatemalan/Mexican border, Oaxaca is an area rich in indigenous history and diverse with indigenous languages.

Although the differences between Georgia and Oaxaca may be overly apparent, their subtle similarities are powerful and hold these studies together in the collective exploration of

critical multilingual and multiliterate pedagogies in diverse classrooms. As English is the dominant language that tends to silence other languages in the United States, Spanish operates similarly in Mexico, silencing the many indigenous languages. In my classroom, students spoke English, while at home they spoke Spanish, Black English, Vietnamese, and Southern American English. In the Oaxacan classroom, students spoke Spanish, while speaking Zapotec, Mixe, or any of the other 16 or more different indigenous languages at home. Most of my students in Gainesville, Georgia were very close to an experience of migration, coming from various parts of Mexico to Georgia in search of work; likewise, the students in Oaxaca, had also moved with their families, leaving their indigenous communities to live in the capital, to also find work. Both of these migrations were heavily driven and shaped by our ever-globalizing world that promotes a life based on capitalistic ideals, working to live and living to work.

Furthermore, the convergence of languages, cultures, and experiences in these communities also created superdiverse classrooms where I taught and researched. As a teacher and scholar, I saw how students were pulled and pushed to conform to societal authoritative discourses of language and culture. For instance, the inability of these students to use Spanish in my classroom or the indigenous language of their parents and grandparents in the Oaxaca classroom was a pervasive and harmful discourse that I witnessed. In my classroom, I also saw my own narrow views of literacy and language emerged in a pedagogy that valued English. Similarly in Oaxaca, I documented narrow ideologies in language and literacy pedagogies that valued traditional forms of literacy and excluded possibilities of creativity and brilliance found in the multiliteracies of the students. Additionally, the data and analysis presented here reveal moments of hope and failure in classroom pedagogies for including more languages and literacies and including and excluding students in discourses of school success.

In chapter 2, I explore Gloria Anzaldúa's construct of *nepantla* (1987; 2002), the overarching concept that ties these studies together. I trace the origin of the word *nepantla* to the Nahuatl, and I then follow Anzaldúa's use of the word, chronologically in her work, showing how she developed the term, as well as how it agrees and contradicts various other claims about what *nepantla* means. Afterwards, I draw in some of Mikhail Bakhtin's (1975/1981) theories on discourse and language, specifically authoritative discourse, heteroglossia, and the internally persuasive discourse, and then I take his terms and apply them to some examples from Anzaldúa's writings. Throughout the article, I apply *nepantla* to several instances of my classroom including the pedagogical failure at the end of my teacher-action research, when I realized that I had created a classroom that was welcoming and promoting Spanish and Spanish literacy in my classroom, but not to Juan's indigenous languages. In the end, I argue for a *nepantlan* pedagogy that would simultaneously deconstruct and construct our societal discourses while complicating teachers' and students' understandings of the world.

In chapter 3, I present a critical discourse analysis of ethnographic data collected over a two-year period in urban Oaxaca. The classroom data comes from classroom observations, participant interviews, and various artifacts, such as newspapers and textbooks that were collected from August to December 2012, in a third grade classroom in public, primary school with students from a Zapotec heritage and range of linguistic repertoires' in Spanish and Zapotec. Drawing on the concepts of *nepantla* (Anzaldúa, 2002), multiliteracies, and intertextuality (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993), I look at how the classroom pedagogy, at moments, challenged authoritative discourses governing Oaxacan indigenous languages. During classroom lessons, it was evident that *nepantla* spaces were evoked, but only briefly; the teacher would revert back to the textbook as her authority and guide. In fact, the reliance on the

textbooks emerged as a major influence on what could be said or discussed in the classroom.

However, I also demonstrate a failure of this project, with a culminating interaction between the teacher and myself. In the end, I turn the analysis on this interaction, and demonstrate that the ideologies I was attempting to impose, and why those ideologies were not taken up.

In chapter 4, I use critical discourse analysis to analyze a student's narrative about the arrest, incarceration, and deportation of her mother to Mexico. The student, Gisela², was a fifth grader in my classroom during the 2008/2009 school year. She had participated in my first project, *Bringing in Biliteracy*, and for this project she had written a story told of her mother's arrest and eventual deportation. I knew Gisela's story was well-told and powerful, but at the time she produced the story, I didn't possess the methodological skills to analyze it in a meaningful way. As I grew in my theoretical framework and became more skilled at critical discourse analysis, I was able to draw on Anzaldúa's constructs of *nepantla* and *nepantlera* together with narrative analysis and systemic functional linguistics to analyze it. The analysis showed how Gisela's construction of her story created a powerful, creative, and moral narrative. Her narrative not only disrupted autonomous forms of literacy that were so prevalent in my classroom, but through her narrative she questioned the morality of excluding and damaging discourses circulating about immigrants in Gainesville, Georgia.

² All names are pseudonyms.

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CHAPTER 2

A NEPANTLA PEDAGOGY:

COMPARING ANZALDÚA’S AND BAKHTIN’S IDEAS FOR PEDAGOGICAL AND
SOCIAL CHANGE

Nepantla is the site of transformation. The place where different perspectives come into conflict and where you question the basic ideas, tenets, and identities inherited from your family, your education, and your different cultures. Nepantla is the zone between changes where you struggle to find equilibrium between the outer expression of change and your inner relationship to it. Living between cultures results in “seeing” double, first from the perspective of one culture, then from the perspective of another. Seeing from two or more perspectives simultaneously renders those cultures transparent. (Anzaldúa, 2002, p. 548-549)

Here, I argue for a nepantla pedagogy, a pedagogy that simultaneously deconstructs and constructs our discourses as well as complicates our understandings of the world. I hope that in the end it is a pedagogy that helps educators and students “see double.” Seeing double allows us to see the world through various perspectives searching for those ways of living that create and allow equality and freedom. Seeing double allows us to see what was previously unseen because it was hidden by our cultural standpoint. As an elementary school educator with a classroom full of diverse students, along with my simultaneous reading of Gloria Anzaldúa’s work sparked my journey into a nepantla pedagogy that would challenge the expected and normalizing pedagogy in my classroom. Anzaldúa’s nepantla is a critique of our society, a society that situates knowledge as absolute, perfect, completely mapped, and unquestionable. This theoretical

concept helped me to rethink classroom pedagogies which called for mastery, absolute knowing, and perfection. This was evidenced through strong discourses of standards-based learning which promoted singular perspectives and narrowed ideologies, high-stakes testing, that judged, passed, and failed children, and a societal discourse that valued these as the ways that school should be.

Nepantla pedagogies are emerging in teacher education. Gutiérrez (2008) used nepantla to explain the process that new science teachers experienced examining issues of equity and inequity in a science curriculum in an alternative urban high school. She found that although the school had a rigorous, inquiry-based science curriculum, it lacked science problems and experiments that resembled real problems in the students' lives. This unexpected contradiction was a nepantla space that science educators could explore how to teach science that allowed students to explore their lived experiences. Additionally, Jaramillo and McLaren (2008) posited that a "nepantla pedagogy occasions its learners into knowing the way of historical contingency, a way of thinking about self and other and the relations between them through an analysis of the systems of mediation that sustain and reproduce them" (p. 198). Prieto and Villenas (2012) used nepantla to frame their testimonios of their Chicana experience in the US and in the US educational system. Their research showed how their pedagogical practices revealed cultural dissonance, consciousness with commitment, and authentic care; these ideas show how nepantla promotes a pedagogy that can start social change.

This pedagogy will bring social tensions forward and position the students as the both mediator and the questioner of these tensions. For instance, students would actively contest the discourses that they are expected to consume, know, and reproduce in the classroom, while also transmitting these discourses in new and interesting ways through their work. I hope that educators and teacher educators will further read, understand, and apply Anzaldúa's concept of

nepantla and to seek out how we can use it shape school pedagogies and frame our educational research (Gonzalez-Lopez, 2006; Keating, 2006).

Anzaldúa (1987) developed the concept of nepantla using a scholarly and literacy structure called, autohistoria/teoría, which is a way to write and create social theory using autobiography embedded in historical events. Likewise, incorporating autohistoria/teoría is vital to the development of nepantlan pedagogy. Educators must situate themselves/ourselves in nepantla to help situate others in the same state. We must experience the following:

We stand at a major threshold in the extension of consciousness, caught in the remolinos (vortices) of systemic change across all fields of knowledge. The binaries of colored/white, female/male, mind/body are collapsing. Living in nepantla, the overlapping space between different perceptions and belief systems, you are aware of the changeability of racial, gender, sexual, and other categories rendering the conventional labelings obsolete. Though these markings are outworn and inaccurate, those in power continue using them to single out and negate those who are "different" because of color, language, notions of reality, or other diversity. You know that the new paradigm must come from outside as well as within the system. (Anzaldúa, 2002, p. 541)

To demonstrate how “autohistoria-teoría” forces the autohistorian into nepantla, I share a personal classroom narrative that combines self-reflection, autobiography, and critical stance (Anzaldúa, 1987; Keating, 2006).

As part of my coursework at the university, I implemented an action research project in my classroom. My students were extremely diverse, including Mexican Americans, Guatemalan Americans, recently immigrated Mexicans, African-Americans, and poor, White students. I was taking a course on bilingual education, and realized that my

classroom practices were completely monolingual--that I was ignoring the linguistic knowledge that bilingual Spanish speakers had to offer. So, I began a yearlong project to bring Spanish into my English-Only classroom, despite the fact that I did not speak Spanish. I carried this project out successfully with students writing stories bilingually, and reading poems aloud in Spanish; however, my nepantla moment came on the last day of the school year. One student, Juan, asked to use my cellphone to call his Dad. I gave him my phone, and he began to speak to his father in a language that I did not recognize. After he hung up the phone, I asked him, "Juan, what language were you speaking? He answered, "Oh that was the language of my father." After a few more questions, I realized that Juan was from indigenous Guatemalan family, with his mother speaking an indigenous language, his father another one, they all spoke Spanish, and the children spoke English along with those. How could I have been so ignorant not to ask if my students spoke languages other English and Spanish? Furthermore, I realized I also failed to include African American English in my project. My way of knowing and viewing the world, a place where indigenous languages didn't exist and African American English wasn't included in the classroom, had certainly violated these students' ways of knowing and being in the world. Nepantla came when I had realized that I had done this. It was not a pleasant moment, but it was a necessary one.

As I entered this nepantla, I began to change my mind, or I began to become different, ideologically. As Bakhtin (1975/1981) claimed, "The ideological becoming of a human being...is the process of selectively assimilating the words of others" (p. 341). Juan's language and words, essentially the idea that he spoke four languages, disrupted my view of my classroom and my world. I began to assimilate my knowledge about multilingualism and multiliteracies

with Juan's new knowledge. Then, my thoughts shifted and morphed, meaning that as I became aware of these countering ideas, I began to shift my values. Bakhtin claimed that ideological becoming is a hegemonic process. Meaning that, in this case, in the process of assimilating these ideas, I must choose what to value more, what is true and acceptable to me? In the end, I saw more languages as equally valuable and present in my classroom, as well as the histories and writings by people who used those languages became equally important.

Next, I further unpack Anzaldúa's work on *nepantla*, and to do this I reference Bakhtin's work on ideological becoming. Because of Anzaldúa's and Bakhtin's very different backgrounds, the similarities among their work intrigued me. As I read their ideas, familiarity resonated within me; it was this familiarity that allowed me to understand their intentions and apply their ideas to my world. So in that spirit, this essay is a *nepantlan* act, a collision of ideas, and an act of ideological becoming, a hegemonic process to change our minds. It reveals similarity, familiarity in these scholars' ideas as way to "see through" their ideas, unraveling them for us. As Anzaldúa (2002) wrote, in *nepantla* a person is

exposed, open to other perspectives, more readily able to access knowledge derived from inner feelings, imaginal states, and outer events, and to "see through" them with a mindful, holistic awareness. Seeing through human acts both individual and collective allows you to examine the ways you construct knowledge, identity, and reality, and explore how some of your/others' constructions violate other people's ways of knowing.

(p. 544)

By colliding Anzaldúa's and Bakhtin's ideologies they can inhabit the same space, allowing their respective ideas to challenge and expand each other's. Ideological collision in *nepantla* can bring about "a change in the way we perceive reality, the way we see ourselves, and the ways we

behave” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 102) and gives us “a new story to explain the world and our participation in it” (p. 103). Bakhtin (1975/1981) said that ideological collision would produce “new ways to mean” (p. 346). Notably, each of these theorists focused on the use of legitimate and illegitimate languages to bring forth the new thoughts that are excluded in dominant discourses. Because language was a central aspect of both of these theoretical constructions, their work pushes borders and boundaries of acceptable linguistic genres by displaying that new thoughts and changes are possible through the use of varied languages. To help form a new story and a new pedagogy, I begin with a brief biography of Gloria Anzaldúa and a brief etymology of nepantla. Likewise, I follow this with a brief biography of Mikhail Bakhtin and definitional work of ideological becoming.

Nepantla

Gloria Anzaldúa, a social activist, philosopher, writer, and poet, was born in South Texas, the oldest child of migrant farm workers who were of Mexican heritage, though she was seventh generation American (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2009). From 1964 to 1968, she financially supported herself while attending Pan American University, and she eventually graduated with a B.A. in English, art, and secondary education. In 1972, she earned an M.A. in English at the University of Texas (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2009). From 1974 to 1977, she studied in the doctoral program at the University of Texas (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2009); it was there that her new ideologies were countered by the established ideologies of academia. This countering came when Anzaldúa’s dissertation proposal that focused on Chicana literature and feminist studies was rejected by her doctoral committee. Her doctoral advisors deemed this topic an *illegitimate discipline*, not allowing her to pursue it. These actions led to her to quit the program and move to California to concentrate on her writing. In 1987, she published her most well-known work, *Borderlands/Las*

Fronteras: The New Mestiza, and in this collection of essays and poetry, she created a new genre of writing that she calls autohistoria and autoteoría (autohistory or autotheory), a writing genre that blends personal histories with social theories through the use of multiple languages (English, Spanish, and Nahuatl) and multiple writing forms (essays, short story, and poetry). Anzaldúa (1987) described her authorial intent as a “struggle ... to change the disciplines, to change the genres, to change how people look at a poem, at theory or at children’s books” (p. 233). Through this new genre, Anzaldúa demonstrated that the struggle among genres was actually a hegemonic struggle of accepted ideologies, which manifested in the value assigned to a genre. In turn, she changed these valuable, acceptable genres and even changed the disciplines by interrogating “existing discursive fields” (Pérez, 2005, p. 6). She wanted to change the way the legitimized see the illegitimate; moreover, she wanted to change how sometimes the illegitimate even see themselves. She argued that returning to a previous epistemological concept held by the Nahua would allow people to do this; she called this nepantla.

Origin of Nepantla

The etymological history of nepantla traces back to the Nahua; the Nahua live in the area now known as the US Southwest and predominantly northern Mexico (Anzaldúa, 1987; Maffie, 2007). There is debate concerning what the Nahua (also referred to as the Aztecs since the European invasion) meant by nepantla and when the term was used in Nahua as ideological stance concerning human existence (Maffie, 2007). Recent scholars (Mignolo, 2000) have argued that the Nahua conceived and articulated nepantla as a way to make sense of their ideological and physical collision with Spanish conquistadors, invaders, and missionaries. In other words, using this definition, the Nahua forged nepantla *after* the Spanish invaded, at a time when the Spanish ideology and actions countered Nahua ideology and actions. However, Maffie

(2007) disputed this position by arguing that the Nahua *always* saw and some Nahua continue to see human existence through this concept, *nepantla*. Again, Maffie's argument stated that *nepantla* was the normal worldview for the Nahua before the Spanish ever invaded the Nahua's land. In his latter argument, *nepantla* is a permanent state of liminality that the Nahua used to view their world, rather than a temporal state of not knowing where one ideologically belongs as a result of the Spanish invasion. Maffie (2007) said that interpreting *nepantla* as a post-conquest ideology is a misinterpretation of Nahua thought, and furthermore, "*nepantla* was not unique to post-conquest Nahua life"; it "defined all of existence and reality" for the Nahua before and after the Spanish invasion (p. 22).

I agree with Maffie (2007) that *nepantla* is and was embedded in the Nahua belief system that places "people and things within a borderland" or within "a dynamic zone of mutual transaction, confluence, unstable and diffuse identity, and transformation" (p. 16). This means that the Nahua held a worldview that sees disorder as the normal of the world, "becoming and transitions are the norm-not being and stasis," and "androgyny is the norm-not male or female" (Maffie, 2007, p. 20). These seemingly chaotic descriptors of *nepantla* as an explanation of human existence and reality counter Western European philosophies that cling to stable human constructions of the world; a world of permanent, absolute truths, and defined dichotomies, such as male and female (Anzaldúa, 1987; Bakhtin, 1975/1981; Maffie, 2007).

Contradictory Definitions of *Nepantla*

Pérez (2005) described Anzaldúa's constructions of *nepantla* as an articulation of "our past to make sense of our present," and that Anzaldúa was not "merely seeking origins," but "she looked to that past to excavate hope for our future" (p. 9). To further understand how Anzaldúa's theorizing of *nepantla* would create hope for humanity's future, I traced her early uses of

nepantla to her later uses of it in her writing. When I began with Anzaldúa's work as another origin of nepantla, at first I saw contradictions between the way scholars (as previously described in Maffie, 2007) defined nepantla and the way Anzaldúa did. However, contradictions existed only in the short definitional work surrounding the word nepantla in Anzaldúa's work.

For instance, beginning with Anzaldúa's first published use of nepantla in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987), where she said that the mestiza, who is Anzaldúa herself, is "in a constant state of mental nepantilism, an Aztec word meaning *torn between ways* [emphasis added], la mestiza is a product of the transfer of the cultural and spiritual values of one group to another" (p.100). Then moving to 2009, Anzaldúa wrote that "art and la frontera intersect in a *liminal space* [emphasis added] where border people, especially artists, live in a state of 'nepantla'" (p. 180). She continues to define nepantla as "the Nahuatl word for an *in-between state* [emphasis added], that uncertain terrain one crosses when moving from one place to another, when changing from one class, race, or sexual position to another, when traveling from the present identity into a new identity" (p. 180). It is the crossing over and implied permanence of the new identity that at first appeared contradictory to the claims that Maffie (2007) made about nepantla not being a transitional space between permanence to permanence. Anzaldúa's use of "torn between ways", "liminal space", and "in-between state" imply that nepantla is marked by temporality. These definitional phrases suggest that a person only inhabits a nepantla for a certain time, then it is finished and one transitions to another permanent belief system. This appeared to contradict Maffie's statement (2007) that nepantla was a permanent state of being for the Nahua, not a temporary way of thinking. So, these unexpected apparent contradictions warranted investigation.

As previously stated, *liminal space* and *in-between* are problematic descriptors of nepantla because being in a liminal space implies that one moves from a permanence of knowing through a space of not knowing into another permanent state of belief (Maffie, 2007). In other words, liminal as a descriptor of nepantla implies that it is a temporal way of thinking about the world, and when one is finished with the consideration of an idea then one transitions permanently into new ideology (Maffie, 2007). However, if the concept of nepantla is based on the Nahua construct of it, then a nepantla epistemology contradicts these definitions that describe it as a temporary liminal experience and act; instead, it is a state of permanent liminality. This means that being in nepantla does not mean that you transition from one permanent state to another; rather you are always in a state of ideological transition.

Anzaldúa's nepantla expansion. Anzaldúa's early definitional work of nepantla may appear contradictory to the nepantla stances of the Nahua. However, when I looked deeper and broader at her contextualization of nepantla, the seemingly contradictory definitions disappeared. I present an argument that her use of liminal and referring to people who only "for a time inhabit nepantla" (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2009, p. 180) is different than that other definitions that have described nepantla as being marked only by liminality or temporality (Mignolo, 2000). Wiederhold (2005) described Anzaldúa as seeking to explore tensions and "contested arenas" (p. 116), and Anzaldúa "invoke[d] the word 'nepantla' to name a paradigm that steps beside western epistemology's binary logic" (p. 116). Nepantla is situated on the tensions between epistemologies because it is where the change in epistemology manifests itself through social interactions thereby producing the world as it is. For Anzaldúa, an epistemology of the Chicana countered the epistemology of the White man, and Anzaldúa positioned herself in this nepantla, ever transitioning, epistemology. To clarify, Anzaldúa's was not trying to position herself

between nepantla and a Western epistemology; instead, nepantla situated her in a position where male/female dichotomies dissolved, and she could transition between subject positions. Nepantla subverted static, one dimensional subject positionings. Generally, western epistemologies have pushed for assurance and stability and have sought to remove ideological tension (Anzaldúa, 2002; Maffie, 2007). These epistemologies seek absolute consensus and homogeneity and present a philosophy of that promotes consensus, homogeneity, and normativity as paths to peace and harmony. This contrasts to a nepantla paradigm, which says that thoughts are expected to shift, heterogeneity is normal, and dissent always happens and should happen.

Superficial readings of Anzaldúa's definitions and theorizing of nepantla appear to contradict the Nahua constructions of nepantla. These contradictions appear in her terms for nepantla because she was writing about nepantla while she was within a different epistemological tension. For instance, nepantla beliefs permeated the Nahua social systems; however, nepantla beliefs do not, nor did they permeate the beliefs and social systems in which Anzaldúa grew up. She was positioned between an epistemology that produced a discourse that lesbians were abnormal people, and she, a lesbian, was not of value within a society that privileged heteronormative discourses. However, she returned to nepantla to produce a lesbian discourse to counter patriarchy, sexism, and the dangerous positioning of women in our constructed societies (Anzaldúa, 1987; 2002).

Living in liminal spaces. As Anzaldúa situated herself in nepantla most of the time, this meant that her ideas and discourses were flexible, subject to change. This way of life and thinking reflected the Nahua's philosophy of border living. In the Florentine codex (Bernardino de Sahagun, 1590/1969), an ethnography documenting the Nahua's way of life, a conversation

between a mother and daughter described the Nahua living on a walk between the borders, a border walk.

On earth we walk, we live, on the ridge of a mountain peak <sharp as a harpoon blade? chichiquilli>. To one side is an abyss, to the other is another abyss. If you go here, or if you go there, you will fall, only through the middle can one go, or live. (p. 101; translation by Gingerich, 1988, p. 522)

This border walk or “straddling the walls between abysses” counters Western thoughts of walks of life as linear progression from beginning to end (Anzaldúa & Keating, 1981/2009, p. 38).

Instead, the Nahua looked at the *process* of life, a process of constant betweeness, one of negotiations of truth, not a life of unquestionable truths. Given that our current society operates through extreme dominant discourse such as (i.e. Chicana theories are unacceptable, lesbians are abnormal, and Chicanos/Chicanas are dangerous social concepts) which want to homogenize and establish permanent truths. Anzaldúa argued that nepantla living, being liminal, situated on the border of thoughts, and allowed her to contest these truths and attempt to shift the thought.

In the Nahua epoch, nepantla is a space of constant change, where the change is accepted on both sides of the border that people walk along during their lives. Therefore, for nepantla to work in the epoch of thought that Anzaldúa lived in, then it had to be marked by temporality. In other words, for Anzaldúa, nepantla *was* a liminal position among a stasis that was produced by an epistemology that promotes absolutes binaries of male/female, white/black, and abnormal/normal.

During an interview in 1996, Anzaldúa referred to nepantla as her way of “theoriz[ing] unarticulated dimensions of the experience of mestizas living between overlapping and layered *spaces* (emphasis added) of different cultures, and social and geographical locations of events

and realities – psychological, social, political, spiritual, historical, creative, imagined” (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2000, p. 268). Because she speaks of nepantla as being a space we live in most of the time, she implies that there is a permanence to the liminal, which disrupts the linear progression of nepantla that may emerge in other brief definitions of her use of nepantla. When the word “space” is used to define nepantla, it conjures up images of the subject positioned in flexible manner, instead of in a place of temporary transition. Nepantla puts a person in the “the overlapping space between different perceptions and belief systems, you are aware of the changeability of racial, gender, sexual, and other categories rendering the conventional labelings obsolete” (Anzaldúa, 2002, p. 541). It is in the nepantla space that the contestation of discourse can happen.

Nepantla encapsulated/s ideas of expected contradiction, that to twist and change is normal. However, in Anzaldúa’s construction of nepantla, one side of nepantla attempted to normalize and establish one way to be. So, for her and for others, who wanted to live in nepantla within an ideological system that contradicts the premises of nepantla, a state of temporality is created for these people who she calls “nepantleras”.

Nepantleras. Anzaldúa (2002) described people who situate themselves in states of nepantla as nepantleras. She wrote “las nepantleras know their work lies in positioning themselves--exposed and raw-in the crack between these worlds, and in revealing current categories as unworkable...they reframe the conflict and shift the point of view” (p. 567). Her naming of people as a nepantlera seems contradictory to the nepantla epistemology of the Nahua because in a Nahua belief system there would be no need to differentiate between those who took a nepantla viewpoint of the world from those who didn’t because arguably nepantla was the dominant belief system that permeated their society. However, Anzaldúa needed to distinguish

the difference between those who are following a nepantla view or some other worldview. This distinct naming of a person who acts in nepantla is only necessary while the nepantlera resides within a conflicting epistemology. Nepantleras are “in [the] between place of nepantla, [they] see through the fiction of the monoculture” (Anzaldúa, 2002, p. 549). A nepantlera struggles to undo ideological fictions carried through discourses that normalize, stabilize, and often oppress.

Anzaldúa (2002) argued “nepantla is the zone between changes where you struggle to find equilibrium between the outer expression of change and your inner relationship to it” (p. 548-549). Through nepantla, a person sees into other worldviews and unpacks the myths and histories that are carried with its subjective positionings. Likewise, Maffie (2007) spoke of nepantla as being a process that is “dialectical, transitional, and oscillating; centering as well as destabilizing; and abundant with mutuality and reciprocity” (p. 11). Nepantla is simultaneously destructive and creative,” it is also “transformative” (p. 11). Maffie’s descriptors of nepantla converge with Anzaldúa’s (2002) latest definition of nepantla as the place where you are “seeing through human acts both individual and collective allows you to examine the ways you construct knowledge, identity, and reality, and explore how some of your/others’ constructions that violate other people’s ways of knowing” (p. 548). These ideas of constructing and deconstructing knowledge from individual and collective acts, seeing our knowledge as violating “other people’s ways of knowing” allows me to shift to Bakhtin’s concept of ideological becoming and define his terms that encompass how people become who they are through the discourses they consume and produce.

Colliding Anzaldúa’s Nepantla with Bakhtin’s Ideological Becoming

The concept of ideological becoming emerged in Bakhtin’s essay, “Discourse in the Novel,” (1975/1981), and in this essay, I noticed the similarities between his concepts and those

of Anzaldúa's. Although Bakhtin was born in Russia in 1895, a descendant of Russian nobility and received an extensive formal education, but he did experience a struggle against established ideologies, much like Anzaldúa. Bakhtin lived during a Russian socio-political revolution, and during the revolution he was arrested for promoting anti-Soviet ideas. It was during this time that Bakhtin wrote his dissertation, which is now published and titled *Rabelais and His World* (1984). To understand Rabelais' work, Bakhtin (1984) wrote that one must have:

an essential reconstruction of our entire artistic and ideological perception, the renunciation of many deeply rooted demands of literary taste, and the revision of many concepts. Above all, he requires an exploration in depth of a sphere as yet little and superficially studied, the tradition of folk humor. (p. 3)

It not necessary to have read Rabelais or Bakhtin's entire analysis of Rabelais to understand what ideology Bakhtin is trying to promote. One, the claim here is that to be able to read Rabelais one must first think differently toward the ideas in Rabelais's writings. Two, this parallel with Anzaldúa (1987) when she says that before we can even act to change a discourse, we must first think differently about it. Also, his ideological becoming in his dissertation paralleled Anzaldúa's thesis rejection by her university committee. Bakhtin waited twenty years to defend his dissertation, only to have it rejected by his university opponents and receive a degree lesser than doctor (Holquist, 1981). The rejection was due to his blatant critique of the formalist ideas held by many opponents on the committee. However, to pull back into a nepantla state, Bakhtin was attempting to tear away at what people knew, to make them think differently toward what already was established and expected. These critiques deeply disturbed and disrupted the political and social beliefs of his opponents. Like Anzaldúa, Bakhtin collided ideologies, and a rupture in thinking occurred; through his other works that will be referred to later, he developed

some terms that are useful for analyzing these kinds of ideological collisions. Although, Bakhtin's work originally analyzed literary works, his ideas have been taken up and used in many other research fields and traditions to look at language and power. In contrast, to Anzaldúa's work, which she herself claimed was used in limiting fashion; Bakhtin's work has driven the creation of a dialogic pedagogy (Matusov, 2009). Numerous educational scholars (Ball & Freedman, 2004; López-Bonilla, 2011) have taken up Bakhtinian ideas across global contexts of education and learning as a theoretical framing for their work. In my reading of Anzaldúa's work and the review of literature that uses her work, I, too, see that Anzaldúa's theories are used heavily to frame studies that situate themselves with immigrant, Chicano/a, and/or Latino/a issues, however, few scholars are pushing Anzaldúa's work to frame studies that are not situated within those contexts.

Ideological becoming is how you become the person you are. Our ways of being and doing are based on our thoughts. We form those thoughts based on the discursive interactions we encounter as live. Through living, our minds continually intersect with discourses such as books, magazines, media, speech, etc. As we consume discourse through reading, living, hearing, speaking, we then reproduce those discourse in our lives, albeit in an altered manner. For example, as White woman from Georgia, I consumed and produced the discourse that public school classrooms should be taught in one language, English. It wasn't until I intersected with contradictory discourses that I changed my practice. Also, ideological becoming is "an intense struggle within us for hegemony among various available verbal and ideological points of view, approaches, directions, and values" (Bakhtin, 1975/1981, p. 346). As we consume discourse we must decide, what is of value, what is true, good, and helpful? It is on those discourses that we will base our lives and actions.

Here is where some departure from Anzaldúan theories becomes evident, in Bakhtin's work this hegemonic relationship does not appear as violent and gruesome as Anzaldúa (1987) portrays: "Attacks on one's form of expression with the intent to censor are a violation of the First Amendment. El Anglo con cara de inocente nos arrancó la lengua. Wild tongues can't be tamed, they can only be cut out" (p. 54). She further demonstrates the violence that is embedded within this hegemonic process, the ideological becoming, of us to value English and devalue Spanish, with her memory of being caught speaking Spanish at recess.

I remember being caught speaking Spanish at recess-that was good for three licks on the knuckles with a sharp ruler. I remember being sent to the corner of the classroom for "talking back" to the Anglo teacher when all I was trying to do was tell her how to pronounce my name. If you want to be American, speak 'American.' If you don't like it, go back to Mexico where you belong. (p. 53)

Anzaldúa's work applies ideological becoming, creating the text that shows how this hegemonic process happens in our lived experiences. For me, when I encountered the idea that silencing my students' home languages, which I realized by reading Anzaldúa's works among others, hurt and harmed them, I assumed a new discourse, and I began to teach differently. At the center of ideological becoming is the collision between authoritative discourses and heteroglossia. Authoritative discourses pull ideas inward toward a normalized center, while heteroglossic discourses pull ideas outward in various directions that disrupt and alter.

Authoritative discourse. Bakhtin (1975/1981) defined an *authoritative discourse* as a discourse that "demands that we acknowledge it, that we make it our own; it binds us, quite independent of any power it might have to persuade us internally; we encounter it with its authority already fused to it" (p. 342). Immediately, I connected this statement to strong

circulations of patriarchy, heteronormativity, monolingualism, and Whiteness in American society. An authoritative discourse battles for central adoption of one ideology, and this discourse will “organize around itself great masses of other types of discourse (which interpret it, praise it, apply it in various ways), but the authoritative discourse itself does not merge with these” (Bakhtin, 1975/1981, p. 343). Bakhtin’s comparison to the authoritative discourse needing a great mass conjures up an image of a religious text that no one can trace the origin of, yet millions flock to it to guide their lives. To question such a text and its truth constitutes blasphemy. An authoritative discourse can be recognized by its need for perfection, accuracy, and inflexibility, and “it remains sharply demarcated, compact and inert; it deems, so to speak, not only quotation marks but a demarcation even more magisterial, a special script, for instance” (p. 343). Bakhtin used “static and dead” as descriptors for authoritative discourses, and they will carry, “but a single meaning” (p. 343). This discourse is not easy to change because it comes with its authority historically attached to it, making it impossible to question. On the other hand, heteroglossic voices will pull against this centralization of thought and normalized ideology and only one way to mean.

Heteroglossia. Bakhtin called the discourses that challenge and counter authoritative discourse, *heteroglossia*. An authoritative discourse is unified, without varied voice and perspective, a single perspective. Whereas, heteroglossia is a plethora of voices, representing a multitude of viewpoints and perspectives, and it pulls away from an ideology that tries to unify and normalize. Clark and Holquist (1986) stated that:

Heteroglossia, or the mingling of different language groups, cultures, and classes, was for Bakhtin the ideal condition, guaranteeing a perpetual linguistic and intellectual revolution

which guards against the hegemony of any “single language of truth” or “official language” in a given society, against ossification and stagnation in thought. (p. 22)

Bakhtin (1975/1981) called heteroglossia the place where “real language lives” (p. 292), the “internal differentiation” in languages (p. 67), and it is “parodic, and aimed sharply and polemically against the official languages of its given time” (p. 273). More specifically, heteroglossia includes those languages that disturb others, languages that must be corrected, and moreover languages that usually don’t demand respect.

Internally persuasive discourse. As people we *always* consume elements of authoritative discourses and heteroglossia. They are ever present in our lives through books, everyday talk, media, movies, and in many other forms of communication. However, when these discourses become embedded in a person’s way of thinking, then that discourse has become what Bakhtin (1975/1981) called the *internally persuasive discourse*.

The tendency to assimilate others’ discourse takes on an even deeper and more basic significance in an individual’s ideological becoming, in the most fundamental sense. Another’s discourse performs here no longer as information, directions, rules, models, and so forth-but strives rather to determine the very bases of our ideological interrelations with the world, the very basis of our behavior; it performs here as authoritative discourse, and an internally persuasive discourse. (p. 342)

One clear example of this is that Anzaldúa’s nepantla is an internally persuasive discourse for me. It has taken a vital place in shaping my thinking, writing, and teaching; in essence, it has become part of who I am. The discourses that *internally persuade* us are important to know and recognize. As an educator, I realized that strong authoritative discourses of prejudice circulated in my pedagogies and our educational system, and because of this, they had become internally

persuasive in my mind, as well as my students' minds. Here I present nepantla as way to disrupt authoritative discourses, an act, somewhat to restore balance in a knowledge system.

Ideological Becoming as an Act of Nepantla

To bring Anzaldúa's nepantla and Bakhtin's ideological becoming together, or make them speak to one another, I focus on examples from their work that include their uses of the words, *collide*, *collision*, *border*, and *boundary*. For Bakhtin and Anzaldúa, when thoughts collide, change may happen, or the change may be silenced. Anzaldúa (1987) argued, "the coming together of two self-consistent but habitually incompatible frames of reference causes un choque, a cultural collision" (p. 100). These collisions happen at the border of thoughts where there is potential for a shift in an epoch of thought. Anzaldúa intentionally writes using heteroglossia to illustrate nepantla and even create it again; Bakhtin (1975/1981) said that when one writes intentionally with heteroglossia that it forces ideological collision. Anzaldúa (1987) wanted to collide ideas within nepantla at "a focal point or fulcrum, that juncture where the mestiza stands... where phenomena tend to collide" (p. 101) as way to bring about change in the way *we* see and think about people and their ideas.

Anzaldúa (1987) wrote the following passage as part of rewriting of the story of La Malinche, a young Nahua woman who was sold to Hernán Cortes, and she eventually became his interpreter. Often in Mexican discourses La Malinche is blamed for helping Cortés invade and conquer parts of Mexico:

Not me sold out my people but they me. *Malinali Tenepat*, or *Malintzín*, has become known as *la Chingada*-the fucked one. She has become the bad word that passes a dozen times a day from the lips of Chicanos. Whore, prostitute, the woman who sold out her people to the Spaniards are epithets Chicanos spit out with contempt. The worst kind of

betrayal lies in making us believe that the Indian woman in us is the betrayer. We, *indias y mestizas*, police the Indian in us, brutalize and condemn her. Male culture has done a good job on us. *Son las costumbres que traicionan. La india en mí es la sombra: La Chingada, Tlazolteotl, Coatlicue. Son ellas que oyemos lamentando a sus hijas perdidas.* (p. 44)

In this quote from a longer section called, “The Wounding of the *india*-Mestiza,” Anzaldúa used intentional heteroglossia (Bakhtin 1975/1981), English, Spanish, and Nahuatl, to force a questioning of the authoritative discourse that subjected the Indian woman to a position of a good, an item bought or taken, then spent for the owner’s profit. Additionally, Anzaldúa harvested a long discursive history around La Malinche.

Anzaldúa’s rewriting of the discursive construct of La Malinche was a nepantlan act. Anzaldúa’s takes this historical discursive formation and shows how it is used to shape and position the indigenous woman continually as one who deserves to be “fucked” because of her betrayal and untrustworthiness. Bakhtin (1975/1981) overtly stated that in these kinds of literary contexts, that “the important activity is not only (in fact not so much) the mixing of linguistic forms-the markers of two languages and styles-as it is the collision between differing points of views on the world that are embedded in these forms” (p. 360). I present Anzaldúa’s theorizing of La Malinche as nepantlan act that is also an example of ideological becoming—“an intense struggle within us for hegemony” (Bakhtin, 1975/1981, p. 346). Anzaldúa had situated herself with a nepantla state through this discursive deconstruction of La Malinche to force others into a nepantla state, as well. She acted on the same premise that Bakhtin (1984) proposed concerning the historical constructions of truth, when he wrote that “while [we analyze] past ages we are too often obliged to ‘take each epoch at its word,’ that is, to believe its official ideologists. We do

not hear the voice of the people and cannot find and decipher its pure unmixed expression (p. 474). Bakhtin described these ideological outcomes as “open, in each of the next contexts that dialogize it, this discourse is able to reveal ever newer ways to mean” (p. 346). Anzaldúa (1987) took up *nepantla* to allow for new “ways to mean” by intentionally and literally writing “a new story to explain the world” (p. 103).

New stories to explain the world. Educators are often fed historical fictions, never questioned, to reteach to the next generation of children. To disrupt these historical truths, Anzaldúa took up an historical fiction, the story of La Malinche, to critique it and write a new story to explain this historical event. To illustrate how classroom educators can do the same, I turn to a real event from my classroom practice. During our unit on the American Civil War, our state standards called for the students to learn that Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852/1998), and John Brown’s raid were vital in the abolitionist movement to abolish slavery. One concern is that both Stowe and Brown were White, and neither Black abolitionists nor Black historical figures from this epoch are mentioned in the state standards. As a way to invoke *nepantla* in my classroom, I challenged the standards by offering a range of people and perspectives during this time in US history, including others' stories, from Frederick Douglass to Nat Turner. This was an effort to rewrite the standard, the story, that we would learn concerning who was challenging the practice of slavery at that time. As well as, I pointed out to my students the absence of Black historical figures in our Social Standards to my students, and they became advocates, investigators, and authors of new stories about the Civil War for themselves, for me, and for our school.

I suggest that a *nepantla* pedagogy will, at times, contradict standards and/or challenge lesson objectives. In this pedagogy, no one would perform the same; much less think the same

about an event, person, or story. Students and teachers would be “skeptical of reason and rationality ...question[ing] conventional knowledge's current categories, classifications, and contents” (Anzaldúa, 2002, p. 541). It will result in a multitude of thoughts and understandings on behalf of the students and educators. As Bakhtin (1975/1987) claimed, “heteroglossia...rages beyond the boundaries of such a sealed-off cultural universe” or in other words, heteroglossia lived beyond our sealed-off social studies standards, and by tapping into it, we subverted some dangerous subject positionings. However, this opening of “subversive knowledges” is not without consequence or risk (Anzaldúa, 2002, p. 542). I, too, was deemed heretical by my school administrator for challenging the sanctity of standards-based learning and challenging the school’s practice of standardized testing along with its numerous practice tests. Anzaldúa explained that “those seeking alternative forms of knowledge have been demonized” (p. 543) and that nepantleras risk being “stoned for [their] heresy” (p. 573). These consequences must be further developed by documenting the repercussions of nepantla pedagogies along with the authoritative discourses’ resistance to them.

Creating new stories is one aspect of a nepantla pedagogy; through rewriting, future thoughts can change; however, a change in thought often requires one to feel as though they are encountering an alien world. Anzaldúa and Bakhtin take up the word, “alien,” in interesting ways to speak of this phenomenon. Bakhtin (1975/1987) argued the necessity of

deeply involved participation in alien cultures and languages (one is impossible without the other) inevitably leads to an awareness of the disassociation between language and intentions, language and thought, language and expression. (p. 368)

In essence, we, educators, must force ourselves to interact, come face to face, with “alien” ways, so that “heteroglossia [can] wash over” our own culture, our language, penetrating us to the core, and in the end, disrupt our deeply embedded ideologies about the world (p. 368).

Alien Words and Worlds

Anzaldúa (1987) explained that people situated on ideological and cultural borders forge a language in which “they can create their own identity to, one capable of communicating the realities and values true to themselves—a language with terms that are neither *español ni ingles*, but both...we speak a patois, a forked tongue, a variation of two languages” (p. 76). Although, often unrecognized by speakers of dominant, imperialistic languages, everyone speaks a variation of many languages. If this is recognized, then other questions regarding language and its practice may come forward. For instance, what is the historical construction/s of the language/s we speak? By answering this, a person may see themselves as speaking a hybrid language within a complicated sociopolitical history, and the understanding of hegemony within language ideologies can open spaces for contestation of “official line[s]” of authoritative discourses (Bakhtin, 1975/1981, p. 345). Collisions and questions of ideology lead to an “alien consciousness” which Anzaldúa (1987) illustrated in her first encounter with the word “nosotras” (p. 99):

The first time I heard two women, a Puerto Rican and a Cuban, say the word “*nosotras*,” I was shocked. I had not known the word existed. Chicanas use *nosotros* whether we’re male or female. We are robbed of our female being by the masculine plural. Language is a male discourse. (p. 76)

To explain minor Spanish linguistics, a Spanish speaker would use feminine and masculine pronoun forms. For instance, *ellos* is a pronoun that means *they* in Spanish, and *nosotros* is a

pronoun that means *we*. In a context, when a Spanish speaker needs to refer to a group of people that are both male and female, or entirely male, it is acceptable to use *ellos*, and only if the group is entirely female, then *ellas* is acceptable. This construct of language is akin to the English historical use of *man* to refer to both men and women, but one would never use *woman* to refer to both men and women. The same linguistic rule applies to the use of *nosotros* (we), but for Anzaldúa, she had never been exposed to the usage of *nosotras* (notice the ending) to refer to a group of women. Instead, everyone was *nosotros*, the masculine form, including a group of women. This nepantla act of deconstructing words explores the betweenness among the linguistic and discursive construction of they/ellos/ellas and we/nosotros/nosotras meanings. In Anzaldúa's historical discourse, it was acceptable for one to view a group of women as they/them/ellas; a man could label women as women by calling them, *ellas*. However, a discourse was missing in Anzaldúa's history; the discourse of women naming themselves, *nosotras*, was non-existent for her. In this instance, only when a labeling *the other* (they/ellos) is the *ella* construction available. This concept stripped women of the possibility of self-identification (in this linguistic and discursive moment) of the option of naming themselves, in other words, *nosotras* didn't exist for women, so they could not use it to name and call themselves. A nepantla pedagogy seeks to speak new ways to exist into being, and this instance, *nepantleras*, the Puerto Rican women, spoke alien words into being for Anzaldúa.

I, too, had a *nepantlera* speak an alien world into existence for me. The *nepantlera* was my student, who wrote and illustrated a story that brought her alien existence into being, gave her an opportunity to name her world, name her position in it, and critique it. As my teaching experience comes from public classrooms in Georgia with majority Latino students, the term *illegal alien* was prevalent in our communities and classrooms. It was especially prevalent the

year of 2008, when Georgia passed a law enabling police officers to act as immigration officials and starting a frenzy of anti-immigrant discourse sparking increased racism against anyone with brown skin in our state and furthering it across our country. I present below a quote by our county sheriff at the time that furthered alienating discourses. He presented this argument to justify the county's application to enact 287g, the law/ordinance that allowed county police officers to act as immigration officers.

Now at this same time, Hall County is seeing a dramatic increase in our Hispanic population, both legal and illegally, and unfortunately we're also seeing an increase in Hispanic involvement in many of our areas of crime. Most alarming was in the areas which most consider our major quality of life issues, that being drugs, gangs and violent crime. In fact, over a two- to three-year period, we saw illegal immigrants disproportionately involved in these areas. Examples included close to 90 percent of the volume of illegal drugs being brought in this community was being brought in from Mexico by illegal aliens. (This is not to say individual cases reflected 90 percent, but the actual volume of seizures.)

Our homicides during a two to three year period reflected one-third to one-half committed by illegal aliens. (In most of these cases the victims were also in the country illegally, many were drug or gang related.) And our gangs, although difficult to determine immigration status because of their age, are more than 80 percent Mexican street gangs.

(Cronic, 2008) (See Appendix A for the full article)

Around the same time that these words were printed in our local newspaper, I implemented a literacy project called the Family Stories Writing Project. I asked my students to collect family stories from their parents, guardians, or anyone really. We were going to write the stories,

hopefully bilingually, illustrate them, and publish them to share with the class, the school, and the community. Gisela, a Mexican-American 10-year old girl, wrote an unforgettable story, a story that was alien me, but told of her life experience. She wrote about how her mother was currently in jail, pulled over for a broken taillight, and arrested for being an illegal alien. Her story told of her father's desperate attempt to figure out how to free her, to Gisela standing with her mother before the judge and receiving the sentence to self-deport or the next time they would imprison her and take her children. Listening to the authoritative discourses of our community promoted the acceptance of 287g as necessary to deport dangerous Hispanic criminals, but if we listened to Gisela and her recount of the deportation of a wife, a mother, a person who loved and cared for her children, who worked outside and inside her home, we may come away understanding this alien existence, and not render them, alien, any longer.

Dissolving borders. Anzaldúa (1987) claimed “borders are set up to define the places that are safe or not safe, to distinguish *us* from *them*” (p. 6). Borders *define*. They define personal property lines to political boundaries to picture frames and classroom walls. Borders *differentiate*. For instance, sometimes my elementary-age students liked to have more privacy when they worked, and using manila folders they would create makeshift walls around their desks. No one could see in, nor could they see out of their paper fortresses. To them, this small border changed how they worked. Borders *change* things. It was during a classroom discussion about borders and immigration that I first thought, how can I dissolve borders?

During my last year of teaching fifth grade, my students and I were immersed in our unit on immigration. We read and watched stories of immigration, and many students connected to My Diary from Here to There, a story of a young girl's move from Mexico to the United States. Afterwards, a discussion began about who was really an immigrant and who wasn't one. In a

classroom full of bilingual children and children of immigrants, the students would try to figure who was born where to figure out who was really an immigrant or not. Surprisingly, the children became envious of the term immigrant. Mandrell wanted to be identified as immigrant because his great-grandmother was from Nigeria. Samuel wanted to connect to immigration by saying that his ancestors came from Ireland. At the same time, Angelica wanted to point out that she wasn't an immigrant; she was born in the United States, on this side of the border.

Although this discussion prompted critical thought, I wanted an even more complicated discussion in which the students would compare and contrast their real, lived experiences. For instance, Samuel, the only White student in my class, had recently moved from a rural White community to a city apartment complex with mainly Black and Latino families. While this move brought complications and friendships into his life, it also brought him into other cultures that he needed to learn how to negotiate living in. However, there wasn't a space in my classroom pedagogy for Samuel to connect this experience with Elba's experience of moving from Mexico. My pedagogy divided and othered students, but my intent had been to connect student experience and dissolve the borders separating us. Likewise, *nepantla* is the place of the border, "el lugar de la frontera" (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2009, p. 176).

So, I began to imagine a pedagogy that would do away with learning about immigration; instead, we would dissolve the borders separating us, and learn how people move and have moved for millennia. This kind of thought allowed us to explore the historical construction of political borders as well as disrupt the idea about who was really an American or an immigrant (Anzaldúa, 1987; Giroux, 1991). It was in *nepantla*, that I saw how borders were "the locus of resistance, of rupture, implosion and explosion, and of putting together the fragments and creating a new assemblage" (Anzaldúa, 1993/2009, p. 177). A *nepantla* pedagogy, helped me to

create this imaginable, borderless space for students which allowed them to position themselves differently, see others similarly, make connections and disconnections across their varied lives.

Conclusion

Nepantla and ideological becoming are theoretical stances that both articulate that people are in a continual process of forming ideas and that those ideas are birthed from historical and current discourses. Contesting and changing these discourses creates the possibility of living otherwise, which entails challenging essentialists and normalizing ideologies that constrain, restrain, produce dichotomies, and continually separate one person from another. Anzaldúa (1987) spoke of her work:

My “stories” are acts, encapsulated in time, “enacted” every time they are spoken aloud or read silently. I like to think of them as performances and not as inert and ‘dead’ objects (as the aesthetic of Western culture think of art works). Instead, the work has an identity; it is “who” or a “what” and contains the presences of persons, that is, incarnations of gods or ancestors or natural and cosmic powers. The work manifests the same needs as a person, it needs to be “fed,” *la tengo que bañar y vestir*. (p. 89)

Again, Anzaldúa’s and Bakhtin’s stories of the world were rejected by those in academia who had the position to approve or disapprove the stories they told. To accept these ideas would “feed” the continuance of those disturbing ideologies, and it would mean a questioning of long historical truths of the world. Perhaps, they would need to decide that their previously held ideas are and were wrong. Moreover, people imbue ideas, so questioning ideas means questioning the person, and people who are in are nepantla would need to see their own participation in the establishment of truths. For educators to recognize a structure as imperialistic and colonizing then we must step aside and examine our beliefs and actions that continue to perpetuate this

truth. Anzaldúa (1987) argued that *it* must first exist in our mind before *it* exists in the world. We produce ourselves according to our thoughts first. Those thoughts produce actions, which produce similar thoughts in other people, and so on. Nepantla helps us understand how thought comes about, which can help us see new ways for thought to come about differently, and thinking differently means acting differently. Nepantla and ideological becoming show that it is the interaction, *the conflict*, between multiple constructions of the world that opens way to change, analyze, and apply ideas that lead to multiple ways to be.

As for educators, we must situate ourselves in nepantla. For instance, reading this essay and asking ourselves: How do I violate other people's ways of knowing? How do I render others alien to me? Why do I accept accounts of history without question? Or taking Bakhtin's recommendation: How do I let an alien world wash over me? These are all ways to invoke nepantla. For teacher educators, we can add Anzaldúa's work to our readings and unpack nepantla with dialog and personal experience. For classroom educators, we must appropriate her work for our students. Seek out new stories, question alienating ways, reveal how one's beliefs can violate those of another, and bring all of it into open spaces. To say this would be a uniform outcome would contradict my previous claims of a nepantla pedagogy, in fact it may have chaotic outcome. The process of nepantla reflection and views, with action as nepantleras may be where we find the harmony and symmetry among us; however, the results of what happens in each classroom or context may look very different.

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CHAPTER 3
USING ANZALDÚA'S NEPANTLA TO
EXPLORE CRITICAL MULTILITERATE PEDAGOGIES IN OAXACA, MEXICO

The simple question 'can you write' seems to be one that does not withstand the test of globalisation. Answers to it refer to practices and skills that belong to local, and very divergent, economies of literacy. Institutional regimes that emphasize uniformity in communication practices will exclude, marginalise and silence people whose repertoires do not match the normative expectations. Globalisation is likely to intensify this form of exclusion, because the super-diversity it spawns precludes any presupposability of linguistic or literacy resources among growing numbers of people. (Blommaert, 2008, p. 4)

Superdiversity and Literacy

Across the globe, people are moving, often pushed and pulled by the effects of globalized capitalistic economies (Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; Cohen, 2004). This human movement fuels the creation of what Blommaert and Rampton (2011) define as *superdiverse societies*, which are characterized by diverse people living closely in the same area, by numerous languages, cultures, religions, and various ways of beings in the same geographical area. In these societies, often our knowledge and assumptions about how society should work are questioned by the society itself (Blommaert, 2012). This is especially evident in Oaxaca City, Mexico, the capital of the Mexican southern state of Oaxaca. It is one of the country's most culturally, linguistically, and biologically diverse states, where one-third of the 3 million residents speak at

least one variant of the 16 recognized language families ³(INEGI, 2010), and estimated 80% live in moderate to extreme poverty (CONEVAL, 2012). In Oaxaca (and across Mexico), this kind of superdiversity in urban areas was partially spurred by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA, 1994), which opened a trade route for US produced genetically modified corn to infiltrate Mexico's traditional corn economy, making it impossible for Oaxacans to sell their native corn at competitive prices. In turn, those, the indigenous, who relied on a local agrarian market, were forced to move in order to sustain themselves. Thus, many indigenous men left their *pueblos* for the US (see Cohen, 2004 for a lengthy discussion of immigration from Oaxaca). Left behind were the elderly, women, and young children to tend farms and sell goods to sustain themselves (Cohen, 2004). It is not surprising that many of these families were and are struggling to survive in their communities and have migrated to Oaxaca's capital, Oaxaca City.

Cohen (2004) likens this movement of indigenous people to urban centers as another and continued form of colonization. Upon migration, indigenous people often find themselves ostracized from the dominant community with unequal access to social and educational services (Trujano, 2008). Furthermore, it may be socially easier and economically advantageous to produce the dominant language and culture; in turn indigenous people may “deny, lose or change their identity, adopt a new language, or disassociate themselves from their community of origin” (Trujano, 2008, p. 51). In the city, relocated indigenous people often encounter an inaccessible and inequitable educational system. One is the cost of Mexican public schooling including

³ The number of languages used in Oaxaca is debatable. It is readily argued that there are 16 language families across the state of Oaxaca. In order of number of speakers, those are Zapotec, Mixtec, Mazateco, Chinanteco, Mixe, Chatino, Trique, Huave, Cuicateco, Zoque, Amuzgo, Oaxacan Chontal, Tacuate, Chochotec, Ixcateco, and Popoloco. However, within these language families there are many variants, not mutually understandable, and the Ethnologue: Languages of the World (2012) posits 98 languages in the Oaxaca regions, but John Schmal (2007) suggests a number closer to 173.

registration fees (150 pesos⁴), inscription fees (750 pesos), uniform costs (2,600 pesos), materials (1000 to 3000 pesos), transportation (12 pesos each day, each child); this creates a costly education, which indigenous families, who are already among the poorest, economically, cannot afford. Additionally, public education in Mexico has been characterized as poor in quality with language and literacy pedagogies emphasizing copying and memorization (Garcia, 2012; Hall, 2006). The educational system in Oaxaca has many pressing issues including a dearth of school resources, such as classroom books, materials, and technology. Additionally, the Oaxacan educational system is heavily controlled by a teacher's union which permits and promotes the buying and selling of teacher positions to unqualified individuals (Lloyd, 2008; 2011; Santibáñez, 2008). Finally, although according to the national directory of Mexican schools there are 1,450 "indigenous schools" in the state of Oaxaca (SEP, 2014), most of these programs are not bilingual, they lack sufficient resources for teaching in indigenous languages, and many of these teachers do not speak the language of the community (Barria Villanueva, 2008; Meyer, 2004). Furthermore, access to a bilingual and intercultural program in an indigenous language is non-existent in urban Oaxaca (Lopez-Gopar, 2009).

Given these problems, there is little research that analyzes the language and literacy practices that mestizo, monolingual teachers implement for their indigenous students (Ramos, 2005). Knowing this, I became curious as to *how* the linguistic and literacy resources of these children were being included or excluded in urban, public elementary schools that they attended.

Theoretical Framework

Based on the scholarly literature and my ethnographic work in Oaxaca, I had hypothesized that I would encounter classroom pedagogies that were monolingual, promoted

⁴ As of March 7, 2014, 13.2 Mexican Pesos is \$1.00 American Dollar or 18.32 Mexican Pesos is 1.00 Euro. The costs listed here are from data gathered during the 2012-2013 school year.

Spanish literacy, and accompanied by a pedagogy that valued autonomous forms of literacy. However, I also knew that speakers of indigenous Mexican languages have been skilled in maintaining their languages and engaging in creative literacy practices outside and without the support of public schools (Faudree, 2013). So, in framing this study, I turned to Anzaldúa's nepantla, an ideology that stems from an indigenous Nahua worldview that frames the world through deconstruction, disruption, and complication.

Nepantla is the site of transformation, the place where different perspectives come into conflict and where you question the basic ideas, tenets, and identities inherited from your family, your education, and your different cultures. Nepantla is the zone between changes where you struggle to find equilibrium between the outer expression of change and your inner relationship to it. Living between cultures results in "seeing" double, first from the perspective of one culture, then from the perspective of another. Seeing from two or more perspectives simultaneously renders those cultures transparent (Anzaldúa, 2002, p. 548-549).

Anzaldúa (1987) discussed nepantla as a way to deconstruct all cultures, way of beings, religions, and languages, among other ideologies. In nepantla, ideas collide, revealing contradictions and similarities in hopes to bring about "a change in the way we perceive reality, the way we see ourselves, and the ways we behave" (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 102). *Nepantleras*, people in nepantla, situate themselves on the cracks between worldviews. They show how elements of worldviews are "unworkable" and reframe conflicts and shift perspectives (Anzaldúa, 2002, p. 567). Nepantla is a useful process because it allows a person to "see through" our "individual and collective" actions to show how "knowledge, identity, and reality"

have been constructed, and most importantly it pushes a person to the point where they can see how “your/others' constructions...violate other people's ways of knowing” (p. 548).

In contexts like the one in the study, *nepantla* is especially helpful for educators to see how their beliefs and practices may “violate” students’ language practices, beliefs, identity, or various other ways of being. For students, indigenous or not, *nepantla* will help them question texts they encounter, create “new stories” about their world, and open up spaces for them to think differently about negative discourses they encounter. As an educational researcher, I used *nepantla* as theory and method, to question my interpretations of the data and how my ideas may have been unworkable in the context.

To focus *nepantla* on issues of language and literacy, I turned to pedagogy of *multiliteracies* (Cazden, Cope, Fairclough, Gee, Kalantzis, Kress, Luke, & Michaels, 1996). A term coined by The New Literacy Studies (NLS); *multiliteracies* is a movement known for breaking open ideologies surrounding societal language and literacy practices. I brought *nepantla* and *multiliteracies* together to “problematize what counts as literacy” in this study’s context and determine “whose literacies” were “dominant, and whose [were] marginalized or resistant” (Street, 2003, p. 77).

As Hall (2006) revealed in her critical ethnography of that Oaxacan schools’ literacy practices were decontextualized, valued grammar and spelling while devaluing content and ideas, and students’ main writing tasks were to copy from textbooks. She argued that, at first, the Spanish literacy and language practices of the students appeared limited and under-developed because of the strong emphasis on autonomous literacy skills (Street, 2003) such as Spanish spelling, handwriting, and form. But when the children were given the opportunity to discuss familiar oral stories, suddenly these students showed interest and creativity, which had

previously been untapped by teacher and classroom pedagogy. For instance, when the students were prompted to discuss local legends, they narrated long, creative versions of *La Llorona*, *The Weeping Woman*⁵. However, Hall noted that the students lacked the ability to implement the same creativity in the written version, often copying the story from the textbook. In summary, Hall concluded that it is important to consider the kinds of literacies practiced by students, that Oaxacan oral literacies are historical and complex, whereas written literacy has been dominated by Western ideas of correct language and grammar, often invoking the need to copy texts ‘correctly’ to demonstrate competence.

Likewise, Lopez-Gopar’s (2009) critical ethnography set in two urban Oaxacan schools further illustrated these same tensions between the schools’ language and literacy pedagogies and the language and literacy practices of indigenous children. He noted that many children were ashamed of their indigenous language in front of monolingual Spanish-speaking peers. On the contrary, during interviews these same children expressed their knowledge and interest in maintaining their indigenous language and learning additional languages to communicate with more people, countering their monolingual peers who stated that indigenous languages were not languages at all but were ways to argue or say curse words.

Additionally, Garcia’s (2009) findings from her ethnographic study in intercultural bilingual schools in Chiapas, a neighboring Mexican state, are strikingly similar to the issues in Hall’s context, where literacy practices centered on the silent reading of workbooks, copying

⁵ La Llorona is well-known folk-tale that traces back to pre-Hispanic times. There are many versions, but usually the story is about a mother’s spirit who appears at night or in the street dressed in long white robes with long white hair, roaming the earth in search of the children she drowned after the man she loved left her. After her death, some versions say she also drowned, she arrived in heaven, and God asked her where her children were, and she replied that she didn’t know. She was sent back to earth to search for them and has been doing so ever since, wandering the streets at night wailing, “Aye, Mis hijos!” (Oh, my children!) This tale is often used to warn children not to be bad or go out at night because La Llorona may get them.

from workbooks, and a general emphasis on decoding words rather than comprehension and questioning. Garcia argued that this kind of literacy pedagogy was due to poorly trained teachers, lack of resources, and lack of clear criteria for the intercultural bilingual education program. Nevárez-La Torre (2012) documented eerily, similar experiences among Mixtec immigrant students in the US, where students were unwelcome in their respective schools, classroom language pedagogies were non-inclusive of their needs, and teachers lacked awareness and training regarding indigenous migration, languages, and social contexts.

Given this basis of research, the framework of multiliteracies pushed me to look at literacy as broad (not narrow), context dependent (never decontextualized), a social practice (not a process that is linearly mastered), a multimodal practice (more than just letters and words), a multilingual act (more than just one dominant language or dialect), and embedded in social relations of power (Cazden et al., 1996, p. 64; Street, 2003). I looked for practices of multiliteracy, practices preventing multiliteracy, and the possibility of a multiliterate pedagogy to happen inside the classroom. As nepantla theory raises questions about the discourses that govern our ways of being in the world and in classrooms, so multiliteracies raises questions about the way literacy should be taught and practiced in and out of the classroom. As both of these elements are controlled by institution and social power relations, a research methodology grounded in ethnography along with critical discourse analysis was useful for capturing and analyzing language to further understand this dynamic.

Methods

Recently, scholars (Rampton et al, 2004; Rogers, 2011) have begun combining two research methodologies, critical discourse analysis and linguistic ethnography, to better explore power relations among students, teachers, and the institutes they negotiate. The methodological

combination is meant to better answer questions about how power constructs our world (Rogers et al., 2005); to provide a context to critical discourse analysis (Blommaert, 2001); and to broaden linguistic ethnography to include historical and larger circulating discourses, accompanied by systemic analysis of the linguistic data.

Power is a central concept in this study and in critical discourse analyses; specifically how power is exercised through language is fore fronted in these studies (Fairclough, 2010). Power is a productive force found in the social relationships we engage in. Essentially power is both in and behind the discourses and languages that we emit and speak, which create our ideologies, in other words, what we can think and act (Fairclough, 2013). In this study I sought to reveal how power produced the language and literacy practices in the classroom and how it “differentiate[d] and select[ed], include[d] and exclude[d]” the language and linguistic resources of indigenous students (Blommaert, 2005, p. 2). The critical part of this CDA attempts to assess "what exists, what might exist and what should exist" within schools and classrooms (Fairclough, 2010, p. 7).

In this study's context, tracking discourses was vital for locating how power worked in and around language and literacy pedagogies. Discourse is a “multimodal social practice” (Rogers, 2011, p. 1) that creates our social world through the spreading of ideas via texts, media, actions, physical constructions, and languages. Discourses are created over time and usually are seen as ‘just the way things are.’ For example, in this context, a discourse of *what school should be* in Mexico contributed heavily to the language and literacy classroom practices. This is discussed at length in the analysis, but this discourse of *what school should be* heavily controlled the pedagogies the teacher would and could practice.

Research Questions

Given my previous experience in Oaxacan public schools, my understandings from literature view, and preliminary interviews with local professors and teachers, I predicted that during this study, I would find a teacher whose literacy practices were narrow, but had the potential to be situated in nepantla which would result in an opening of the pedagogies to include and further indigenous languages, literacy, and ways of being. Specifically I sought to understand the following:

- 1.) In what ways did classroom pedagogies promote or silence languages other Spanish?
- 2.) By which discourses did the teacher discuss and enact her pedagogy?
- 3.) What are the perceptions of indigenous languages among students, and
- 4.) How and when did I observe possibilities for critical, multilingual pedagogy and to what extent were these possibilities taken up by the researcher, teacher, and/or students?
- 5.) How did my own ideological view of literacy affirm or counter the views held by the teacher, and/or practiced in the classroom pedagogy?

The School and Classroom

This study is based on data collected from August 2012 to December 2012 through observations and interviews at Esperanza Primary School (a pseudonym), first through sixth grades, located in a northern neighborhood of Oaxaca City. The area was known as a settling community for Zapotec families migrating in from rural areas and emerging in terms of development. Often, it was represented in newspapers as having a high crime rate due to the presence of gangs. The school, like many schools throughout Mexico, runs on a double shift, a morning school shift from 8:00 to 1:30 and an afternoon school shift from 2:00 – 6:30. Each shift operated as its own school with its own name, directors, teachers, and students. I observed during the afternoon shift because previous research showed that the afternoon schools have more

students from very poor families, fewer resources, lower test scores, and larger class sizes than the morning schools (Cardenas, 2010). Discourses that privileged morning over afternoon shift attendance were evident during my observations. One student was in the afternoon shift because he had been kicked out of the morning shift because he couldn't read, and another student was there because her parents could no longer pay for private school, and all the morning shifts were full.

The classroom teacher. “Marisol” (all names are pseudonyms) represented a typical conception of an Oaxacan teacher, one whose public image is popularly condemned as being a part of a corrupt and dysfunctional public education system (Howell, 2009). She said that before she was a teacher, “I cleaned houses, or did whatever I could to make money.” Marisol received her teaching position (*non-plaza*) at this urban school through her uncle, who held an administrative position in the state teachers' union. Marisol had an annual renewable contract; she earned 8,000 pesos each month, about \$640 US, and she worked about 23 hours each week. In an interview, Marisol described working in the city schools as difficult:

Es muy difícil trabajar con niños que son de la ciudad, que todo lo saben, dice que todo conocen, nada le sorprende, y era muy difícil para trabajar así, y los papas también eran muy exigente, muy renuente, todo quieren, pero nada quieren hacer. You give and they don't give you back.

It's very difficult to work with kids from the city. They know everything, they say they know about everything, nothing surprises them, it was very difficult to work like that, and the parents, as well, were very demanding, very reluctant, they want everything, but nobody wants to do it. You give and they don't give you back.

Previously, she had taught in La Mixteca Alta, a mountainous area to the north of Oaxaca City, in a school with an entirely Mixtec student population. She compared this with her experience teaching in the city:

Yo pienso es mas fácil, o para mí, es mas fácil porque son jóvenes que les interesa mucho cuando llega una maestra de afuera cuando una maestra es extranjera este les apasiona a todos, les extraña porque soy alta, porque tengo la piel es otro color, se apasiona a ver sobre tu cultura sobre tus tradiciones, porque aquí en Oaxaca, hacemos una cosa, y ellos hagan otra cosa, ellos comen otra

I think it's easier, or for me, it's easier, because they're youth who are very interested when a teacher arrives from the outside, when a teacher is foreign everybody is enthralled, it's strange to them that I'm tall, because I have a different color skin, they're passionate to learn about your culture, about your traditions, why here in Oaxaca, we do this, and they eat something else

She spoke of her experience there with mixed feelings, stating that she enjoyed teaching younger children who were so loving and respectful, but she had trouble connecting to older students. Her boyfriend, who was from this community and also spoke Mixtec, encouraged her to start learning Mixtec to bridge that gap, and she spoke of how she had learned some Mixtec and continued to talk with Mixtec speakers in the city to further her language learning.

Marisol stated that she had finished preparatory (equivalent to a US high school), but she had not finished college. At the time of this study, she was enrolled in a British English course through the Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP), the federal governing body of public education in Mexico. She spoke English at an intermediate level and had started learning it in high school, stating that chatting online helped her to master the language.

Marisol had been worried that her contract would not be renewed for the following year, and she could not pay the \$80,000 pesos (\$6400 US) she was offered to purchase a teaching position. She worked hard to show the school director that she was a good teacher by attending all school meetings and union functions. She reported that at a union meeting to elect the next union president, one candidate had offered to gift her a plaza in exchange for her vote. She stated that she would vote for him if she were assured of a permanent position in the school system. In January 2013, her contract was not renewed, and another contracted teacher replaced her. In August 2013, with the help of her uncle, she had secured a teaching job in a community 35 kilometers north of Oaxaca City, about 90 minutes by bus and collective (shared taxi), in a multiage classroom with a diverse group of students of Zapotec heritage. This study took place in her first position prior to losing her contract.

January 2011 – Marisol began working at Esperanza Primary School, teaching fourth grade.

August 2012 – She returned to Esperanza Primary School, teaching third grade.

December 2012 – Her contract was not renewed.

August 2013 – She started working at a primary school, outside of the city, in a multi-age classroom.

December 2013 – Her contract was not renewed at this school.

January 2014 – She received a teaching position in an indigenous, elementary school in La Mixteca Alta.

The classroom students. During this study, 2012-2013, Marisol taught a third grade class of 18 students, 12 boys and 6 girls, who ranged from 8 to 10 years old, two of whom were repeating third grade. The children showed their linguistic competence in various ways. All demonstrated Spanish proficiency in the classroom; 14 students described their parents and siblings as Zapotec speakers, while stating they, themselves, did not speak Zapotec, but they

could understand it. Two of these 14 students demonstrated their Zapotec knowledge by teaching me the names of animals and foods in Zapotec. They were also two students who demonstrated little to no knowledge that in Oaxaca there were still indigenous languages spoken; one of these students was the late transfer whose parents said they could no longer afford her private school, and another was a boy who yelled out “French” when I asked the students what other languages were spoken in Oaxaca besides Spanish.

Analysis

After one month of observing in this classroom, one theme became evident by its absence in my observational notes: there was a pervasive silence about indigenous languages, which stemmed from autonomous views of literacy that were enacted as part of the classroom pedagogy. To make sense of this silence, I drew on Fairclough’s (2010) orders of discourse: *genre* (a way of acting), *discourse* (a way of representing), and *style* (a way of being). A *genre* is what governs the ways we act, or the ways we can act appropriately or inappropriately, such as how we can act differently in interviews, classroom, or telling jokes in a bar. *Discourses* are the larger belief systems that we may reference when interacting in a genre; for instance in the data I will present here, Marisol will reference two prominent discourses, human rights and anti-bullying. *Style* is the way of being that we can take up in “dialogic exchange” (Patel Stevens, 2011, p. 189), for instance the way a teacher uses language to establish her or his identity as the “nice” teacher, “strict” teacher, or various other identities teachers may take up. Taken together, these elements define what is possible to do or not do with language (Fairclough, 2010).

Furthermore, how did *genre* contribute to the actions that the participants could have taken in these literacy events? In terms of discourse, I asked what were the connections between the school institution and the texts that were being produced, consumed, and distributed within it,

as well as what were the disconnections? Style is how the relationship between a text and social structure play a role in how we position socially, construct identity, and can enact agency (Fairclough, 2010). I thought of social positioning, focusing on who and what were valued and/or devalued, along with how identities were being constructed in the classroom, which may have promoted or limited individual agency. Additionally, the concept of intertextuality was useful in showing how the teacher, the students, and I drew on various texts in our interactions to make sense of our social order and even attempt to change it. I used Bloome's & Egan-Robertson's (1993) definition of intertextuality as a "social construction" that "as people act and react to each other, they use language and other semiotic systems to make meaning, to constitute social relationships, and to take social action" (p. 17). Additionally, in analyzing this data, I thought of texts not only as books or various written forms of language, but that human experiences and children's lives were also textualized and could be read as a text (Bloome & Egan-Robertson, 1993).

Finally, I turned to Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) (2009), a form of linguistics that looks at grammar and language as contextually embedded and shows how we take up and construct language to accomplish communicative goals. SFL posits that we use language for three main functions. Coinciding with Fairclough domain of discourse is the interpersonal metafunction which is "to enact our social relationships" (Martin & Rose, 2003, p. 6). The ideational metafunction, Fairclough's domain of style, represents "our experiences to each other" (Martin & Rose, 2003, p. 6). The textual metafunction, Fairclough's genre, organizes "our enactments and representations as meaningful text" (Martin & Rose, 2003, p. 6). In the data presented here, I will draw specifically on a subset of the interpersonal function, appraisal to how language is used evaluate situations, people, and actions. More specifically, how through

language we assign value on people and ideas in order to make a judgment as to its worth, and how those values stem from social norms and institutionalized feelings that have been historically and discursively constructed and reproduced.

Findings

As silence regarding indigenous identities, languages, and ways of being was most predominant, I began to see what *was not being said* about indigenous ways of beings was far more important than what *was* being said (Huckin, 2002). I've chosen three representation literacy moments that demonstrate 1) how pedagogical reliance on textbooks creates discursive silences, 2) how the teacher used intertextuality to disrupt these silences, and 3) how lack of mutual intertextuality between the teacher and I lead to unresolved methodological issues.

What School Should Be

Marisol's classroom pedagogy was based, almost entirely, on the nationally produced textbooks. The following exchange is the beginning of her language arts lesson on October 1, 2012. The students have just been seated and all have their textbooks titled Español (2011) out and open on their desk; Marisol stands at the front of the room. In the following transcript she will use the word, *dialog*, although the textbook is using the word discourse. As the students yelled the last words, she stared down at the textbook, which was open to p. 23, and printed in the textbook:

Ahora, transforma el siguiente chiste empleando el discurso directo:
(Now, change the following joke using direct discourse/speech.)

1	Marisol: El chiste que está en la página	Marisol: The joke on page 23, you are
2	23, lo van a transformar en <u>diálogo</u> ...	going, you are going to change into
3	Students: ¡Indirecto!	<u>dialog</u> .
4	Marisol: ¡Directo!	Students: Indirect!
5	Students: Ah	Marisol: Direct!
6	Marisol: Este es indirecto. En la página	Students: Oh
7	23, el chiste, en la página 23, eso van a	Marisol: This is indirect. On page 23, the
8	convertir en <u>diálogo</u> directo. ¿Que vamos	joke, on page 23, that you will change in
9	a hacer con la página 23?	direct <u>dialog</u> . What are we going to do on
10	Student: ¡Copiar! ¡Y cambiar a <u>diálogo</u>	page 23?
11	directo!	Students: Copy! And change it to direct
12	Marisol: Exacto, un niño le pregunta a su	<u>dialog</u> .
13	hermano...eso van a transformar a	Marisol: Exactly, a boy asked his
14	<u>diálogo</u> directo, van a copiar, en la	brother...you will change that to direct
15	página 23, esta como <u>diálogo</u> ...	<u>dialog</u> , you all will copy, on page 23, this
16	Students: ¡Directo! ¡Directo! ¡Directo!	as <u>dialog</u> ...
		Students: Direct! Direct! Direct!

Tracing Marisol's use of the word dialog in this exchange, she changes from dialog to discourse in line 17.

17	Marisol: <u>discurso</u> directo, en <u>discurso</u>	Marisol: Direct <u>speech/discourse</u> ,
18	directo	direct <u>speech/discourse</u>
19	Students: ¡ <u>diálogo</u> directo!	Students: Direct <u>dialog</u> !
20	Marisol: ¿ <u>discurso</u> directo, sale?	Marisol: Direct <u>speech/discourse</u> ,
21	Marisol: entonces, ahí dice,	okay? So, here it says (reading from
22	Un niño le pregunta a su hermano, que	textbook)
23	era muy bromista, por qué a algunas	A boy asked his brother who was a
24	personas no les gusta comer caracoles. El	jokester, why some people don't like
25	hermano le contesta que la razón es	to eat snails. The brother replied with
26	porque a esas personas les gusta la	the reason that those people like to eat
27	comida rápida.	fast food.

She did this as she realized the textbook was using the word, discourse, instead of dialog. She switches from dialog and corrects the students to use "discourse" from then on. This example is representative of what I observed daily in the classroom, that the textbooks were a strong authoritative source which heavily controlled what Marisol could say, from the topics she would address and even down to the microlinguistic choices she made while addressing the students.

In this lesson, which began at 3:14 and ended at 4:54, with a 30-minute recess from 4:00 to 4:30, Marisol stood at the front of the room, reading from the textbook, while the students were seated in rows facing her. The students were to copy and change two jokes into dialog; as they finished they lined up in front of Marisol's desk for their work to be checked. When they received a check, they returned to their desk. They did not have another activity to do so many students walked around the room playing or talking to other students and to me. Notably, this structure of lessons was common across all content areas and in every lesson that I observed.

The pattern of speech that I found in most lessons, as illustrated above, followed what Cazden (2001) termed an IRE discourse, the teacher initiates, the students respond, and the teacher evaluates. This structure of interaction has been found to be very common in classrooms. As Losey (1997) has argued,

One result of the pervasiveness of the IRE interaction pattern in education settings is that the teacher is almost always in control of the topic. Students have limited opportunities to ask questions or to add to the interaction. Therefore, students' needs, interests, and concerns may not be expressed or met in such interactional situations. Additionally, IRE interactions allow for little negotiation of meaning. (p. 10)

Classroom interactions constructed in this manner may promote a narrow construction knowledge, which may silence other, non-school, linguistic repertoires (Cazden, 2001). Structured in this way and with a reliance on the textbooks, the classroom literacy pedagogy unproblematically reproduced literacy practices and school just as the way things are (Fairclough, 2010). This classroom lesson was the predominant classroom genre, and genres dictate how a person may act or participate. Marisol had reiterated in interviews with me that she preferred teaching in pueblos to the city because

Cuando pongo videos en teléfono, ellos se sorprenden mucho y dicen, wow, es en serio, ¿como funciona? ¿Como se hace la azúcar? ¿Una fabrica de azúcar? Wow, muy interesante, queremos ver mas, queremos saber mas, cuando nosotros les explicamos, y se abrieren la mente, quieren saber mas, es mas productivo para mi, que ellos me dijeron, quiero saber mas If you know everything, why are you here? Don't come to school, if you know everything.

When you show students cell phone videos, they are amazed, and say, "Wow, for real? How does that work? It's very interesting. We want to see more, we want to know more." When we explain something, their minds are opened; they want to know more, for me that is more productive. If you know everything, why are you here? Don't come to school, if you know everything.

Her characterization of the students in the pueblos as being more enthralled with technology and her being positioned as the one who brought this technology to the pueblos, suggests that Marisol prefers to occupy a teacher identity that presents a teacher as the one with the knowledge to impart to the students. As she strongly expressed, most likely hyperbolically, students shouldn't come to school if they think they know everything. This further establishes the idea that student knowledge that is not produced from the textbooks holds very little to no value. This was further exemplified in a classroom lesson on Oaxaca identity.

One of the textbooks that the students in Oaxacan schools are required to purchase and use in the classroom is titled, Oaxaca (2011). On Thursday, November 22, 2012, Marisol was reading to the students from this textbook, Oaxaca, specifically pages 50 to 55. The following excerpt begins at minute 22 of the lesson.

1	M: Mixtecos y Zapotecos	M: Mixtecs and Zapotecs
2	Student 1: Zapoteco	Student 1: Zapotec
3	M: Exactamente	M: Exactly
4	Student 1: Mixtecos y Zapotecos	Student 1: Mixtecs y Zapotecs
5	Student 2: ¿Ya lo habíamos visto no?	Student 2: We've already seen this right?
6	M: Cual?	M: What?
7	Student 2: ¿Que llegaron aquí los	Student 2: That the Zapotecs arrived here
8	zapotecos?	M: Exactly
9	M: Exactamente	Student 2: And there were the Spanish
10	Student 2: Y luego fueron los españoles	M: And then there were the Spanish,
11	M: Y luego fueron los españoles, exacto	exactly
12	Student 2: Acá, no dicen Mixtecos	Student 2: Here, they don't say Mixtecos
13	M: No, ¿dice ahí?	M: No, what does it say there?
14	Students: ¡Mixteca!	Students: Mixteca!
15	M: Mixtecas, dice, bueno, en la siguiente	M: Mixtecas, it says, well, on the next
16	hoja, en nuestro libro, ahí vamos a ver,	page, in our book, there we're going to see
17	donde se asentaron,	where they settled
18	Student 1: ¿¡Que pagina?!	Student 1: What page?!
19	M: En la pagina...54, ahí vamos a ver que	M: On page...54, there we're going to see
20	culturas se establecieron, y en que	what cultures were established, and in
21	lugares, y en que estados también, de	what places, and in what states too, in the
22	color naranja, perdón, es amarillo, no	orange, excuse me, it's yellow, not orange,
23	naranja de color amarillo, se establecieron	from the yellow color, who settled there,
24	quienes ahí	Student 3: Theeeeeeee
25	Student 3: Looooooooooss	M: Mixtecs, Zapotecs...Cuicatecs y Mixes
26	M: Mixtecos, Zapotecos...Cuicatecos y	Students: Mixtecas! Mixtecos!
27	Mixes	Student 3: Zapotecs
28	Students: ¡Mixtecas! ¡Mixtecos!	M: In the yellow zone
29	Student 3: Zapotecos	Student 3: Zapoteco
30	M: En la zona de amarillo	Student 4: Zapoteca
31	Student 3: Zapoteco	Student 5: Mixe
32	Student 4: Zapoteca	M: With the information on page 54,
33	Student 5: Mixe	you'll respond to page 310 from the book,
34	M: Con la información de la pagina 54,	ok?
35	vamos a responder la pagina 310 de libro,	Student 6: We're going to paste it in our
36	ok?	notebooks?
37	Student 6: ¿Los vamos a pegar en	M: Yes, you're going to cut it out and
38	nuestros cuadernos?	paste en your notebooks
39	M: Si los van a recortar y a pegar en su	Student 6: ah, yes, that's right, a yes that's
40	cuaderno	right
41	Student 6: A si es cierto, a si es cierto	M: I don't want messy things, whoever
42	M: No quiero cochinas, el que me	brings me everything, bent, the sheet, and
43	traiga, toda, doblada, la hoja, y fea, se lo	ugly, I'll return it, with a punishment
44	regreso, con un castigo,	Student 5: Teacher, you know who

45	Student 5: Maestra, usted lo conoce	M: From that page, if you are responding
46	M: De esa pagina si se va a responder en	your notebook about where you live,
47	la libreta donde vivo, todos para poder	everyone, in order to respond to all the
48	responder todas las hojas, vamos a tener	sheets, must read the book on the identity
49	que leer el libro de identidad donde vivo,	of where you live, yes or no?
50	¿si o no?	Students: Yes, to help us
51	Students: Si para que nos ayude	M: To help you respond, yes, then, keep
52	M: Para que ayude a responder, si,	your work
53	entonces, guarden sus hojas	S: We'll get a 10
54	S: Sacamos un 10	M: Some of you, and you all will, as well,
55	M: Algunos de ustedes, y van a hacer	a timeline, in a group, for Mo..
56	también su línea de tiempo, en equipo,	Students: Monday, Tuesday
57	para el lu...	M: No, for Tuesday, we'll do this again,
58	Students: lunes, martes	everybody got it?
	M: No, para el martes, que nos toca,	
	¿sale?	

The assignment involved cutting and pasting images from pre-Hispanic times until present, to show the changes in society over time. After cutting and pasting the images, the students were to write about how Oaxaca is now. In lines 45-49, Marisol advises the students that to write about an Oaxacan identity the students must read their textbook to respond to the questions. This seemed like a prime opportunity to draw on students' funds of knowledge (Gonzales & Moll, 2005) as source for writing about their lives as Oaxacans. Unfortunately, the opportunity was not realized, and this was assigned as homework. Additionally, on this same day, Marisol told me that she thought school would be cancelled the next week because her section of the teacher's union, section 22, was closing schools because section 59 had kidnapped some teachers from section 22. This had happened after a group of teachers from section 22 had attacked a school that was employing teachers from section 59. She said that they (teachers from section 22) wanted that section gone. And Marisol predicted correctly, school was closed for the next seven school days, and when we returned to school, Marisol never collected the homework that had been assigned, nor returned to the Oaxaca textbook during her remaining two weeks as a teacher there.

In this section, I've presented classroom transcripts and interview data that show a classroom where school is expected to be focused on the teacher, the copying of textbooks is a valuable way to show learning and knowledge, and the teacher simultaneously relies on these textbooks as the authorial knowledge to decide on what should be included in the classrooms. Because student knowledge was not viewed as valuable source for building or guiding classroom instruction, the linguistic repertoire that the students had in Zapotec was dismissed as well, or moreover was simply ignored.

Disrupting the Way School Should Be

As Bloome et al (2005) stated, the “IRE structure [may be] used to locate control and power in the teacher and to limit what counts as legitimate knowledge” (p. 55); however, people are not passive recipients of culture or discourses that govern how school should be. At times, teachers and students, even while using an IRE structure, may challenge ideologies, as seen in the next example. In the following transcript from October 3, 2012, Marisol stands at the front of the room with her Civics and Ethics (2011) textbook in her hand. She begins the lesson by giving students examples of what “rights” mean.

1	M: Todos tiene los mismos derechos.	M: Everyone has the same rights. Everyone
2	Todos tienen una diferencia. Por ejemplo,	has a difference. For example, everyone
3	todos tienen el derecho a hablar un idioma	has the right to speak an indigenous
4	indígena. Por ejemplo. ¿Si ellos juegan	language. For example. What if the boys
5	futbol y yo juego muñecas?	play soccer, and I play with dolls?
6	Estudiantes: Nooooo	Students: Noooo!
7	M: No, ¿Qué yo puedo hacer?	M: No. What can I do?
8	Estudiantes: ¡Llevarse!	Students: Join with them!
9	M: Exacto. Nos tendríamos que llevar.	M: Exactly. We would have to join in. Ok.
10	Ok. Tal vez, a mi me cae gorda Estrella	Maybe, I don't like Estrella because she
11	porque tiene el cabello cortito. Pero eso,	has short hair. But that, that will not stop
12	eso no me va a impedir ser su amigo, voy	me from being her friend, I will try to get
13	a tratar de llevarme bien	along well.
14	Estudiantes: ¡De llevarme, de llevarme!	Students: Get along. Get along!
15	M: Bien con ella, me gusta llevarme	M: Well with her. I like to get along with
16	contigo, pero te tengo que tratar bien.	you, but I have to treat you well. Because,

17	Porque, si yo trato mal alguien, si yo trato	if I treat someone bad, if I treat someone
18	mal alguien	bad
19	Estudiante: se va a hacer a todos	Student: You will do it to everyone.
20	M: Si yo trato mal alguien. Si yo trato mal	M: If I treat someone badly. If I treat
21	alguien. Se llama discriminación.	someone badly. That's called
22	Estudiante: Se llama bullying.	discrimination.
23	M: aparte es el bullying. Este	Student: That's called bullying.
24	Estudiante (niño gritando): Cuando te	M: Something else is bullying. This
25	pegan, cuando te pegan, te maltratan	Student (boy yelling): When they hit you,
26	M: A ver, entonces, si yo me llevo bien	when they hit you, treat you bad.
27	con diferentes grupos. Va a ver diferente	M: Let's see, so, if I get along with
28	reglas. A ver, entonces, va a existir	different groups. I will see different rules.
29	respeto, tal vez, yo no me llevo con	Let's see, so, there will be respect, maybe, I
30	Aliene. Porque ella se peina así, y yo por	don't get along with Aliene. Because she
31	eso, me siento, hasta allá, en la esquina,	looks like this, and I, for that reason, I feel,
32	para no verla. ¿Si?	there, in the corner, I can't see her. Yes?
33	Estudiante: A si. Separadas.	Student: Yes. They're Separated.
34	M: Y no la puedo ver. Pero si la veo. ¿Le	M: And I can't see. But yes, I see her.
35	voy a decir? ¿Quítate?	What will I say? Get out of the way?!
36	Estudiantes: ¡No, se llama	Students: No, that's called discrimination.
37	discriminación!	M: That's called discrimination. So.
38	M: Se llama discriminación. Entonces.	Students. You have to say, Get out of the
39	Estudiantes: Se tiene que decir, quítate,	way, please.
40	por favor.	M: Yeesss. Please, can you let me see the
41	M: Siiiiii. Por favor, me das permiso de	board. You can look from one side, if you
42	ver el pizarrón. Te puedes hacer a un lado,	can't see.
43	porque no veo.	Student: Get out of the way!!!
44	Estudiante: (gritando fuerte) ¡Quítate!!!	M: No, everyone yells. Get out of the way!
45	M: No, que todo mundo grita. ¡Quítate!	Get out of the way! And, let's see. Move
46	¡Quítate! Y a ver. Mueva la cabeza, por	your head, because I can't see. Get out of
47	que no veo. Quítate! Eso, estamos	the way. That, we are violating their rights.
48	violentando sus derechos. Ella tiene	She has the right to see the board, like
49	derecho de ver el pizarrón, como todos.	everyone. Yes?
50	¿Si?	Students: (giggling)
51	Estudiantes: (riendo)	Student (boy): We have the right for
52	Estudiante (niño): Tenemos el derecho	everyone to see the board. And not say
53	de ver todos el pizarrón. Y no decirle	things like that. Everyone.
54	cosas así. Todos los de mas.	M: We have the right to study, yes? We all
55	M: ¿Tenemos derecho a estudiar, si?	come to school to do what?
56	¿Todos venimos a la escuela a que?	Students: To study!
57	Estudiantes: ¡a estudiar!	M: To study.
58	M: a estudiar	Students: To learn.
59	Estudiantes: ¡Aprender!	M: and to learn. Because it's a right that
60	M: y aprender. Porque es un derecho que	we can study and learn, yes? For example,
61	nosotros que tenemos de estudiar y	this, mmm, I don't know, come to school,
62	aprender, ¿si? Por ejemplo, esta, mmm, no	but it's a little more difficult for him/her to

63	se, vienen a la escuela, pero les cuesta un	learn, because he/she has a disability. We
64	poquito mas aprender, porque tiene un	think he/she has a disability, like with
65	discapacidad. Pensamos que tiene un	thinking. I think, I don't know, if you know
66	discapacidad, como de pensamiento. Creo	the girl, I don't know in which grade, that
67	que, no se, si conocen a la niña, no se, de	she is bad in her
68	que grado es, que esta malita de su	Students: from fifth, from fifth!
69	Estudiantes: ¡de quinto, de quinto!	M: Fifth grade, I don't remember, which
70	M: De quinto es, no me acuerdo, de que	gra--, that, ok. Azul, for example, Azul, it's
71	gra--, así bueno. Azul, por ejemplo, Azul,	difficult, for her to learn some things, so
72	le cuesta mucho, aprender algunas cosas,	her buddies have to help her. They are
73	entonces su compañeros que tenia le	support. What is support?
74	ayudaban. Eran solidarios. ¿Que es la	Student: Friendly
75	solidaridad?	M: Friendly, for example, there, That you
76	Estudiante: Amistoso.	have to be supportive. For example,
77	M: Amistoso, por ejemplo. Hay, que ser	behaving myself. If this Luis said to us, No,
78	solidario. Por ejemplo. Portándome bien.	I can't copy quickly. And I erase, and
79	Si, este Luis digamos, No, puedo copiar	Memo, has finished copying, being
80	rápido. Y ya borre, y Memo, ya copio,	supportive would be, ok, my little friend, or
81	solidaridad seria, ok, amiguito, o amigo,	friend, nothing else, he says, here, I'll lend
82	nada mas, le dices, así, te presto, mi libro,	you, my book, so that, you can do your
83	para, que puedes hacer tu tarea, eso se	homework, that's being supportive, or here,
84	llama ser solidario, o ten, copia esto, ¿ah?,	copy this, ok? Or, here I'll give you the
	o ten, te doy las respuestas, eso, ya, no es	answers, that, isn't supportive, that's
	ser solidaridad, eso se llama	called...
	Estudiantes: ¡Copia!	Students: Copying!

Further along in the lesson, at minute 8, Marisol stopped giving her own examples, the intertexts that she was referencing to teach the students about the discourses of discrimination and rights. She said to the students, “Here it says,” and she begins to read from the textbook, Civics and Ethics (2011). Although, Marisol still employed the IRE structure in this text, she used it to open a nepantla moment with her statement that the indigenous have a right to their own language, line 1. She began to do what Anzaldúa (2002) called “seeing double” and “rendering cultures transparent” that we could look in and look from another perspective to see the harm that our discourses do to others (p. 548-549). Additionally, the students were heavily engaged in a call and response (Foster, 1989) style with Marisol, yelling out answers and demonstrating engagement with their eye gaze on Marisol. However, the nepantla moment as

closed, after 8 minutes of outside examples, when she picked up the Civics and Ethics (2011) textbook and began to read directly from the text for the next ten minutes and 11 seconds. Student disengagement became evident, eyes wandered off, blank stares, and students chatted with one another. Marisol raised her voice and increased her reading speed; perhaps in an attempt to draw back the students back in to her lesson. At the end of the reading, Marisol closed the text, assigned math homework, and dismissed the students.

Although in this lesson genre, Marisol continued to employ a similar structure of talk, she changed what discourses she was drawing to engage the students in a discussion about human rights, another discourse. The students demonstrated their engagement in this lesson (lines 25-26) when the boy was yelling that when they hit you that's a violation of rights, as well as the tone and body languages that the students presented, shouting out answers that they knew were right and directing their eyes and posture toward Marisol. Moreover, they were not engaged in their listless play with pencils and notebooks, as when Marisol typically read from the textbook. Intertextuality is socially constructed between participants in speech and literacy events and that when participants are familiar with these intertexts that can meaningful communicate and learn. Marisol referenced texts that the students were familiar with, such as being able to see the board and the students, Azul and Luis (lines 70 and 77 in English). The students reaction to the intertext of Azul is clear when they yell, "from fifth, from fifth," (line 68) when Marisol states she can't remember what grade Azul is in. This action confirms their understanding and acceptance of the text as an example of the discourse of "rights." But as Marisol began to read from the textbook, she abandoned the intertextuality that had been that established, and it became impossible for the students to co-construct meaning with her and without meaning, learning doesn't happen.

Silencing Nepantla

My initial visit to Marisol's classroom was in April 2012, and I observed her teaching and discussed with her the kind of research that I wanted to do. I told her about my interest in bilingualism and bilingual education, especially in maintaining and reviving Mexican indigenous languages. It was at that moment that she shared her experience of working with Mixtec students, and that she had a boyfriend who was a Mixtec speaker. Based on my initial observations and conversations, she appeared receptive to my ideas and plans, I asked if I could return to her classroom beginning in August 2012 to observe her and work on some literacy projects. I offered to teach English lessons to the students as a form of reciprocity for letting me observe and participate in her classroom. At this point, October 8, I asked Marisol, "For tomorrow's English lesson, I want to read a multilingual book that has some Mixtec in it. Can you help me with the Mixtec?" Marisol, smiled and nodded, and answered with, "Sure!"

The next day I brought in collection of riddles called, La Lengua de La Lluvia/The Language of the Rain (2006). The book was a collection of riddles written in six different languages, three variants of Mixtec, English, Spanish, and Catalán⁶. Each riddle was accompanied by an illustration containing a hidden clue to help solve the riddle. I purchased seven copies in a used bookstore in downtown Oaxaca, for 30 pesos each, about \$2.40 US. The next day, Marisol and I read one riddle in English, Spanish, and Mixtec; the students immediately saw that the answers to the riddles were hidden in an accompanying illustration. I grouped the students in twos or threes, and they finished reading the books together. The student fought over who would hold the book first and begged to take the books home when the reading

⁶ Catalan is a Romance language spoken in northeastern Spain and part of France. The language has been banned numerous times in Spanish history, and often its status was similar to that of the indigenous languages in Mexico.

was over. We started a rotation of who would take the book home each night. I also assigned homework for the students to write a riddle in Spanish, and if they had someone who could write in Zapotec, could they try to write the riddle in Zapotec as well.

Two days later, October 10, 2012, As Marisol and I walked around the classroom collecting the students' riddles, I asked her if we could write a trilingual book, like La Lengua de La Lluvia, in English, Spanish, and Zapotec. She responded with, "These parents can't read or write in Zapotec." I thought to myself, "But they can't read or write in English, either." Instead, I offered up to Marisol some evidence that the children and their parents had some print literacy in indigenous languages. I showed her an example from a student's notebook that contained a riddle written by a student's father in Spanish and Nahuatl. She stepped away me from moment to talk with the child. She came back and said, "No, he copied that from the internet." I was silent after that, wondering why Marisol would be so dismissive to the inclusion of Zapotec. I continued to collect the students' riddles, 13 in all, which I later photographed and transcribed for analysis.

I rode the bus back to my apartment that day in a state of worry and confusion about what had happened. I had not expected Marisol to respond that way, and I realized that the project wouldn't happen the way I had hoped, by resulting in a "victory narrative" (Lather, 2007, p. 11). I did return to observe the classroom until Marisol's last working day in December, but I chose not to continue with the creation of a book in Spanish and English. Additionally, school closed during the Day of the Dead holidays, October 30 to November 2, and for another week in November due to teacher protests. I was also gone for ten days to present at a conference, and Marisol's contract was not renewed, so her last working day at the school was December 14, 2012. This time frame made it difficult to start up another project in this classroom. So, I turned

back to CDA in an attempt to understand or deconstruct our final linguistic interaction about the riddle book.

Understanding Silence

“What [is being said] in [the texts] is always said against the background of what is unsaid – what is made explicit is always grounded in what is left implicit” (Fairclough, 2010, p. 17). I turned to SFL’s appraisal framework to look at how Marisol and I used language to evaluate the Zapotec literacy of Julissa’s father (Martin & Rose, 2003). Marisol did not explicitly state a negative attitude toward Zapotec; instead her evaluation was implicit in the phrase that “he copied that off the internet.” The verb choice “copied” may appear benign at first; however, when it is highlighted against the larger context of the larger classroom pedagogy which involved a good amount of copying from Spanish language textbooks, it appeared ironic and hypocritical. In my observations, the students were validated and rewarded based on their ability to quickly and accurately copy in Spanish from the textbooks; however, the Zapotec literacy knowledge held by the father is dismissed due to the same action.

To make sense of this contradiction, I turned to a subtype of the appraisal function, judgment, to show how Marisol’s words were based on what had been said before about indigenous literacy. As Martin and White, while referencing Bakhtin, (2005) claimed,

All verbal communication, whether written or spoken, is ‘dialogic’ in that to speak or write is always to reveal the influence of, refer to, or to take up in some way, what has been said/written before, and simultaneously to anticipate the responses of actual, potential or imagined readers/listeners. (p. 92)

In exploring how Marisol’s ideology about literacy was shaped by societal influence, I began searching for articles about literacy in the local newspaper, and I found an article regarding the

outcome of a recent literacy initiative among indigenous Oaxacans.

The results of the six-year program confirm that three-quarters of Oaxaca municipalities are illiterate and more than 236,000 Oaxacans will never be literate because they only speak an indigenous language or because they appear to have a mental, visual, or auditory disability. (Las Noticias, 2010)

We may interpret Marisol's conclusion was based on a view of literacy that decoding letters and writing words as the way to be literate (Street, 2003). My definition of literacy, in contrast, affirms the claims of the NLS movement that posits a literacy that "relates to the increasing multiplicity and integration of significant modes of meaning-making, where the textual is also related to the visual, the audio, the spatial, the behavioral (Cazden et al., 1996, p. 64). My attempt to write a children's book in three languages reflected my ideological and pedagogical stance of multiliteracies.

As I looked at how genre and style could have produced this outcome, I turned Bazerman's (2004) claim that classroom "genres are strongly shaped by the teacher's decisions of what should be written and how" (p. 332). As this took place in Marisol's classroom, the interaction may be seen as a conversation between two educators.

Me: Marisol, do you think we could write a trilingual book like *Lengua de La Lluvia* in Spanish, English, and Zapotec.

Marisol: No, the parents can't read or write in Zapotec.

Me: Julissa's father has written some Zapotec in her notebook.

Marisol: (walks over to Julissa's desk and looks at her notebook) No, he copied that off the internet.

As the classroom teacher, Marisol was able to make the final decision regarding the inclusion of Zapotec in the book of riddles; she also concluded that the parents of her students were not

literate in Zapotec. As the classroom pedagogy emphasized literacy as a system of skills to be mastered, this “mere literacy” results in an “authoritarian kind of pedagogy” that created a strict system of what counted as literate and/or literacy (Cazden et al, 1996, p. 64).

Drawing on the concept of intertextuality, especially to the texts mentioned, I looked at connections among the children’s book, Julissa’s notebook, and the internet. I referenced the children’s book and Julissa’s notebook as sources of authority to validate my intent to include written Zapotec in the classroom; Marisol referenced the internet and copying to invalidate my claim that the parents had some print literacy in Zapotec. This was even more ironic given my previous discussions with Marisol and her language learning experiences of English: Marisol had stated that online chats and translators had greatly helped her to learn English, and I had stated the same regarding my efforts to learn Spanish. Instead of referring to her efforts in dialogue with speakers of English, her ideological stance toward Zapotec aligned with Bakhtin’s (1984) extreme monologism. In this ideological construction the “the existence...of another consciousness with equal rights and equal responsibilities, another I with equal rights” is denied (p. 292). The other “person remains wholly and merely an object of consciousness, and not another consciousness” (p. 292). In a monologic interaction, one interlocutor is “deaf to other’s response, does not expect it and does not acknowledge in it any force” (p. 292). In the end this kind of dialogue will be final, the “ultimate word,” and “it closes down the represented world and represented persons” (p. 293).

Recalling, Anzaldúa’s explanation of *Nepantla* as a state where we see how we violate another’s way of thinking and being, Marisol could not see her violations of her stated literacy practices. That may be because of how her role was constructed through the genre of the authoritarian classroom pedagogy, a role to evaluate and judge what is literacy, not necessarily to

change what counts as literacy. As Marisol had said during a follow-up interview regarding this exchange, “We don’t need to work with the indigenous languages where the people don’t speak the language.” It appears that even though the students in the city had retained various repertoires of knowledge regarding Zapotec, she didn’t recognize this as sufficient to qualify one as a “speaker” of the language. In a follow-up interview, Marisol responded to my questions about what constitutes literacy and why indigenous languages are not used as much in the city of Oaxaca in this way:

Los maestros de la ciudad, pregunte por qué deben incluso intentar fomentar el uso de idiomas indígenas, ya que no tiene un propósito, ¿qué es lo bueno? Lo que ellos no entienden, y que yo no entendía bien fue que el idioma indígena es una cuestión cultural desde hace miles de años. Pero los padres no tienen la capacidad, ya sea para entender o, por ejemplo, este niño habla un idioma indígena, pero él es especial por eso, por lo que ahora, en la ciudad, los niños tienen que hablar inglés porque es algo que les ayudará, una manera que ellos ganan dinero, o algunos dirán que las lenguas indígenas son hermosas pero no van a ganar dinero. Hay maestros que vienen y yo lo sé que hay maestros, que vienen de pueblos lejanos, cuando están a dentro del salón, ya en la ciudad, se les olvida de donde vienen y no, y los desprecian, vamos a cambiar, no, porque eso a mí no me sirvió, porque yo sufrí mucho cuando era indígena, y yo no sabía, entonces ellos cambian completamente y meten estas ideas en dentro de los niños.

Teachers in the city, ask why they should even try to encourage the use of indigenous languages, because it doesn’t have a purpose, what is it good for? What they don’t understand, and that I didn’t understand either was that the indigenous language is a cultural thing from thousands of years ago. But the parents don’t have the ability either to

understand or for example, this child speaks an indigenous language, but he is special for that, so now, in the city, the kids have to speak English because it's something will help them, a way that they will earn money, or some will say that indigenous languages are beautiful, but they are not going to earn them money. There are teachers that come, and I know, that there are teachers who come from distant pueblos, when they are inside the classroom, in the city, they forget where they come from, and no, and they are treated like they don't belong, we're going to change, they say, because this isn't doing me any good, because when I was indigenous, I suffered a lot, and I didn't realize it, so they change completely, and they put this idea inside the children.

Three issues are fore fronted here: what constitutes a speaker of language (a fluent speaker), what is the value of a language, and who is to blame, at least in part, for absence of the indigenous language use in the city. Addressing the first issues, what is a speaker, I turn to Blommaert's & Rampton's (2011) ideas of superdiversity and linguistic repertoires, and I posit that the simplistic idea of 'you speak Zapotec' must be further complicated and deconstructed. I argue that language and literacy pedagogies and those who are enacting them would fare better to not separate languages, into narrow categories of Spanish, English, or Zapotec, or to judge students as fluent or not speakers of those languages. Instead, we should look at how linguistic knowledge is dispersed among its users, and by doing this we can further expand what constitutes a speaker of a language (Moore, 2013). This is especially applicable to less commonly spoken or endangered languages, such as Zapotec, which change substantially from community to community. However, the consequences of Marisol's perspective, or a perspective that defines languages as singular stable entities or speakers through rigid classifications as fluent or not, result in the enactment of classroom pedagogies that have been presented here, for

example the copying of words from textbooks and instruction that only includes acceptable 'languages.' Secondly, evaluating the value of language is equally as complicated as evaluating what is a language and who is a speaker of that language. Marisol points out that indigenous languages have little function in our globalized economy, which in some ways is true; however, what isn't referenced is the value of languages to cognitive development, identity, and familiar relationships, all of which have value. Finally, Marisol's words, "They put this idea in the mind of the children," gives the impression that the indigenous teachers who choose to hide their indigenous ways and languages are at fault, at least partially, for students not wanting to speak an indigenous language or for other teachers not including indigenous languages in the classroom. This perspective leaves out issues of institutional power that lead to the loss of non-dominant languages, and the consequence of this perspective is that speakers of indigenous languages are left on their own to learn and pass down their languages. As in the classroom, Zapotec was something that was left at home, and it had no place in the classroom.

Discussion

Through Marisol's use of the word, dialog, as a way to explain to the students how to change a joke to an interaction between students, and her construction of intertextuality to provide meaning to the words "rights" and "discrimination," she demonstrated her ability to step away from the discourses that valued autonomous views of literacy. However, what interaction or discourse would encourage Marisol to break the authoritative "tradition of silence" regarding indigenous languages in the classroom (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 81)? Anzaldúa (1990) claimed that discursive silences "hollow us," and I liken this hollowness to an ideological absence, the inability to see something differently because of the lack of a conscious alternative (p.132). In this literacy event, using another's language may have offered up an alternative ideology;

however, at times using another's language may contradict beliefs held in our own. To use another's language we must think in that language or "adopt the ideology of the people whose language it is and to be 'inhabited' by their discourses" (Anzaldúa, 1990, p. xxii). For Marisol to recognize Zapotec literacy may have contradicted what she had learned was acceptable classroom speech and ways of being in the classroom. As Lopez-Gopar (2009) argued,

Narrow views of literacy have contributed to the discrimination and stigmatization of indigenous groups in Mexico. Their illiteracy has been regarded as a disease that needs to be eradicated, and for which indigenous groups need all the help they can get. Indigenous groups are literate in many different modalities and have created different designs throughout history. They do not want to be "cured." (p. 170)

But I want to briefly provide an alternative reading of this last exchange. What if Marisol was right? What if the parents were illiterate, print illiterate, in Zapotec. For instance, in referring back to text, the riddle, I referenced it as evidence that the parents did have "some" literacy. While I explicitly referenced this text, I was much more implicitly relying on some other texts to justify my argument, such as texts produced by the New Literacy Studies and A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies. For intertextuality to be constructed, there must be an occurrence of the intertext in a social interaction, and then the intertext must be recognized (Bloome & Robertson, 1993). How could Marisol react and accept my reference to these more implicit texts to create a new meaning of literacy, if she was unaware that these texts, The New Literacies and A Pedagogy of Multiliteracies, even existed? In returning to Anzaldúa's claim that in *nepantla*, we understand how we violate someone's else's' way of knowing, in this interaction it could be that my way of knowing the world, or perhaps literacy, is different from how Marisol knows literacy in her

world. In this view, my ways of knowing and being violated Marisol's ways of knowing and being.

In all, I have attempted to infuse Anzaldúa's theoretical construct of *nepantla* with the methodological frameworks of critical discourse analysis and linguistic ethnography. Drawing on *nepantla* was a way the teacher, the students, and I could challenge a tradition of not including indigenous languages in the classroom. I read the data looking for moments where *nepantla* could have happened, turning to CDA and SFL to offer up a linguistic and discursive explanation as to why it failed. I have argued that the pedagogy that was available to Marisol, and the lack of alternatives, was one discursive tool that contributed to the absence of indigenous languages in the classroom. Although, this project did not end as I had imagined, I agree with Prieto's and Villenas' (2012) view that

Nepantla in our classrooms signal uncertain terrain, crossings, moving between identities, and confronting and contesting power—precisely the agency of our everyday lives.

Pedagogies within/from *nepantla* reveal fruitful tensions for exploring how we might experience transformative teaching and learning (p. 425).

In contexts like these I imagine that the fruitful tension to explore is how intertextuality may be contrasted when researcher, teacher, and student may draw on very different texts to make sense and explain their world. Or how do we introduce texts that may contradict or challenge strongly held ideologies? In this Oaxacan context, it seems difficult to expose public school educators to new ways to think about literacy, seeing that most do not attend teacher preparation programs. And although I've lectured at the local public university in their teacher preparation courses using New Literacy and multiliteracy frameworks, and the students are picking up these ideas and wanting to apply them in their future classrooms, these same students shared the sad reality

that they will never be public school teachers because they can't inherit or afford to purchase a teaching position.

Taking these ideas to a wider context, we may see some similarities among the struggles that teachers in the United States are currently facing. While they may be exposed to new ideas about literacy in their teacher preparation programs, they may feel unsure about putting those ideas into practice for fear of rebuttal by supervisors or student failure on standardized testing. It leaves me wondering how educators can think against what they know or act against what they are told? As a researcher, it leaves me in another nepantla space, wondering how should I act from now on in sites like these? As a teacher educator, I wonder about how to teach for and through nepantla, and what will be consequences and outcomes of nepantla in classrooms?

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CHAPTER 4

A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF GISELA'S FAMILY STORY: A CONSTRUUAL OF DEPORTATION, ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS, AND LITERACY⁷

Gisela was a delightful, unforgettable student who loved art, hated math, and bore a striking resemblance to Frida Kahlo. Gisela was born in northern Mexico; she and her family had moved to Georgia to find work in the poultry industry. Now, Gisela lived with her mom, dad, and two younger siblings who were US citizens by birth. In 2008/2009, Gisela was a fifth grader in my classroom, and during that time she wrote a family story that narrated the events of her mother's arrest, court appearance, and deportation to Mexico. Gisela's family story is set in semi-rural North Georgia, beginning in 2008 and ending in 2009, and it forefronts the experience of Mexican immigrants. Vital to understanding her story are some facts about immigration to this part of the US. Set in the state of Georgia, the American South has a long history of racism and prejudice toward non-Whites. From slavery to the removal of the Cherokee and Creeks in the 1830s, Georgia has a political history that has maintained White social groups in positions of power.

From the early 1980s until 2000, Georgia farmers and industrial plant owners had encouraged immigration by actively seeking immigrant and migrant labor from Latin America, specifically Mexico (Guthey, 2001). The pay for these workers was and is low, with Latinos in the American South earning an average annual \$16,000, 60% of what White, Southern industrial workers earn (Kochhar, Suro, & Tafoya, 2005). The Georgia economy prospered immensely from this cheap labor, fulfilling a labor shortage in construction, completing the projects for the

⁷ In press at *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*

1996 Olympic Games, and increasing production in the carpet and poultry industry (Olsson, 2013). However, when the ‘great recession’ began around 2007, Georgia’s economy began a rapid decline; the housing ‘bubble’ burst, and many homes dropped significantly in value, in turn lowering the state’s property tax basis. As the housing market declined, related industries such as carpet and construction were also negatively impacted. This effect continued, even affecting schools, where class sizes increased and hiring freezes were enacted. By 2007, these same agricultural and industrial concerns now had a labor surplus, and one solution that the county devised to rid the area of surplus labor was a law called 287g, which allowed police officers to act as immigration officials (US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2013). In turn, police rapidly targeted anyone of ‘Mexican’ appearance, often detaining people for minor infractions, while checking their immigrant status, upon finding that some immigrants were not properly documented, immigrants were ordered to deport, or detained in our county’s new, privately funded detention center, built just one mile from our school. Gisela’s mother was stopped for a traffic violation, a broken tail-light; the local police discovered her undocumented status, arrested and jailed her, and eventually ordered her to deport.

Gisela's family story

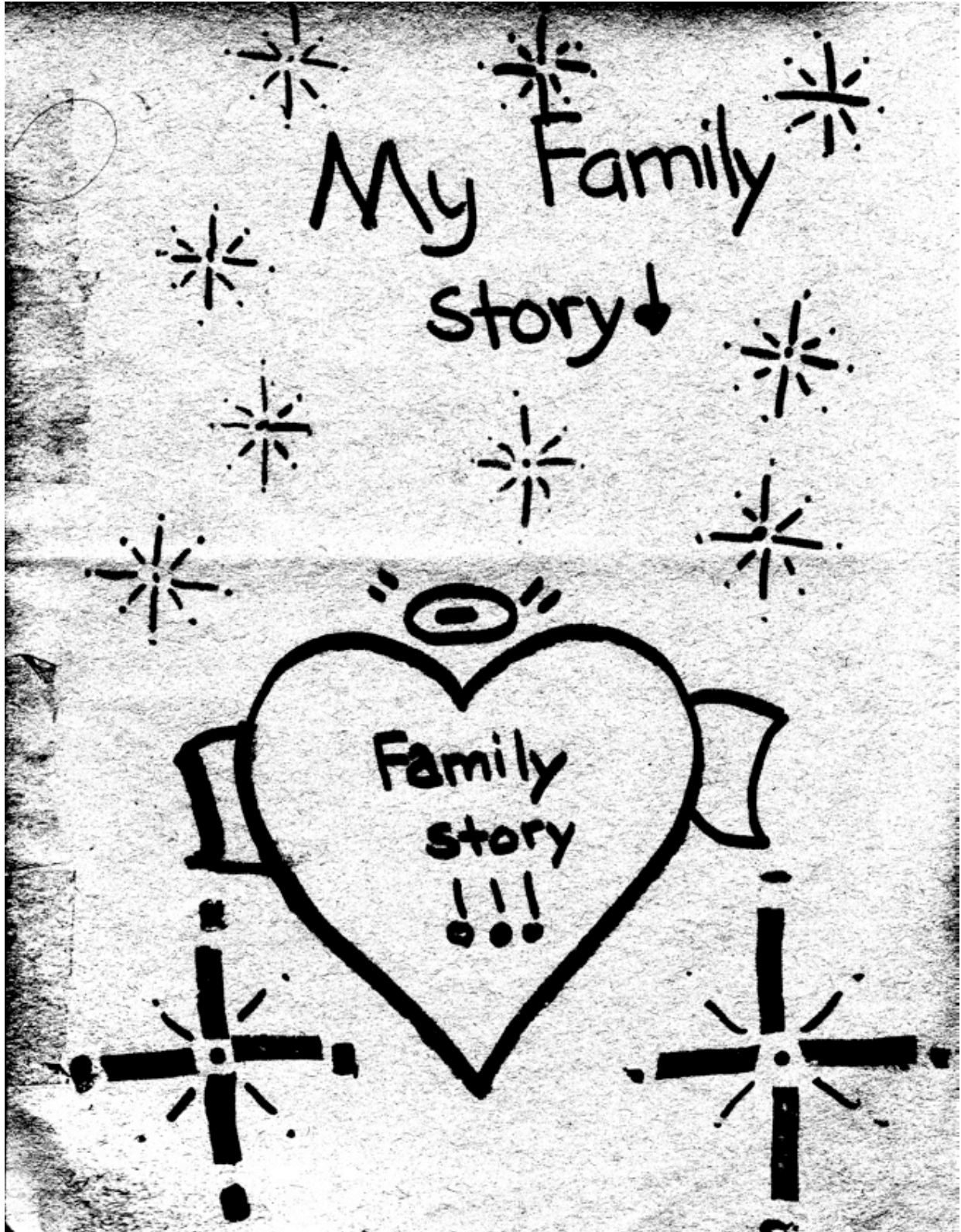


Figure 1

It all started one morning. When I was dressing up for school. I went to my mom's room to get something. And my mom said if she can fix my hair better. I said no because I was mad at her at something but I don't remember why.

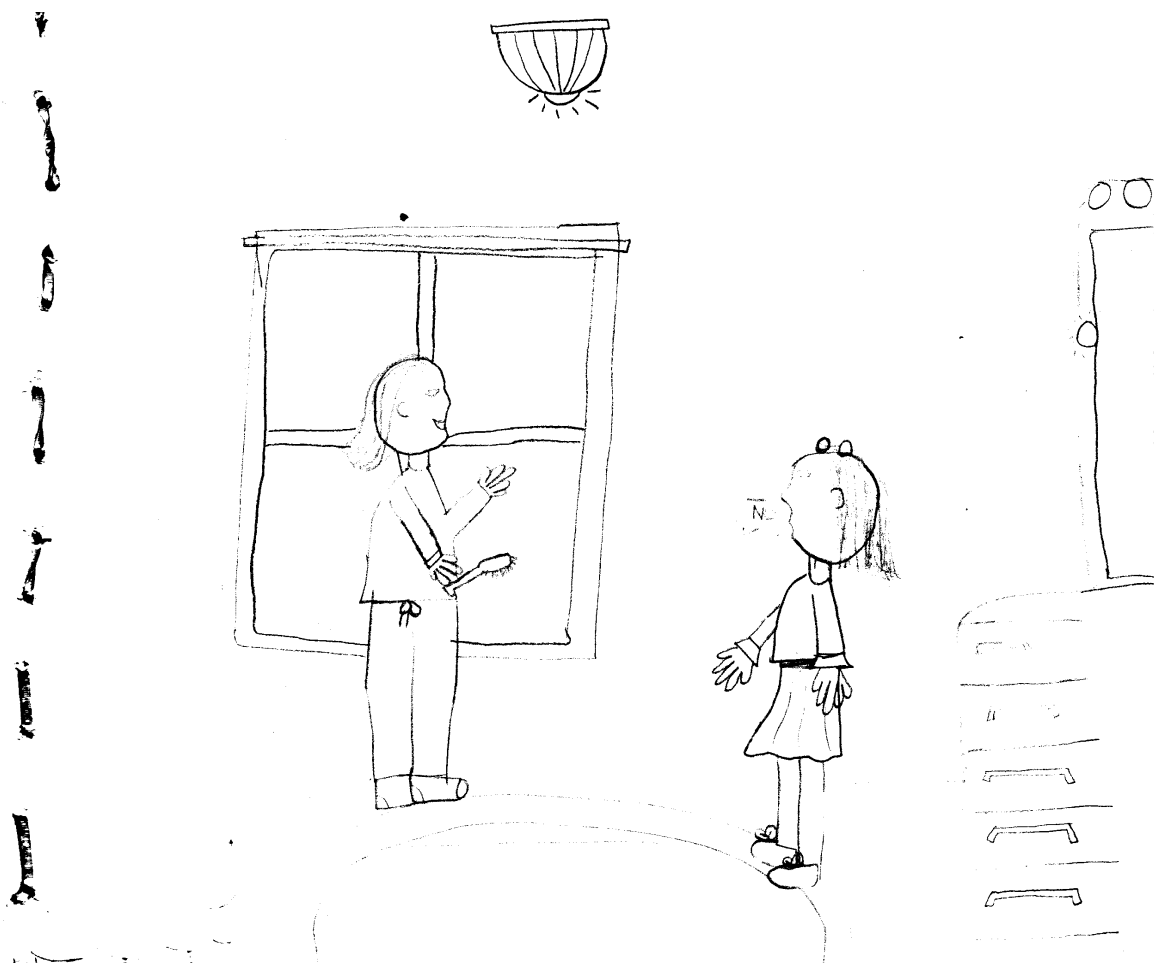


Figure 2

I went to school all mad at her. I was in class I filled so sad about getting mad of my mom. So I made her a card to tell her sorry. When got home I was looking for my mom but I could not find her. I found dad so asked his were is my mom. He said she was not here because the police got her without a license so she got a ticket.

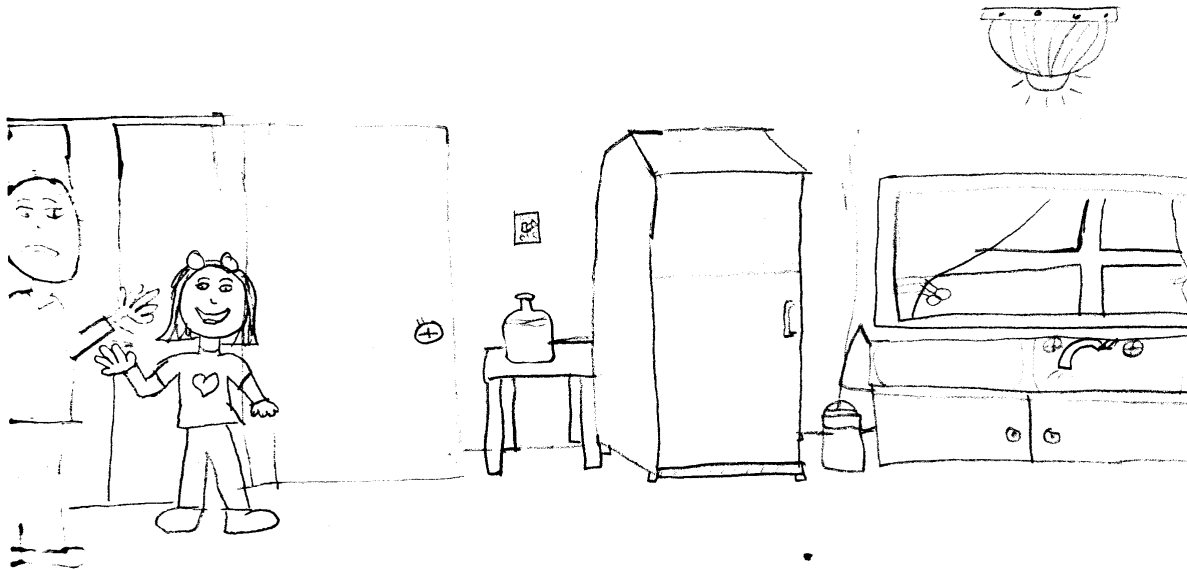


Figure 3

She had to go to jail. My dad was going to leave us with my mom's sister which is my aunt. Because he was going to pay my mom's ticket to get her out. When go there they told my dad my mom can not get her out because she was on the immigration list so they were going to take her back to Mexico.

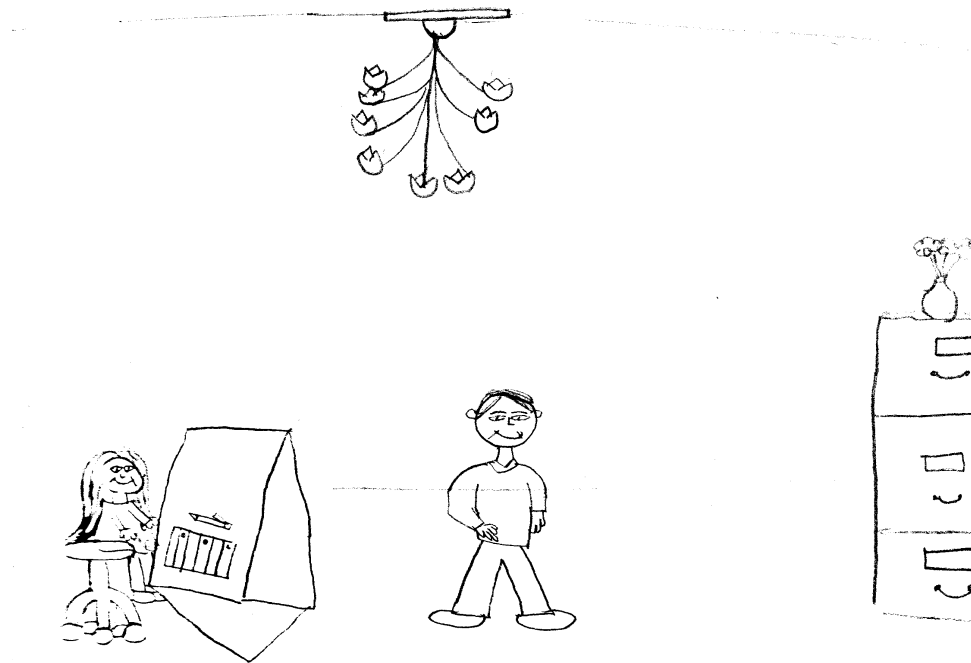


Figure 4

My dad could not do anything about it now. When he told me all that I started to cry so bad and saying why did I get mad of her this morning and why did they not take me instead of her. My dad was crying too but then he stopped crying and said be strong. "Yo no voy a darne por vencido. Yo voy a intentar de sacar la te lo pormeto."

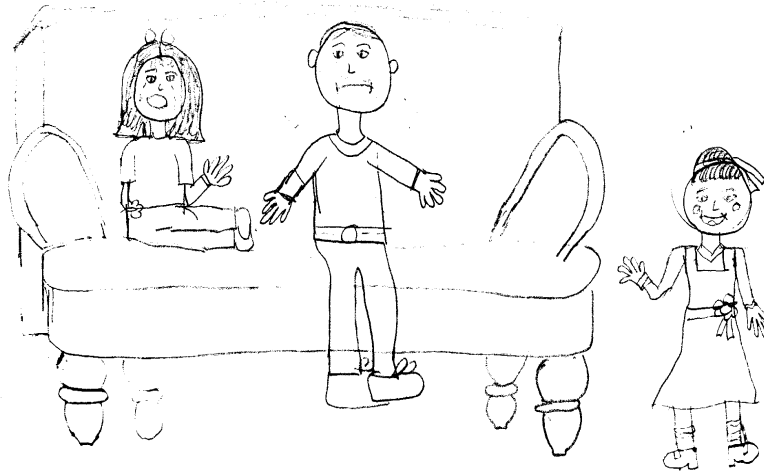


Figure 5

Then I told my sister, she was crying too. We all went back home. At night my brother started to say, "Donde esta mama?" We told him she was at work because he would not understand my mom was in jail.

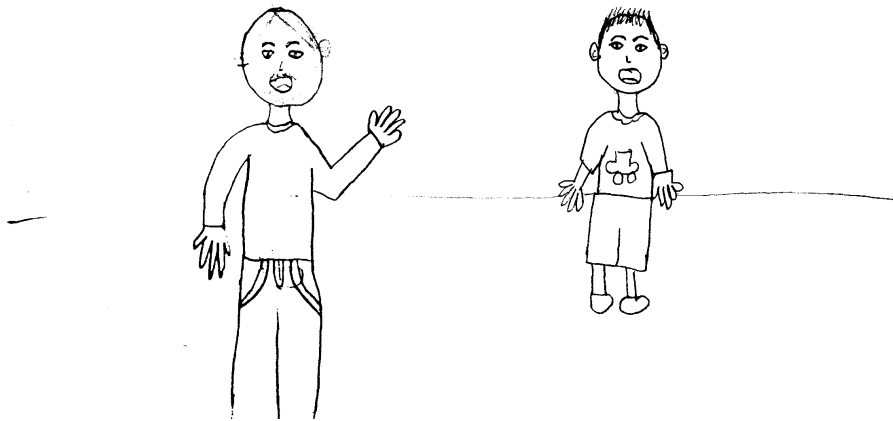


Figure 6

My dad did not sleep all night long because he was looking for lawyers. We woke up so early like at three o'clock because my dad had to go work at that time. So he took us to my aunt's house to sleep there because there was nobody at home at that time.

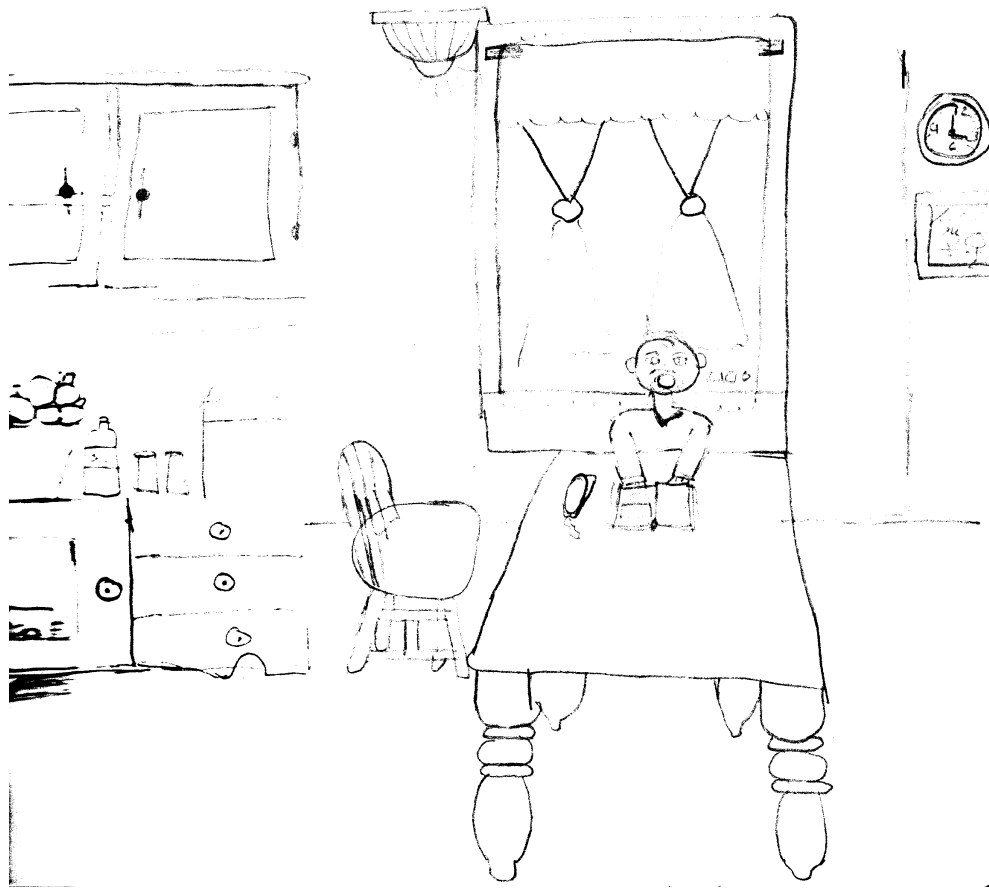


Figure 7

One whole week pasted and it was Saturday morning my dad took us to my aunt's house to play. It was Jose's birthday today that's why we went her house I helped my aunt make the cake. When the party started I kind of felt bad because I said to my self why should I be having fun if my mom was sad and locked up. So I started to cry and told my dad to go.

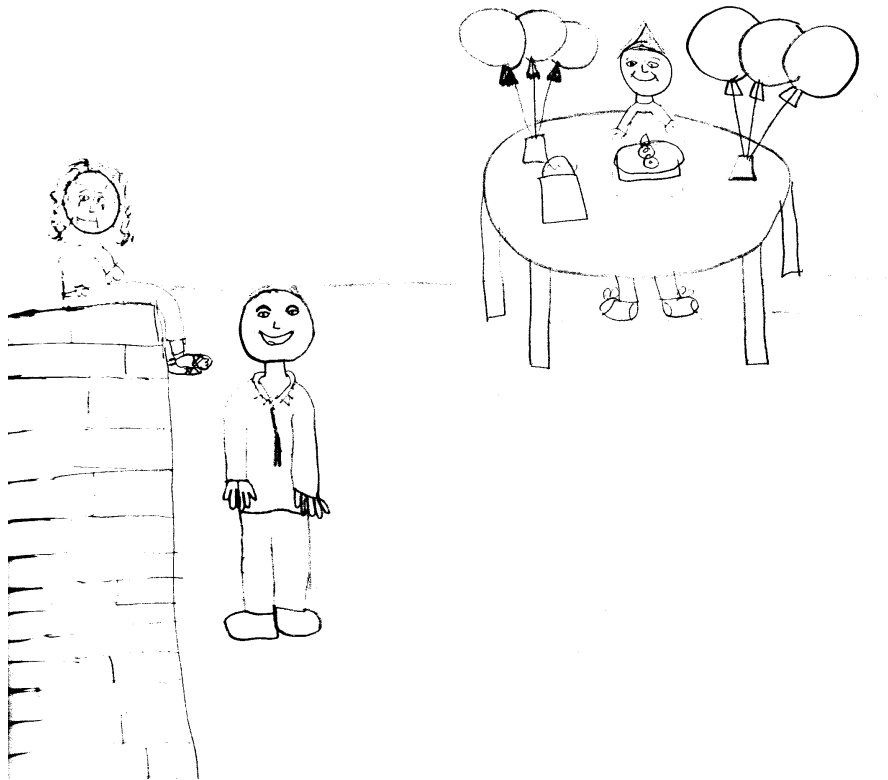


Figure 8

Every time I called her she was crying, so that made me cry, too. One month passed, and my dad called again to see if they would let my mom out of jail. They said, "Yes, but you have to pay 100,000,000 to get out." All of my uncles got out their money out of the bank to help. My dad went to get her out of jail. When my dad came back, too. So I hugged her and told, "Sorry." Now, I was happy about that now.

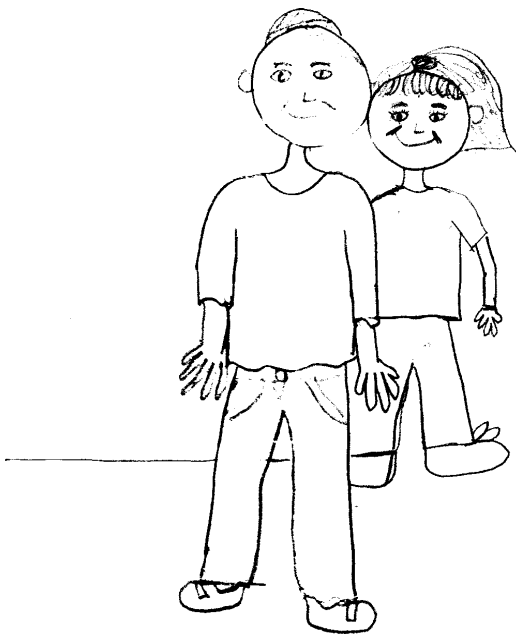


Figure 9

Seven months passed and my mom had to go to court at 9:00 AM. I was in school. They called me out for check-out. I asked my, "Where are we going?" She said, "Somewhere." We took about one hour to get to court. I said, "How much do I have to wait for you?" She, "No, you are going with me." I said, "OK."

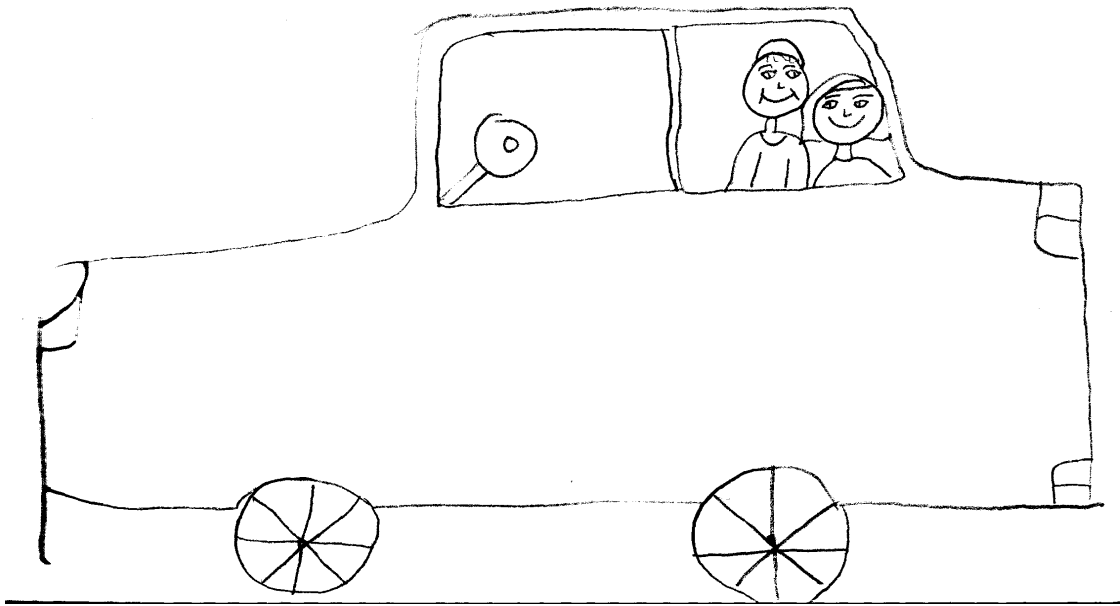


Figure 10

We went to the courtroom. They were not letting them get out. One man they took there, they took his children away from them. My mom was next, but they judge said he was taking a break. My mom went back to the car shad said to stay here. I said, "Why?" She said, "Because if I go back to jail, they will get you." So I stayed, My uncle said, "Are you hungry?" I said, "Yes." So we went to get some food.

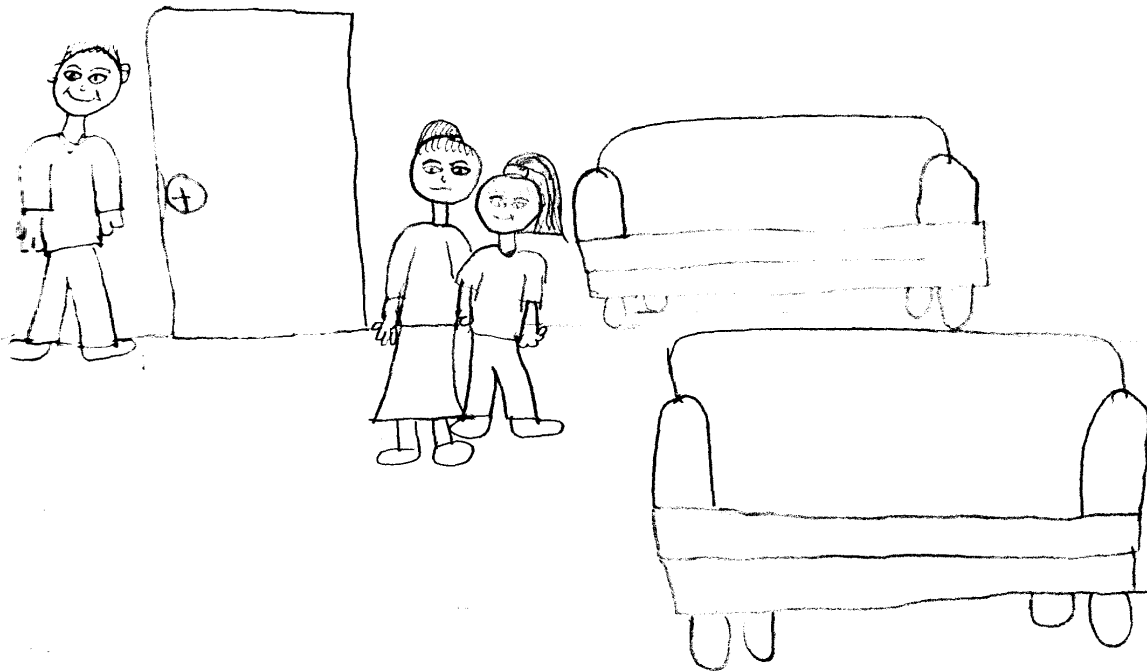


Figure 11

When we got back my mom came back, too. I knew that my mom did not go to jail. I asked, "How many days until you have to leave the USA?" She said, "Until May the 13th." My mom did not like how many days they gave her because that was not enough days to pay all of my uncles' money back and my dad would have to stay to work and pay back. I was sad, too, because I wanted for all of us to go, too. But at least they not take my mom away from me!!!



Figure 12

Disrupting discourses with Student Narratives

When 287g was passed, I was teaching fifth grade classroom in a P-5 public, elementary school in a North Georgia county that had seen tremendous growth in the Latino population over the past 20 years. Our student population was majority Latino, as was my classroom, and most of my students had family ties to Mexico. In 2008, I heard classroom talk of arrests, deportation, and missing parents. Outside the classroom, I heard anti-immigrant propaganda on the radio and read about the necessity of deportation in our local newspapers. Suddenly, our Latino population had become suspect, and they were to blame for our state's economic recession, crime, and state drug issues. Our county sheriff fueled this discourse with statements like the following.

Now at this same time, ____ County is seeing a dramatic *increase* in our Hispanic population, both legal and illegally, and unfortunately we're also seeing an *increase* in Hispanic involvement in many of our areas of crime. Most alarming was in the areas which most consider our major quality of life issues, that being drugs, gangs and violent crime. In fact, over a two- to three-year period, we saw *illegal immigrants disproportionately* involved in these areas. Examples included close to *90 percent of the volume of illegal drugs being brought in this community was being brought in from Mexico by illegal aliens*. (This is not to say individual cases reflected 90 per cent, but the actual volume of seizures.)

Our homicides during a two to three year period reflected one-third to one-half committed by illegal aliens. (In most of these cases the victims were also in the country illegally, many were drug or gang related.) And our gangs, although difficult to determine immigration status because of their age, are *more than 80 per cent Mexican street gangs*. (Cronic, 2008)

The sheriff construed illegal aliens as criminals, murderers, gang members, and drug dealers, and he equated increased crime and homicide rate to the presence of *illegal aliens*. Then, he used this construal to justify the removal of the cause, illegal immigrants, to prevent further crime, hence the need for 287g.

As this harmful discourse was circulating, I realized that my classroom literacy pedagogies didn't have a 'space' to include this kind of knowledge (Baker, 2011). My literacy pedagogy was narrow and dominated by standards-based instruction that would prepare students to pass state exams. One clear example of this was the Georgia Writing Test that my fifth graders were required to take each year. Our school had mandated three mock exams be administered prior to the 'real' one, which were meant to prepare students to pass the state exam. These extremely controlled literacy moments were shaped by timers, dividers between students, secret writing prompts, no choice in topic, along with strict rules, no outside texts, and very narrow accepted responses. For example, for the state exam, I read the following from the examiner's manual.

Your paper will be read by persons like your teachers and scored on how well you express your ideas. In order for your paper to be scored properly, it is very important that you write on the assigned topic. Papers that consist of poetry, musical lyrics, or rap will not be scored. Additionally, papers that are offensive in language or content will not be scored. Papers must be written in English only. (GA DOE, 2013, p. 18)

Over the years of administering this test, I had become concerned about what was considered acceptable written responses. Especially, when I saw a Mexican American student reference La Llorona, The Wailing Woman, in her response to the topic, worried that it would be considered non-scorable for including Spanish. This 'narrowing' of responses was a discourse that I wanted

to work against. I wanted to *open* up writing to include more responses, stories, languages, and thoughts, and I turned to the ideas found in critical literacy studies to help me do this.

Moving toward critical literacy

Unlike what was called for in the Georgia Writing Test, I knew that good writing pedagogy included authentic tasks, student choice of topic, space for multiple revisions, options for publishing, and writing that builds on students' background knowledge (Calkins, 1986; Jones, 2006). Specifically, The New Literacy Studies (NLS) helped me further situate literacy, more specifically writing in this case, as a social practice, instead of a set of skills to be mastered (Street, 2003). I moved away from viewing 'good' writing as the ability to write correct sentences and paragraphs with topic sentences and supporting details, and I moved toward 'good' writing as a practice that was goal-oriented, communicative, context-based, and peer involved. After shifting these thoughts, assessing students as 'good' writers based on 'mock' writing tests or a singular writing score became impossible. In place of this, students' writing was evaluated with the students during its creation, revision, and final sharing.

Also, I was inspired by the idea of multiliteracies (Cazden et al., 1996) instead of a singular literacy, there are many ways that people are literate, in math, in computers, in various languages, music, sports, etc. I began to encourage students to include more forms of writing, expression, and knowledge. This resulted in students using digital tools to publish, including drawings or photographs with their writing, and writing in more than one language and/or dialect (Street, 2003). Combining these elements with questions of perspective, positioning, and power (Jones, 2006), molded a critical literacy pedagogy that I could practise and believe that those practices would help students become and be seen as the good readers and writers that I knew they were.

Student narratives in the classroom

Fore-fronting this critical literacy pedagogy, I prepared our unit on narrative writing, and I turned to an activity that I had read about called—The Family Stories Writing Project (Dworin, 2006). A family story is a story or a tale, true or false, that is often told among family or relatives. I sent home a bilingual letter to parents and guardians explaining that the students needed to collect a family story. First, students were to listen to a story and take notes, then follow up with questions to the storyteller to fill in any missing details. We practiced interviewing and note taking skills in the classroom among the students; students asked questions of one another and attempted to construct a short story based on those answers. They returned to their interviewees when they couldn't remember the content or needed more information.

Narratives and nepantla

Family stories are kinds of narratives. And student narratives have long been an essential part of classroom literacy and writing pedagogies. As previously stated, I desperately wanted to disrupt the discourse that said, 'Passing the writing test means you are a good writer. Failing the writing exam means you are a bad writer.' Using narrative elements is part of Georgia's Language Arts standards, and narrative prompts are one of three prompts given on the Georgia Writing Test. More importantly, personal narratives or stories are ways of making sense of personal experience and sharing that experience with others. Literacy researchers argue that narratives are an important element in critical literacy pedagogy because they can be used to disrupt discourses that maintain harmful positioning of students in and outside of the classroom (Jones, 2006; Rogers, 2013; Rymes, 2003).

To help me create this discursive disruption of accepted literacy forms, I turned to Gloria Anzaldúa's theoretical construct of nepantla (Anzaldúa, 1987). Gloria Anzaldúa was a Chicana

theorist, author, and activist scholar who drew on an indigenous concept of nepantla to explain how people could change the discourses they lived in. She demonstrated that discourses could be changed by writing ‘a new story to explain the world, and our participation in it’ (1987, p. 103) Through her writing, she showed how she could situate herself and her readers in a state of nepantla, a—

... place where different perspectives come into conflict and where you question the basic ideas, tenets, and identities inherited from your family, your education, and your different cultures. Nepantla is the zone between changes where you struggle to find equilibrium between the outer expression of change and your inner relationship to it. Living between cultures results in ‘seeing’ double, first from the perspective of one culture, then from the perspective of another. Seeing from two or more perspectives simultaneously renders those cultures transparent. (Anzaldúa, 2002, p. 548–549)

She called people who want to change social discourses, ‘nepantleras’; those who create a space where ideas may collide, resulting in readers or listeners of nepantleras having to judge the morality of the discourses we hear, see, and live. As nepantleras, my students and I took up this kind of work, to show conflicts in our community discourses by writing new stories to explain our world. I hoped that those stories would help us and others to see through our constructed society, to undo discourses that devalue groups of people, and would help others to this do by reading our new truths about our community. In this case, Gisela’s narrative countered the discourse, *an illegal immigrant is a dangerous criminal*, with, *it’s my mom who is an illegal immigrant*.

Reasoning that my students were from marginalized backgrounds and their knowledge was often silenced and/or actively dismissed in classroom literacy pedagogies, family stories

offered me a remedy, an avenue to bring student lives into the classroom. Once, students had brought their lives into the classroom, it became essential to talk about their lives, to critique the negative discourses they encountered, and to potentially rewrite those discourses and share them with others. Using narratives also prompts narrators, the students, to position themselves in our society, to make judgments based of their view of the world, and write themselves into it (Rogers, 2013). By writing stories, my students could position themselves in the discourses that circulated in our community, and as well as reposition themselves to counter discourses that were harming them.

As Rymes (2003) claimed, ‘What a story can become is contingent on when and where a narrative occurs, who is eliciting it, and who is listening’ (p. 385). And Gisela’s family story is a key example of that. Soon after the family story assignment went home, Gisela came to me privately to discuss an idea for her family story. She told me that her mother was in jail because she didn’t have ‘papers’ and asked if she could write about that. I answered that she could write about whatever she wanted, and the next day she came to school with a hand-written story detailing her mother’s arrest. For the next several weeks, she revised it with peers, her dad, and me. She typed it, printed it, and illustrated each page of her story. One salient suggestion I made during the revision process was to add some Spanish. However, Gisela was a reluctant Spanish writer, so I encouraged her to only write the dialog among the characters, her family members, in Spanish, reasoning that the actual dialog she was attempting to reproduce had happened in Spanish.

Critical discourse analysis

I turned to critical discourse analysis (CDA) to make sense of what happened in my classroom during this project and to say something meaningful about Gisela’s writing and

drawings. While there are many forms of analysis and theories that can be used to conduct a CDA, generally it is an approach to research that draws on critical social theories of the world along with systematic language analysis to reveal how power shapes our societies through discourse (Fairclough, 2003; Rogers, 2011). The critical part of critical discourse analysis means to take a look at our institutions, practices, cultures, languages, and everything else, and ask why is it like this? How did it become this way? Who created this way of doing things? Who benefits because the world has been made this way? Who is being excluded because things are this way? And how can I change this? In this context, I asked the following critical questions: How did people come to be called illegal? Who was creating the dangerous illegal immigrant discourse? Who benefited from this discourse? Who was being harmed by this discourse? What could I do to change it?

Discourse means language, actions, thoughts, histories, and silence (Rogers et al., 2005). Discourses tell us how to behave and speak in school, in a park, or at the doctor. Discourses make us think the way we do; we judge people and ideas based on the discourses that we hold to be true. Discourses are so intricately embedded in our everyday lives that we fail to recognize the power and shaping of most of them. Moreover, we often fail to see how those discourses exclude and harm people. As literacy educators we can question discourses by closely examining language and recognizing that language is never neutral; it is always ‘caught up in political, social, racial, economic, religious, and cultural formations’ (Rogers et al., 2005, p. 369). Narratives are one way that people use language to construct discourses, so I turned to narrative analysis to display how Gisela’s narrative created a new truth, showed power, suggested morale, and revealed human agency (Rymes & Wortham, 2011). Drawing on Anzaldúa’s *nepantla*, I read the tension in Gisela’s text as a *nepantla* state, looking specifically for how she was writing a

‘new story’ to explain her world and how her story created a collision of discourses for readers. To understand the linguistic choices that Gisela made in her story and how those choices contributed to the powerful construction of her narrative, I turned to some elements in Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) to show how language can be chosen and used to create truth (Martin & Rose, 2003).

Making Sense of Gisela’s Narrative

As I set out to make sense of how Gisela’s story contributed to my classroom pedagogy, to my understanding of her world, immigration, and deportation, I began to ask questions of Gisela’s work. For instance, what is Gisela’s text doing? How does immigration and 287(g) function? What discourses does Gisela’s story reproduce and/or counter? What are the specific narrative elements that helped her do this? What grammatical and linguistic structures did she draw on? After answering those questions, I organized my responses according to four areas: a construction of truth; power; a moral tale, and revealing agency (Rymes & Wortham, 2011).

Constructing a truth

Everyone listens to and tells stories. Stories help us decide what we believe to be true or false, and stories help to convince others what is true or false. Our sheriff’s story narrated a ‘truth’ about immigration, deportation, and 287g, with facts, numbers, and statistics to justify its use. In contrast, Gisela’s construction and content of her narrative helped her build up a different ‘truth’ about undocumented immigrants and deportation. Gisela used a classic narrative structure to help her create this new truth (Knapp & Watkins, 2005). She begins by orienting the reader to the situation with an event that predates the arrest. Then, she proceeds to sequence some events, getting ready for school, going to her mom’s room, her mother asking to redo her hair, and Gisela’s rejection of the request. She ends this scene by evaluating herself as angry, but not

remembering the reason, leaving the reader with the feeling that her anger was unimportant and unresolved. Gisela uses this narrative structure throughout the rest of story, sequencing events, evaluating them, and eventually building up to a problem. The problem is eventually resolved, and she adds a coda to the end of the story, *But at least they did not take my mom away from me!* As Gisela continued to employ the narrative elements of sequencing events along with evaluating her position within these events, she created an ‘an appropriate text’ meaning that as readers we recognize her writing as a ‘story,’ and we are drawn into the problem through the use of strategic placement of events and emotions (Knapp & Watkins, 2005, p. 26).

Gisela’s portrayal of truth is convincing because she structured her narrative so well. This is partly because Gisela had ‘lived’ this narrative (Ochs & Capps, 2001). The telling of narratives is way to present and organize the narratives that we *live*. For instance, in life, events pass, we evaluate them, we encounter problems, resolve problems, and reflect back on the past; essentially these combined structures constitute a narrative. Gisela drew on these tangible elements of life to create this story, as she presented an arrest, making bail, as well as writing the end using the actual resolution. Based on a lived experience, she drew detailed description, in words and pictures to show us, for example, her father at their kitchen table, or tell us about the experience in the courtroom. As she created characters based on her family and showed us relationships that were authentic and moving. These elements made her story quite ‘tellable’ (Rymes & Wortham, 2011), given the political circumstances in our community and added to the fact that it was her mother who was in jail. Her story was also appropriate for accomplishing what I had hoped, to deconstruct harmful narratives circulating in our community about illegal immigrants. Furthermore, tellability is created when receivers of a narrative react and encourage the story, and Gisela had received substantial reader support from her peers, dad, and me to help write and

revise her story. Combining a well-structured narrative with high-tellability draws us, readers, into her stories, and we begin to believe what the narrator has written or said.

Once a narrative becomes believable, it can begin to construct truth, and if narratives construct truth, and we live by those truths, then understanding that narratives do this and how they do it is vital for educators and for students. As a reader of Gisela's narrative, I was left in a *nepantla* state; her story undid a truth for me and wrote a new way for me to see our world. *Nepantla* can break down the idea of seeing others as not us (Anzaldúa, 1987, 2002); this means that I could no longer look at illegal immigrants and deportation as out there, not me; but instead, it was my students and their families who were being deported. Gisela's position as an 'illegal' immigrant and a daughter of 'illegal' immigrants revealed 'cracks' in a discourse, where essentially the discourse was wrong (Anzaldúa, 1987, 2002). Those who are situated on the borders of discourses, *nepantleras*, can reveal what discourses are doing; from their position they can write new narratives that will pick apart discourses, especially dangerous ones, like that promoted by our county sheriff. On the other hand, if we never pick apart the narratives that construct dangerous discourse then those discourses may never change. Gisela's narrative was one act of 'picking apart' a constructed truth about illegal immigrants; a truth that said that they were gang members, murderers, and drug dealers. Instead, Gisela created a different story, a loving family, a working-mother, and most importantly, it wasn't dangerous criminals being deported; it was her mom.

Power

I have shared Gisela's story many times, with my family, colleagues, college students, and at numerous conferences. Her story never fails to solicit a strong emotional response: usually tears, anger, and outrage. In this case, it appears true that 'the power of language may in fact

sometimes be more powerful than the power of the entrenched social hierarchy' (Rymes & Wortham, 2011, p. 46). I attribute these powerful responses to how Gisela positioned herself throughout the narrative. It is obvious that her narrative is about the arrest of her mother, but what is less obvious is how she discussed undocumented immigrants and deportation by creating her own parallel infraction. Gisela begins her parallel story line with, *why did I get so mad at her, why didn't they take me instead of her*. Recalling the orienting event to this story, Gisela had shouted at her mom and went to school angry, without reconciliation. Here, Gisela creates tension for us, the readers, with clauses like—

When the party started I kind of felt bad because I said to my self why should I be having fun if my mom was sad and locked up. So I started to cry and told my dad to go...

and she moves us through her narrative to eventually release this tension—

My dad went to get her out of jail. When my dad came back, my mom came back, too. So I hugged her and told her, 'Sorry'. Now, I was happy about that now.

This strategy creates a reason to read the text; much like that feeling we have when just can't put a book down, urgency for resolution. This engrossment is created by the power of the teller's story to draw us in and move us through the story until the narrator accomplishes her goal.

In addition to creating a parallel storyline, Gisela creates her story's characters using the identities of her family members. Identity formation is another function of narratives and stories. By listening to stories about people, we judge those involved in the story based on how the narrator constructs that person in their tale. To form the identity of her father, Gisela uses dialog and a drawing to position her father as a loving husband who is determined to free his wife—

My dad was crying too but then he stopped crying and said be strong. 'Yo no voy a darme por vencido. Yo voy a intentar de sacar la te lo prometo.' (I won't give up. I will try to get her out I promise you.)

On this page, Gisela first uses Spanish in her narrative. As Anzaldúa (1987) argued that when nepantleras write with multiple languages it can disrupt discourses and free readers to enter a new understanding of the world. In this instance, Gisela challenged a discourse that only by writing in English could she construct herself as a good writer, and only English was acceptable in a Georgia public school classroom.

Then I told my sister, she was crying too. We all went back home. At night my brother started to say, ‘Donde esta mama?’ We told him she was at work because he would not understand my mom was in jail.

She also employed a multilingual writer’s strategy of not translating the text for her readers. Instead she contextually embeds it to help us decipher the meaning without the use of a dictionary or translator. To understand her young brother’s question, she provides us answer that reveals what he is asking.

By combining a clear narrative structure, believable characters, and skillful linguistic choices, Gisela was able to draw on the powers of words to disrupt the power that she and her family were being subjected to. However, this disruption had no effect in stopping the deportation of her mother; it has, however, had an effect on the people who have read her story and must grapple with morality of laws that result in these kinds of actions.

Uncovering agency

Like Martin and Rose (2003) claimed, ‘The source of agency is often an important consideration in discourse analysis, and is not always easy to recover’ (p. 73). Essentially, agency means the ability of people (actors) to act or make decisions in a free society. In Gisela’s story when can see that the police, judges, and those who passed 287g are able to act and make decisions. These actors can detain, arrest, and deport, but they also have the capability to decide not to. Gisela’s verb choices reveal the possession of and the lack of human agency held by her

family. For instance, Gisela wrote the *police got her without a license so she got a ticket*.

Gisela's repetitive use of the verb, got, is interesting. Her mother is 'gotten' just as one 'gets' a ticket. As the police are in a position of being able to do something or 'get' people; they are able to act, or they have agency. On the contrary, Gisela's mom receives action, as she is 'gotten' as she 'gets' a ticket.

She had to go to jail. My dad was going to leave us with my mom's sister which is my aunt. Because he was going to pay my mom's ticket to get her out. When he got there they told my dad my mom can not get her out because she was on the immigration list so they were going to take her back to Mexico.

The phrases, *had* to go to jail, *cannot* get her out, *were* going to take her back, coming from the source of the county government create a feeling of permanence about the decision to deport Gisela's mom. She doesn't evaluate this event or she doesn't say what she thinks about it, nor does she reference any other voices. By doing this, she creates a serious tone, and a feeling of permanency to the decision to deport her mom. Gisela continues to show how agency available to police and county government through their actions, and she continues to show her mother as non-agentive with the lack of action that she took or could take.

My dad did not sleep all night long because he was looking for lawyers. We woke up so early like at three o'clock because my dad had to go to work at that time. So he took us to my aunt's house to sleep there because there was nobody at home at that time.

As we gaze into Gisela's portrayal of her home, we see father sitting a table with a phonebook searching for lawyers. Gisela also draws the clock above him, set at three o'clock. She uses this image of her father and time to show urgency, worry, and a panic to find help. An empty chair is centered in Gisela's drawing, leaving the reader with a feeling of an absence, perhaps a reference to her mother's absence.

We went to the courtroom. They were not letting them get out. One man they took there, they took his children away from them. My mom was next, but they judge said he was

taking a break. My *mom* went back to the car she said to *stay here*. I said, ‘Why?’ She said, ‘Because if I go back to jail, *they will get you*.’

It is *they*, the agents of anti-immigrant discourse, who are able to act in this context. *Took* is the same verb used for the removal of children from families and for the judge who elected for a recess. By using the same verb, *took*, the children become equivalent to ‘a break’ for the judge, and they can be *taken* just as easily as a break can.

Every time I called her she was crying, so that made me cry, too. One month passed, and my dad called again to see if they would let my mom out of jail. They said, ‘Yes, but you have to pay 100,000,000 to get out.’ All of my uncles got out their money out of the bank to help. My dad went to get her out of jail. When my dad came back, my mom came back, too. So I hugged her and told her, ‘Sorry’. Now, I was happy about that now.

Gisela give us hope that her mother can get out of jail, beginning with the, *They said, ‘Yes’*. However, she immediately follows this affirmation with information that counters our expectation of her immediate freedom with *but you have to pay 100,000,000 to get out*. I didn’t correct Gisela’s somewhat humorous use of 100,000,000 as the amount required to free her mom. I’m sure the bail amount was much less, but the accidental misrepresentation functioned to reveal Gisela’s, a child’s, interpretation of the impossibility of freeing her mom.

In contrast to the agency held on part of the police and judges, Gisela’s text reveals the lack of agency that her family had. Gisela’s mom’s choices were either to return to Mexico with her children, or stay in the US without documentation and risk being arrested again. In the end these are not free choices are at all, but options handed to her from a social system that is guided by a faulty discourse about immigrants (Fairclough, 2003). Often our American society is construed in way that says we are ‘free’ that we live in ‘ready-made hierarchical worlds of sense in which individuals form intentions, make choices, and carry out actions in the ready-made terms of those worlds’ (Lugones, 2005, p. 86). This kind of agency is shown in our discourses such as The American Dream, hard work pays off, innocent people go free, and guilty people go

to jail. Instead, Gisela's text shows that these kinds of constructs do not exist. Systems are in place that position some people as agentive, while others are positioned with narrow choices or perhaps no choice at all.

Constructing a moral tale

While Gisela was writing truth, she was also spinning a moral tale for her readers to grapple with. As Rymes & Wortham (2011) claimed, 'Through the act of telling [a] story, the narrating event becomes a moral arena in which all individuals are answerable to the ethical issues raised in the story' (p. 50). Tracking how people participate (Martin & Rose, 2003) in narratives can reveal how a narrator constructs morality in their tale and construes human agency. Determining morality in a story means that readers must make decisions about who you agree with and who you believe. Referring back to the county sheriff and his moral tale, we saw how he positioned himself and other policemen as good guys who were acting to rid our county of the bad guys, the illegal immigrants. Gisela's story reverses this construct. She positions us using her point of view, the child of an illegal immigrant, to show us that it isn't violent criminals being arrested and deported. By changing the perspective, readers relate to Gisela and her mom, suggesting that her mom is the good guy who is being unjustly taken away from her family, while the police officers and judges are the bad guys who are separating parents from their children.

Nepantleras live on the borders between ideas; and because of this nepantleras are fitted for changing minds and constructing morals. In this instance, Gisela had the capacity to spin this moral tale for us because of her position as an immigrant, Mexican, child of an 'illegal' immigrant, and fifth grader. Without these positionings it would have been impossible for her to paint such a detailed and moving picture for us. She was able to show us where discourses hurt,

harm, and/or help people; and moreover, she could change minds with her story. *Nepantleras* are like a bridge that those of us, who don't have access to these alternative ideas, need to cross us over to *nepantla*. It's in *nepantla* where things can change. We can think new things. We can question the unquestionable (Anzaldúa, 2002).

Discussion

I have argued that Gisela's text constructed a truth, revealing how power worked through discourse against Gisela's family. The story calls for readers to make a moral judgment based on this new truth, specifically calling into question the justice of laws that result in the imprisonment of people like Gisela's mom, and the deportation of families and American citizens (Gisela's younger siblings) as a result of them. Although, I have argued that Gisela's story revealed a lack of human agency on the part of her family, it does reveal another possibility of agency, our freedom to think. As Anzaldúa (2002) claimed about *nepantleras*, those who live 'between cultures' can see 'double, first from the perspective of one culture, then from the perspective of another', and then they can 'render ... those cultures transparent' (p. 549). I see Gisela's text as a rendering of discourses transparent, revealing moral and immoral, truth and lie, and power and powerlessness. It is in *nepantla*, where can have freedom to see how discourses work, the effects on people, and how we can change our minds, so that we can think and act differently.

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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Literacy is about meaning. Both the writer and the reader of a book find ways to produce and deduce meaning in the words found there. Likewise, the teller and listener of stories find meanings in the words spoken there. The actor and the audience engage in the meaning of what is portrayed on stage and set. I present literacy as much more complex than learning letters and sounding out words. It's socially embedded and emerges from our lived experience; it's dynamic and will change with us. I started to read before kindergarten. My mom filled our home with books, and every night at bedtime my dad spun tall tales to put me to sleep. Although, my parents did not finish high school, they knew and understood the value of these forms of literacy. This may be one reason that I loved to read *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and I identified so strongly with Scout. A child who loved to read but didn't necessarily like school. I didn't necessarily like going to school, but I loved going to the school library. I organized every book in our house into our own home library and forced my little brother to check out books from me when he wanted to look at one. Initially, I viewed learning to read and write, to be literate, as easy and fun, and nearly the same for everyone, at any time and at any place. But this idea of reading, learning to read and write, of becoming literate, has become more difficult for me to understand. Literacy has become troublesome. *To Kill a Mockingbird* is great example of that, although it is a phenomenal tale of growing up in the American South amidst racism and classism. It is told from the perspective of White young girl. I had never thought of critiquing a classic like *To Kill a Mockingbird*, but as I reread it now, the representation of Tom Robinson and his family bothers

me. The premise of a White lawyer saving an innocent black man perpetuates the White savior narrative, and represents the Black characters as lost, in need of saving. How was I able to draw a different meaning from the very same words? Because literacy is about where you come from and where you are in the world. Literacy will change, and as it changes, we change how we write, read, and think.

As I've shown in my classroom that I initially ignored the multiple languages and multiliteracies of my emerging bilingual students because I couldn't even *think* that they needed to be included until I was exposed to a new text which allowed me to think differently. And when I did recognize Spanish as valid form of expression, along with family stories, my students produced writing that far exceeded any requirements on the Georgia Writing Test. Gisela's story was such an excellent example of that, she drew on her life experience of family, work, and fear of deportation to create a powerful tale. But her literacy is also troublesome because that same school year she failed the Georgia Writing Test. This test is a strong authoritative discourse that circulates in many of Georgia's classrooms, often resulting in literacy pedagogies that are based on the literacy ideologies that the standardized exam promotes. I also demonstrated a similar tension in the kinds of literacies practiced by the Oaxacan students; their riddles in Spanish, Nahuatl, and Zapotec, which illustrated the creative literacy practices that they were already engaged in. However, in the classroom, the autonomous views of literacy circulated so strongly that it was hard to disrupt and change this classroom pedagogy in a short amount of time, from a researcher's position, and from this level in the school structure. Again, literacy was a troubled area. As the Oaxacan local newspaper consistently circulated reports about the illiteracy of the indigenous of Oaxaca, and the horrors concerning how many people can't read. I must wonder at how their literacies were assessed? I propose that authoritative and autonomous views of literacy

circulate in Georgia, in Oaxaca, and arguably the rest of the world, which stand counter to how real people engage with literacy and do with literacy in their daily lives.

I've argued that critical discourse analysis and linguistic as a methodological approach can lead to better understandings of language and literacy practices in classrooms and communities. It is one way to understanding how language and literacy pedagogies are shaped by ideological structures stemming from educational governances and social ideologies. Additionally, its shown useful for revealing how classroom pedagogies continue to exclude multiple forms and styles of literacy practiced my students and families, especially those from marginalized backgrounds and positions. I've presented the ethnographic and linguistic data from my own classroom, as well as the Oaxaca classroom, as ripe with complicated language and literacy practices. In turn, these language and literacy practices show the reproduction of hegemonic discursive structures, as well as the speech and literacy events that teachers and students take up to challenge those structures, remaking them. Specifically in Oaxaca, I've shown how in the structure of lessons, Marisol's subjectivities as teacher, and the discourse that could be included in the classroom created a pedagogy that was heavily shaped autonomous views of literacies. In turn, this pedagogy excluded other home language and literacy practices.

Finally, I theorized Anzaldúa's *nepantla* as both theory and pedagogy for undoing and redoing ways that we think and teach. For example, from my interaction with Juan and his languages, and the horror I felt at myself for not knowing that he spoke more than two languages, led to my study in Oaxaca. Recalling my predicament when I realized that my students with such great experiences of moving from place to place could not find a space in my pedagogy to connect those experiences. From there, I changed my instruction of immigration to one of human movement, looking at how we connect and disconnect our experiences of moving

from place to place. In Oaxaca, I took nepantla and looked at the moments of possibility between a teacher and her students. A teacher who had the potential to make changes to her pedagogy but was so constrained by overwhelming discourses carried by the textbooks, she couldn't take those steps to do it. And finally, I have presented one of my students, Gisela, as a kind of ideal nepantlera, hovering between discursive and physical worlds, who drew on this positioning to write that new story about illegal immigrants in the world.

Appendix A

Guest Column: Local enforcement has cut crime by illegal immigrants

By Steve Cronin

Guest columnist

POSTED: December 7, 2008 5:00 a.m.

In a recent guest editorial, David Kennedy once again took aim at what he doesn't like. Namely anyone who would dare do anything to address the issue of illegal immigration in this country or in this community.

The content of the latest letter is the same but with every new offering his tone seems to be more mean-spirited and contains more personal attacks on those that would hold an opinion different from his own.

I normally would not respond to these types of attacks but, enough is enough. The citizens of Hall County and the readers of The Times deserve to know the truth about the 287(g) program, what the program is and what it is not.

To get the full understanding of the 287(g) program you must first understand the history behind how we came to participate. Looking back over several years, there was a time when the Immigration and Naturalization Service had three full time agents dedicated to Hall County. As time marched on, the INS saw the demands for their services skyrocket with a steady influx of immigrants, and particularly illegal immigrants.

With this influx, it became increasingly necessary for them to pull their officers who were assigned to this office and have them respond to other areas. This practice over time combined with the 9-11 attacks and reorganization of the INS, created the Immigrations and Customs Enforcement agency and left us, for the most part, with one full-time agent.

Now at this same time, Hall County is seeing a dramatic increase in our Hispanic population, both legal and illegally, and unfortunately we're also seeing an increase in Hispanic involvement in many of our areas of crime. Most alarming was in the areas which most consider our major quality of life issues, that being drugs, gangs and violent crime.

In fact, over a two- to three-year period, we saw illegal immigrants disproportionately involved in these areas. Examples included close to 90 percent of the volume of illegal drugs being brought in this community was being brought in from Mexico by illegal aliens. (This is not to say individual cases reflected 90 percent, but the actual volume of seizures.)

Our homicides during a two to three year period reflected one-third to one-half committed by illegal aliens. (In most of these cases the victims were also in the country illegally, many were drug or gang related.) And our gangs, although difficult to determine immigration status because of their age, are more than 80 percent Mexican street gangs.

All of these facts, combined with a lack of available federal support, put us in a position where we had to use what tools were legally available. We were informed about the 287(g) federal partnership and in absence of having the federal resources available, applied for the program.

Before explaining what the program is, it's extremely important to understand what it is not. It is not, as it's been characterized by Kennedy, anti-immigrant; it's not even anti-illegal immigrant.

The program's sole focus is on those illegal who that continue to break the law while they are here. The only way anyone becomes subject to the program is if they are arrested for a separate offense and find themselves booked into the jail.

The 287(g) program itself basically requires that we identify several officers to work with ICE and that we send them to federally sponsored training in order for them to have access to federal databases and to authorize them to initiate certain paperwork associated with the program.

It's also important to understand that under Georgia law, all sheriffs' offices are required to check the legal status of anyone processed into a jail in this state who has questionable status. In most cases they refer them to ICE; in ours, we can make the data base check ourselves.

After it has been determined that the person booked is here illegally, the officers then complete the necessary paperwork and refer the individual to ICE, where they will be given their due process, have access to a hearing and then a determination is made by ICE on whether to deport or not.

It has been suggested by Kennedy and others that the sheriff's office should only process certain cases, that we, in effect, should act as judge and jury in particular cases picking and choosing which individuals are processed and which are not.

As I've said in the past, that would be a very slippery slope, with many opportunities for abuse and corruption. I strongly believe that decisions such as these are best left to the proper area of our legal system, the judges and courts as our system allows.

Finally, to share some of the results that we've seen, when comparing statistical information before the program was initiated with information since the program was initiated we've seen the following:

According to the Gainesville Hall County Multi Agency Narcotics Squad, the volume of drugs coming into Hall has been reduced by approximately 70 percent.

Since implementing the program we've seen a reduction in violent crime, with one illegal immigrant-related homicide committed since the program's inception.

And most significant, according to the Gainesville Hall County Gang Task Force, we've seen a 44 percent reduction in our recorded gang membership here in Hall County.

At the end of the day we know that there will always be those that disagree with what's done or the way things are done, but well intended people can always agree to disagree without being disrespectful and mean-spirited.

I also want to take the opportunity to thank the citizens of this county for the positive feedback we've received regarding this and other programs we've initiated here and we want to say that we take great pride in our service to this community. We welcome your input and will always gladly address your concerns when you have them.

The only thing that I would encourage is that when and if you ever do have questions, comments or concerns, please give us a call. We're always grateful to get the opportunity to answer your concerns and we feel very blessed to have the chance to serve.

Steve Cronic is sheriff of Hall County.