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"Be Valiente": Investigating Ethnic Identity Through Digital Storytelling with Latinx Fourth-Grade Students

Jennifer Michelle Barreto
University of South Florida

"Be Valiente": Investigating Ethnic Identity Through Digital Storytelling with Latinx

Fourth-Grade Students

by

Jennifer Michelle Barreto

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Major Professor: Lisa M. López, Ph.D.
Sarah Kiefer, Ph.D.
Elizabeth Hadley, Ph.D.
Lauren Braunstein, Ph.D.
Jennifer Collett, Ph.D.

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Dedication

I dedicate this to my Dad and Mom, who gave me endless love, support, and encouragment.

For my partner en la vida, Cord.

Y a mi familia, los adoro.

Acknowledgments

It always seems impossible until it's done. —Nelson Mandela

This has been my mantra to help me get through all the challenging times. So many times, I felt like different obstacles felt impossible to overcome, and I would repeat to myself this mantra. I've also had many mentors that have helped me when I did not think I had it in me to continue. I would like to acknowledge those that have made this study possible. To Dr. Lopez, I appreciate your feedback and guidance. Without you, I would not have been able to get to this point. To the rest of my committee, Dr. Kiefer, Dr. Hadley, Dr. B., and Dr. Collett, each one of you has provided unique insight that has made my work better and challenged my thinking. To Dr. Kozdras, thank you for our talks that helped me decide I was smart enough to pursue a doctorate. I will never forget your kind words and encouragement to take the GRE's and finish the graduate application process for USF.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Abstract

Multilingual and multicultural students face the challenge of understanding where their ethnic identity lies in learning. The education system in the United States lacks inclusivity in classrooms, continuing monocultural views and monolinguistic ideals as the norm and encouraged in curriculum and standards (Flores, 2020). This dissertation study seeks to break cultural and linguistic ideologies to better understand the development of ethnic identity in three Latinx fourth-grade students by creating a digital story. Through a sociocultural lens that includes a bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017) and multimodality (NGL, 1996) framework the study emphasizes all funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) in making-meaning with one's identity. This study uses a collective case study (Stake, 1995) methodology focusing on a holistic analysis of three Latinx multilingual multicultural learners' digital storytelling projects and their everyday actions. This study seeks to contribute to how Latinx young adolescents understand their ethnic identity in school through assigning meaning to the objects and artifacts they use in their digital stories, and how they construct hybrid texts to deliver their messages. The findings from each case contribute new insight into the lived experiences of Latinx preadolescents. Additionally, each case was instrumental in the collective understating of cultural and ethnic identity development. This study provides a rich account for this particular group of students' development of cultural and ethnic identity.

Chapter One: Introduction

We are stories.
We are two languages.
We are lucha.
We are resilience.
We are hope.
We are dreamers, soñadores of the world. - Yuyi Morales

"Tienes un bien dia, mija bonita" [Have a great day, my beautiful daughter]. My Puerto Rican parents would always tell me this before heading to school. As I would enter the classroom, the teacher would say, "Good morning, Jennifer," and I knew that was my signal to speak English. After class, I would go home to, "Come fue tu dia?" [How was your day?] and that question allowed me to go back to speaking Spanish. As a bilingual learner, I never saw my ethnicity, culture, or language reflected in the classroom. That led me to believe that my culture and language was more of a social aspect of my life instead of an academic one. I did not know it at the time, but I was separating my ethnic identity from learning. Constantly separating my home and school life caused me not to connect my linguistic knowledge or cultures when I was learning a new concept, separating my ethnic identity in the classroom. I was not using all of what Moll et al. (1992) call my full funds of knowledge that include both my cultural and linguistic repertoire. I would enter school thinking that I was less than my monolingual peers because of my bilingualism. I never thought about how my linguistic and cultural repertoires could be a benefit in learning (Quiroz, 2001; Garcia, 2009).

Statement of Problem

As an adult, I became a public-school elementary teacher. I continued to see the lack of inclusivity in the classroom with ethnicity, language, and culture. Scholars in the field have stated that monocultural views and monolinguistic ideals are the norm and encouraged in curriculum and standards (Flores, 2020; Flores & Garcia, 2017; Flores & Schissel, 2014; Garcia, 2009). The lessons or curriculum I taught never included how students could bridge cultures/languages to work together to learn English and new content. As a fourth-grade teacher, I taught a lesson on immigration and coming to an unknown land. The curriculum was straightforward, discussing Ellis Island and historical dates but not asking students to reflect on their own lived experiences. I thought the lesson could be more meaningful if I were able to connect students' multicultural/multilinguistic knowledge and experiences with classroom learning.

I yearned to figure out a way that would combine my students' cultural and linguistic expertise so that students could use all their cultural and linguistic repertoires. I could see my multicultural/multilingual students frustrated when they could not fully express ideas with paper and pencil. One of my students who had been labeled an English language learner (ELL), Manny (pseudonym), had recently immigrated from Honduras. He said "Sé que necesito olvidar el Español para aprender inglés" [I know I need to forget Spanish in order to learn English]. It was shocking to hear those words.

Manny connected his experience in school to include forgetting a part of who he was in order to be academically successful. The disconnect, or cultural discontinuity, Manny felt between his home and school communities has been well documented in the literature because of an education *system* in the United States that favors White monolingual students (Garcia &

Kleifgen, 2019; Tatum, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999). These monolingual practices honor ethnic/racial identities of White monolinguals by the curriculum, the language of instruction, and the linguistic landscape (environmental print) that reinforces what identity is acceptable at school (Przymus & Huddleston, 2021). Particularly for Latinx students, a deficit learning model called subtractive learning is the most common method for teaching English. Subtractive schooling is a concept termed by Valenzuela (1999) that says schools promote cultural and linguistic subtraction to enhance academic performance for immigrants and non-immigrants that are multicultural and multilingual. This model views multiculturalism and multilingualism as a problem and not a benefit when learning (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2019). This deficit learning model will "fracture students' cultural and ethnic identities" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 5).

Developmental and educational psychologists (Douglass & Umaña-Taylor, 2016) have well established the importance of ethnic identity in education (Hashtpari et al., 2021; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014a, 2014b; Quintana, 1995; Syed et al., 2013; Umaña-Taylor, 2018; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015, 2014), citing the need to connect linguistic and cultural repertoires for positive impacts not only on academics but also social-emotional benefits and ethnic identity. In the United States, the largest multilingual and multicultural demographics are Latinx (NCES, 2018). The opportunity gap, sometimes called the achievement gap, is a term that refers to inequities in education measured by achievement scores between Latinx and White and recent immigrant and White students (Ladson-Billings, 2006). The preferred term is opportunity gap as opposed to the achievement gap because of the political implications. The achievement gap is putting the burden on the student in terms of what they are lacking; whereas the opportunity gap is putting the burden on the system and the inequalities that are perpetuated within the system. The opportunity gap has continued to occur with high dropout rates in high school for Latinx

students, with 35% of Latinx students, compared to 11% White peers, not completing their high school requirements for graduation (NCES, 2018).

The Child Trends Hispanic Institute (Ramos & Murphey, 2016) reported as early as fourth-grade predictions can be made if the student will graduate high school based on national reading scores (NAEP, "The Nations Report Card"). On average, Latinx students performed "below level" with only 21% scoring "at or above grade level" on the NAEP, while nearly half (46%) of White students scored "at or above grade level." The problem is that education is a *system* that prioritizes the dominant culture while "othering" historically marginalized groups (Tatum, 2017). The dominant culture is the norm in education, with Latinx students' cultural and ethnic identities not taken into consideration as part of the curriculum and learning.

Understanding students' multicultural and multilingual identities in today's 21st-century classroom is essential. Many studies regard multimodal literacy as crucial to helping understand students' identities, ensuring culturally and linguistically diverse students succeed using different modalities (images, text, sound, etc.) of communication (Angay-Crowder et al., 2013; Castañeda et al., 2018; Green, 2013; Hirsch & Macleroy, 2020; Ranker, 2008; Sukovic, 2014; Vasudevan et al., 2010). The research shows that multimodal literacy taps into cultural and linguistic repertoires for multilingual students because it allows multiple modes of communicating, such as sound, text, image, and translanguaging, viewing language as dynamic (Pacheco et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2020). Rejecting dominant monoglossic practices evident within the system, Stewart and Ivala (2017) argue digital storytelling is a form of resistance to current educational pedagogy that traditionally consists of stagnant paper-pencil literacy practices. Literacy scholars have regarded multimodal literacy as a crucial way to ensure culturally and linguistically minoritized students' success through the accessibility of different modes that tap into all their cultural and

4

linguistic repertoires (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; NLG, 1996; Smith et al., 2020). Arredondo et al. (2016), Garcia and Kleifgen (2019), Gutiérrez et al. (2011), Canagarajah (2013), and Velasco and Garcia (2014) stress the importance of language being dynamic, and literacy moving beyond traditional monoglossic models, especially with bilingual students, providing these students the opportunity to use all linguistic repertoires in their learning.

To address these issues, there is a call for additive learning, where all cultural and linguistic repertoires (Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003) are a benefit to learning English and translanguaging is encouraged (Garcia, 2009). Garcia and Kleifgen (2019) encourage a term called translanguaging, meaning the multilingual student can use all their linguistic repertoire and view language as dynamic. Translanguaging would encourage what Yosso (2005) calls "community wealth knowledge" by recognizing students' culture or ethnicity as vital to learning (p. 70). My experience with Manny sparked a call to social justice and equitable education to figure out how to empower multicultural/multilingual students and disrupt the *system* so that what might be different or "other," traditionally viewed as a deficit, could become a superpower. Education is not neutral—either it is challenging or reproducing oppression (Freire, 1970).

Identity in Education

The linking of education and identity has been recognized by scholars from various disciplines that include psychology (Erikson, 1959; Marcia, 1966), social development (Gee, 2000; Kaplan & Flum, 2009; McAdams & McLean, 2013; Wegner, 1998), academic success (Davidson, 1996; Delpit, 1995), student motivation (Oyserman & Destin, 2010; McCaslin, 2004), and within diverse communities (Cummins, 2015; Feinauer & Cutri, 2012; Ogbu, 1987; Phinney, 1990; 1993; Phinney & Ong, 2007; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014; Umaña-Taylor et al.,

2018). Erikson (1968), a psychologist who first discussed identity, created the term *identity crisis*, to explain a psychoanalytic crisis that embeds social and cultural context.

Culture and language are at the center of identity. In school, students interpret situations and difficulties in ways that are congruent with currently active identities and prefer to align their learning with identity-congruent rather than identity-incongruent actions (Oyserman & Destin, 2010). For example, when you match action with what a person feels is congruent with their identity, then the behavior is essential and meaningful. For example, Manny needed to see his heritage culture or linguistic knowledge valued in the class or school to believe that it was essential and meaningful. Students need to see themselves represented in the learning to feel included (Ladson-Billings, 1995). However, when the same action feels incongruent with the identity, the behavior is viewed as pointless and "not for people like me" (Oyserman & Destin, 2010; MasCaslin, 2004). With Manny, he did not see his ethnic/cultural identity reflected in the class and school so he thought he needed to subtract his Spanish language in order to learn English and then have an identity that was congruent to be academically successful.

School success needs to feel congruent with identity. Wenger (1998) demanded that before any learning could be done, educators first have to take into consideration the student's sense of belonging and identities.

> Education in its deepest sense and at whatever age it takes place, concerns the opening up of identities—exploring new ways of being that lie beyond our current state. ...Education is not merely formative—it is transformative… [I]ssues of education should be addressed first and foremost in terms of identities and modes of belonging and only secondarily in terms of skills and information. (p. 263)

Identity in education is not often discussed or included in the curriculum. Wenger is stating the importance of exploring yourself in new ways that will transform education. This study emphasizes that identity development is impactful and essential in education, particularly for Latinx students who are often marginalized.

Significance of Ethnic Identity (EI)

Ethnic identity looks at the psychological relationship of ethnic minority group members, examining personal and within-group views. Ethnic identity includes ways of responding to and dealing with the often deficit view of their group and investigates the impact of these factors on psychological well-being (Phinney, 1990, 1993; Phinney & Ong, 2007). The broad term of *ethnic identity* has multiple components that regard ethnic group membership as a sense of belonging, whether positive or negative attitudes are held toward one's ethnic group, and ethnic involvement, such as the participation in social and cultural aspects of the ethnic group (Phinney, 1990).

Empirical research suggests the benefits of positive EI for Latinx students are powerfully intertwined with cognitive development, leading to both academic achievement and social-emotional benefits, connecting learning to self-esteem, well-being, and positive academic school attitudes (Brown & Chu, 2012; Quintana, 2007; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014a, 2014b; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014; 2016, 2017, 2018). Having a positive EI was also found to be a form of resilience protective factor against peer and teacher discrimination (Brown & Chu, 2012; Gonzalez-Backen et al., 2018; Kiang et al., 2006; McKown & Weinstein, 2003; Shin et al., 2007; Vera et al., 2011). School social factors such as interactions with teachers and peers also impacted EI development in young adolescents (Benjamin, 1997; Brown, 2017; Constante et al., 2020; Feinauer & Cutri, 2012; Gillen-O'Neel et al., 2011).

EI and Young Adolescents

A growing body of scholarly work shows preadolescents, particularly Latinx preadolescents, are developing their ethnic identity sooner than traditional research demonstrated because of their stigmatized status in the United States (Garcia Coll & Szalcha, 2004; Quintana 2007; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014) calling for studies to be done with elementary students (Rogers et al., 2020). Ethnic identities have primarily been studied in the context of middle and high school (Rivas-Drake et al., 2014a; Rogers et al., 2020). With past research focusing on a cognitive or developmental approach, using experimental or quantitative methods, there is a need to examine the qualitative contextual aspect of identity construction through meaning-making (DeCuir-Gunby & Schultz, 2014). These methods have unveiled the impact of positive ethnic identity as having a significant effect on psychosocial outcomes of self-esteem, well-being, and academic school attitudes (Rivas-Drake et al., 2014a; Rogers et al., 2020; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015). By "meaning-making" in a multimodality form, I refer to Kress and colleague's (2003, 2010; Kress & Jewitt, 2003; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001) definition of the social semiotic theory (Hodge & Kress, 1988) that makes social interaction the center focus. Identity development will be investigated through multiple modes of communication through the digital story. Using multiple modes of literacy as a nontraditional method of pedagogy, such as digital storytelling, can create innovative ways of engaging teaching and learning relationships, especially with multilingual and multicultural students to support positive identity development (Anderson et al, 2018; Angay-Crowder et al., 2013; Cummins et al., 2015). The gap in the literature is the limited studies complete with preadolescents in elementary and the dearth of qualitative literature understanding the contextual factors of EI development (Rogers et al., 2020).

My goal is to add to the literature about understanding the contextual factors of ethnic identity development and learning with preadolescent Latinx students in elementary school (Quiroz, 2001; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015). I do this by answering the call to examine ethnic identity in preadolescence among minority students (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2014; Rogers et al., 2012), specifically fourth-grade, Latinx students.

Theoretical Framework

Essential to teachers effectively supporting multilingual and multicultural students is an understanding of the interconnectedness of language and culture with identity. For this study, I integrate sociocultural models in order to investigate the relationship between language, culture, and identity in the learning of Latinx children. First, to get a multilayered perspective of ethnic identity development of fourth-grade Latinx students at their school, an ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017) considers identity development nestled in multiple social contexts and environments. Within these broader social systems, the theoretical framework of multiliteracies (NGL, 1996) creates a point of entrance where literacy is not monomodal (Narey, 2017), one dimension (paper and pencil), but instead constructed through multiple modes or modalities (e.g., sound, image, text) to address "the multiplicity of communications channels and media, and the increasing saliency of cultural and linguistic diversity" (NGL, 1996, p. 63). Together, these perspectives provide multidimensional and interconnected insights into the complex and dynamic process of ethnic identity development with fourth-grade Latinx students, including ecological factors constructed through multimodality as a tool of investigation within a particular English language arts classroom in the United States.

Significance of Multimodality

My yearning for ways that could incorporate culturally and linguistically diverse knowledge as a teacher led me to think of other modes of learning. The literature suggests an expanded view on literacy that includes multimodal practices in the classroom as a transformational venue for Latinx students because of the multimodality (Cummins & Early, 2011; Grant & Bolin, 2016; Pacheco & Smith, 2013; Rowe & Miller, 2015; Smith, 2015). Multimodality through digital storytelling incorporates two key aspects of literacy, (a) linguistic diversity and (b) multimodal forms of linguistic expression and representation (NLG, 1996).

Much of this work descriptively highlights digital storytelling accessing modes beyond the traditional literacy of paper and pencil to help teach and learn. Teachers have transcended pedagogy using technology that emphasizes multimodal scaffolding for developing complex vocabulary, including visual aids, text modifications, and sound (Angay-Crowder et al., 2013; Fitts & Gross; Green, 2013; Hirsch & Macleroy, 2020; Hur & Suh, 2012, Pierce, 2014; Skinner & Hagood, 2008; Smith et al., 2020; Zapata & Horn, 2017).

An important argument for integrating multimodal digital storytelling in the classroom is the opportunity for using all cultural and linguistic funds of knowledge by breaking down language ideologies (Anderson et al., 2018; Anderson & Macleroy, 2017; Hirsch & Macleroy, 2020). Funds of knowledge has been defined by scholars as using all cultural and linguistic repertoires (Moll et al., 1992). This is done by disrupting dominant linguistic ideologies through translanguaging (viewing language as dynamic) and multiple modes of communicating (sound, image, and text). Linguistic barriers, difficulties when communicating, can occur with multilingual students when writing is monomodal (paper and pencil), by putting the focus on one way of communicating (Narey, 2017). Offering a multimodal approach allows multicultural and

multilingual students to have different opportunities to capture the right word or words to express their thoughts (Lizárraga & Gutiérrez, 2018). Kress and colleagues (2003, 2010; Kress & Jewitt, 2003; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001) discuss the importance of semiotics, meaning-making to go beyond text and language. Digital storytelling allows meaning to no longer be stagnant; it connects multiple modes to represent an idea, object, or belief. When putting the different modes together, meaning transcends one dimension (Kress, 2010). For example, Pacheco and Smith (2015) found when multicultural and multilingual students created digital stories, they could leverage multiple languages by recording the narrative of the story in their native language, writing the text in English, and use a heritage language song to convey meaning. My study develops multimodal ideas by investigating how the preadolescent is meaning making in school as a learner.

Research has shown how to incorporate digital story in class to help with understanding text (Guttiérrez et al. 2011), crossing boundaries with home and school knowledge (Anderson et al., 2018; Fitts & Gross, 2010; Hirsch & Macleroy, 2020; Ranker, 2008; Smith et al., 2020), and using identity text (stories created about the student) to support positive identity development with multicultural and multilingual students (Cummins et al., 2015). Although important strides have been made, research has only started understanding how digital storytelling is an introspective tool for identity. We need to move beyond multimodal opportunities for exploration, instead focusing on in-depth understanding of bridging home and school cultures. In the classroom, including the home context and knowing the realities of students' lives makes this content even more meaningful, as teachers can then draw connections between academic content and students' prior knowledge from personal experiences (Ladson-Billings, 1994). This study incorporates authentic storytelling (Ada & Campoy, 2004), employing culturally relevant

pedagogy by valuing both home and school cultures (Ladson-Billings, 1995), and centering bilingual Latinx students' experiences (España & Herrera, 2020) in a digital story in which they answer the question who they are as learners to explore their cultural and ethnic identity.

A smaller section of scholarly work focuses on digital storytelling as an introspective tool for identity (Anderson & Macleroy, 2017; Anderson et al., 2018; Cummins & Early, 2011; Cummins et al., 2015; Vasudevan et al., 2010) and using a social justice lens with ethnicity at the center (Rolon-Dow, 2011). Multimodality, as a theoretical model, not only goes beyond academic achievement but also helps with the complexities of multilingual and multicultural students accepting and affirming their ethnic identities while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities (Ladson-Billings, 1995). This study uses multimodality as a tool to investigate identity development by using multiple modes (photos throughout the school, music choice, and text) for participants to explore their identity to answer the question who they are as learners. The theoretical construct of multimodality compliments the construct of identity for this study because it allows for multiple modes of meaning to be made, opportunity for students to express who they are, embraces full funds of knowledge, and centers student experiences through authentic storytelling.

There is a lack of research on Latinx students creating text that is culturally authentic at a young age, showing areas of gap when students are creating their own story (Ada & Campoy, 2004; Angay-Crowder, Choi, & Yi, 2013; Cummins & Early, 2011; España & Herrera, 2020). We know even less about how we can use these tools to support academic learning and identity development strategically with students of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Rowe & Miller, 2016). Development in self-knowledge, values, goals, orientation, and skills for personal and social transformation is critical for schools to acknowledge in helping Latinx

students. Unless schools have access to the right tools and understand the complexities of identity early enough to eliminate misconceptions, Latinx students will continue to drop out of high school (NCES, 2018) and underperform on standardized tests (Ramos & Murphey, 2016) due to home and school disconnect (Quiroz, 2001; Constante et al., 2020). The analysis of multimodal literacy is necessary to shed light on how ethnic identity is represented and negotiated in multimodal forms (Davis & Weinshenken, 2012; Yang, 2012). This study will investigate how the use of multimodal digital storytelling can be used with students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, specifically Latinx fourth-grade students, to help them express and explore their cultural and ethnic identity.

Context of Study

Currently, the majority of public-school classrooms in the United States employ an English immersion model, focusing on the dominant language and culture. A challenge Latinx students face is the problematic conceptions of bilingualism (Braunstein, 2014; Garcia, 2009). For example, English as second language programs (ESL) are presumed to be "subtractive" and assimilationist (Valenzuela, 1999), which means that the native language is seen more as a deficit rather than a benefit (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2018). Schools view assimilation as critical to being academically successful in school. Studies report Latinx students are discouraged from speaking Spanish at school (Carter, 2014), resulting in their ethnicity, culture, and language being ignored (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2018; Quiroz, 2001).

In the state of Florida, the setting for the current study, the population's majority of non-dominant groups is labeled Latinx or "Hispanic," and the top language spoken at home, other than English, is Spanish. This state has a high percentage of students labeled ELL compared to the rest of the United States. Florida is ranked third in the ELL population, with Spanish being

the majority of these students' first language (Florida Department of Education [FDOE], 2020). In Florida, Latinx students comprise the second-highest retention in third grade and at near the top of high school dropout rates (FDOE, 2016). With FDOE funds put in place to assist these students, supporting a positive ethnic identity could be a solution.

Significance of Study

There is a strong relationship between identity and education, specifically, EI development in Latinx young adolescents (Rivas-Drake, 2014a, 2014b, Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014, 2017), and yet little is known about how to use digital storytelling as an introspective tool to support learning strategically with students of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Anderson & Macleroy, 2017; Anderson et al., 2018; Cummins & Early, 2011; Fitts & Gross, 2010; Hirsch & Macleroy, 2020; Vasudevan et al., 2010). However, research has shown that multimodal literacy can break down language ideologies (Anderson et al., 2018; Anderson & Macleroy, 2017; Hirsch & Macleroy, 2020; Rolon-Dow, 2011) supporting a positive EI development (Brown & Chu, 2012; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014a, 2014b; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014, 2016, 2017, 2018; Quintana, 2007).

This study seeks to understand how Latinx young adolescents navigate their ethnic identity at school through digital storytelling, a multimedia form that uses text, images, and sounds to tell a story. Storytelling is a means by which Latinx students can explore and express their cultural and linguistic identities (Angay-Cowder et al., 2013; Skinner & Hagood, 2008). Therefore, by engaging students in digital storytelling, creating an *identity text*, they could experience enhanced cultural identification, become critical thinkers, writers, and connect their home and academic practices (Cummins et al., 2015; Grant & Bolin, 2016).

Purpose

The purpose of this study extends beyond interest in the intrinsic complexities of one student or process. More broadly, this study deepens understandings of how ethnic identity develops in young adolescents overall. Therefore, this study is designed as a collective case study in which each "case" or student was "instrumental to learning about" (Stake, 1995, p. 3) an in-depth understanding of ethnic identity development in Latinx young adolescents. As a collective case study (Stake, 1995), the focus is on individual students and the whole. The purpose of this collective case study is to add to the literature about understanding the problematic relationship between ethnic identity and learning with Latinx students (Quiroz, 2001; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014; Umaña-Taylor, 2016). This study connects ethnic identity through culture and language such as how often students mention or connect heritage (family, traditions, food, etc.) when learning. I will address the following research questions:

1. In what ways do Latinx fourth-grade elementary school learners navigate their culture and ethnic identity at school?

2. How does the multimodal tool of investigation, digital storytelling, assist in meaning-making aspects of their culture and ethnic identity at school?

Definition of Terms

Bilingualism—an individual uses two languages

Cultural discontinuity—defined as language patterns from multicultural and multilingual children that differ from the dominant school environment (Lovelace & Wheeler, 2006)

Dual language learner—labeled in education as an English language learner (ELL) or English learner (EL), English is the second language

Ethnic identity (EI)—self-identification or the ethnic label an individual uses regarding their group membership

English immersion—English only instruction with no modifications or materials translated, native language not encouraged or used in the classroom

Ethnic-racial identity (ERI)—includes racial oppression along with ethnic group membership

Funds of knowledge—includes all linguistic and cultural knowledge for learning (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2019; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Marshall & Toohey, 2010; Moll et al., 1992)

Translanguaging—the multilingual student can use all their linguistic repertoire and views language as dynamic

Multilingual—the ability of an individual to use more than two languages

Digital storytelling (DST)—using multiple modes (or modalities)—beyond and including text, sound, images, color, and animation—to tell a story that is usually 2–3 minutes

Digital story (DS)—the product of digital storytelling

Identity texts—"instructional spaces that opened up when teachers encouraged students to use their multilingual and/or multimodal skills as cognitive tools and to employ a broad range of modalities to create literature and art and to generate insight about social and personal realities" (Cummin et al., 2015, p. 557).

Subtractive learning—you need to forget one language in order to learn a new language (i.e., A–B = A; A is English, B is Spanish)

Delimitations and Limitations

Findings from this study may be transferable (Trochim 2006) but not generalizable to populations similar to that of the participants, given that this population is in a public, elementary

school classroom in the southeast United States. The reader would determine transferability, understanding the context of this study and how it would apply to the new context. Specifically, the findings may represent young adolescents who are Latinx learning in English-only models of education. Because the sample is of one school and three students, the generalizability of the findings is reduced and may not be generalizable to other diverse backgrounds or to those who do not live in the state of Florida.

Organization of Remaining Chapters

The next chapters are the roadmap to this study. Chapter 2 includes a literature review focused on ethnic identity (EI) development of Latinx students in the United States and how multimodality is an introspective tool to help understand EI development. Chapter 3 describes the methodology used in this study including a description of the participants, procedure, ethical considerations, research design, and a data analysis plan. Chapter 4 describes the findings of the collective cases. Last, Chapter 5 encompasses the discussion, implications in education, limitations, and future directions.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Without a sense of identity, there can be no struggle.

—Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

Ethnic identity has a lifelong impact on the lives, social relationships, access to resources, and learning of minoritized populations (Quintana, 1998; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014a; Rogers et al., 2020). Chapter two begins with a sociocultural theoretical framework that helps to explain the phenomenon of ethnic identity and why it is important during middle childhood development. This is followed by a literature review focused on the ethnic identity (EI) development of Latinx students in the United States. Lastly, multimodality is explored as an introspective tool for understanding EI development.

Theoretical Framework

Understanding the interconnectedness of language and culture with identity is essential for teachers to effectively support multilingual and multicultural students. For this study, I integrate sociocultural models to investigate the relationship between language, culture, and identity in Latinx children's learning. First, to get a multilayered perspective of ethnic identity development of Latinx fourth-grade students at their school, an ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017) considers identity development nested in multiple social contexts and environments. Within these broader social systems, the theoretical framework of multiliteracies (New London Group [NLG] 1996) creates a point of entrance where literacy is not monomodal (Narey, 2017). Narey defines monomodal as "literacy that

privileges the written word" and is a "social justice concern," particularly for marginalized

populations because curriculum and instruction fail to incorporate all their skills and knowledge

(Narey, 2017, p. 6). This framework goes beyond technologies to include multilayered

dimensions constructed through multiple modes or modalities (e.g., sound, image, text),

addressing two key areas: "the multiplicity of communication channels and media, and the

increasing saliency of cultural and linguistic diversity" (NLG, 1996, p. 63). Through a

multiliteracies framework, the first key area relates to the skill participants need to learn to build

the digital story (e.g., using Adobe Spark, editing photos, etc.) while the second key area relates

to centering their cultural and linguistic repertoire to deepen understanding of the participants'

identity. Together, these perspectives provide multidimensional and interconnected insights into

the complex and dynamic process of ethnic identity development with Latinx fourth-grade

students because they move beyond monomodal designs of literacy to include multiple modes of

demonstrating all funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). In the following section, I describe

each theory and then discuss how they work together to guide my inquiry.

Ethnic Identity Development

To address my first research question, "In what ways do fourth-grade Latinx students

express culture and ethnic identity in school?", I build on the work of prior developmental

psychologists, starting with the leader of identity development, Erickson (1959), who brought to

light the psychosocial crisis of identity development in young adolescents. The current study will

focus on fourth-grade students (10 years old). Erickson describes this age range to include the

psychosocial crisis, "industry versus inferiority" (Ages 7 to 11). This is an important time in

development because children enter school and either get the chance to be successful and learn

(industry) or they think they cannot learn (inferiority), setting the tone for their academic trajectory.

Building off Erikson, Marcia (1966) dug deeper into identity development, including four stages based on exploration or commitment to identity (i.e., identity achievement, foreclosure, moratorium, and diffusion). Of particular interest to my study is a moratorium, a time of identity exploration for young adolescents. Further, and most relevant, building from the foundation set forth by Erickson and Marcia, Phinney and colleagues (1990; Phinney & Ong, 2007; Phinney & Balderlomar, 2011) continue addressing identity, specifically including ethnic identity (EI) development during preadolescence as a time for exploration. The broad term of *ethnic identity* is defined by Phinney (1990) by multiple psychological and social components: (a) self-identification or the ethnic label an individual uses regarding his or her group membership; (b) a sense of belonging, which includes the level of importance or concern given to one's ethnic group; (c) positive or negative attitudes toward one's ethnic group, which is typically expressed in the form of acceptance (positive) or denial (negative) of one's ethnic group; and (d) ethnic involvement, or the participation in social and cultural aspects of the ethnic group.

Quintana (2007), through a meta-analysis, expands upon the definition of EI to include historically marginalized people, shifting the focus on Latinx populations. In Quintana's (2007) meta-analysis, he found EI development in Latinx young adolescents differs from that of White children. Latinx young adolescents explore their ethnic identity earlier. Quintana (2007) defines this time of exploration as "a level of ethnic perspective-taking ability in which adolescents develop an ethnic group consciousness" (p. 262). Umaña-Taylor et al.'s (2014) synthesis on current research builds on this definition by connecting EI (referred to by the author as ethnic-racial identity, ERI) with Latinx young adolescents within the social and environmental context

in education through different milestones. Umaña-Taylor et al. isolate middle childhood development, highlighting cognitive milestones, social and environmental context, and how they connect to EI development. The cognitive milestones include "refinement of cognitive abilities (e.g., equity-based reasoning, social comparison, perspective-taking abilities) (p. 22). The most important social and environmental context during this time of EI development are family, peers, and media. Through these cognitive milestones, middle childhood students are aware of biases based on ethnicity and understand social hierarchy such as in-group and out-group. They connect public regard, perceptions of how others' view them, to their EI.

According to the research, Figure 2.1 shows the chronological progression of identity theory and the lens that will be used in this study to interpret EI. Both Umaña-Taylor et al. (2014) and Rogers et al. (2020) found in their synthesis of the literature a lack of EI studies done in elementary, with most of the studies being done in middle and high school. Rogers et al.'s discussion of studies that did occur in elementary school showed that children can recognize incidents of bias, understand what it means to be part of their ethnic group, and the importance of EI. This theory allows me to investigate EI in preadolescents in elementary school through their perspective, lived experiences, and exploration process.

Figure 2.1

Progression of Identity Theory

Erickson (1959) "Industry vs. Inferiority"

Marcia (1966) Moratorium

Phinney (1990) Ethnic Identity (EI)

Quintana (2007) EI with historically marginalized

Umana-Taylor et al. (2014) EI and Education
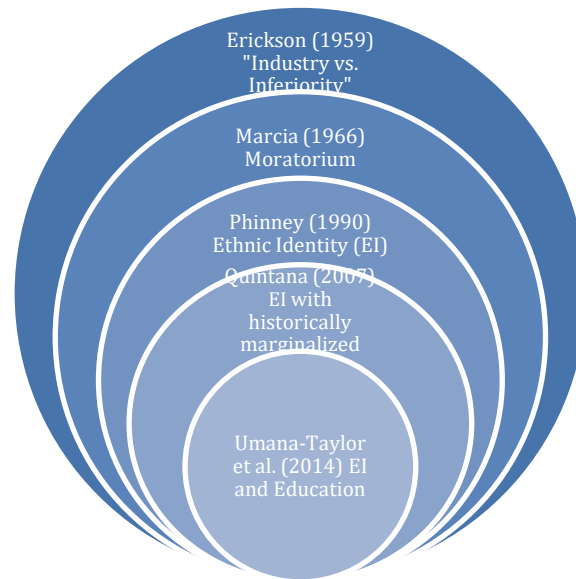
Situating Ethnic Identity within an Ecological Context

Ethnic identity is dynamic and best understood within its context (Douglass & Umaña-Taylor, 2015; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014a; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). External influences affect development in many different ways (Bronfenbrenner, 1977) and culture is at the center (Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017). Therefore, learning does not exist in isolation, but rather occurs within multiple ecological contexts. Bronfenbrenner (1977, 1986) discussed development within communities and the wider society. In developmental science, paradigms for investigating the effects of the environment provide powerful tools to analyze data. According to Bronfenbrenner (1977, 1986), the structure of external systems within the community and wider society influence development, particularly learning. Bronfenbrenner (1986) explains:

> Although the family is the principal context in which human development takes place, it
>
> is but one of several settings in which the developmental process can and does occur.

Moreover, the processes operating in different settings are not independent of each other. To cite a common example, events at home can affect the child's progress in school, and vice versa. (p. 723)

Bronfenbrenner is discussing that the family environment is only one context out of many in which development is taking place for a child. And the different environments work together to impact learning. A child's family life, ethnicity, culture, and language are not independent of the context of school.

School and Home

The school and home context are essential to understand because school is the first major institution encountered by children and the interaction between home and school influences development (Garcia Coll & Szalacha, 2004). Garcia Coll and Szalcha (2004) were the first to forge a new understanding of development context centering multicultural, especially Latinx immigrant experiences by factoring in social positioning and culture to create a more relevant and holistic view of children. Particularly important during middle childhood, Coll and Szalcha (2004) support technologically innovative ways, such as digital storytelling, to understanding how these different dimensions increase knowledge about the self during the critical ages of 6 to 12 years old. Garcia Coll and Szalacha (2004) break down their integrative model of child development into three overarching sections: (a) societal constructs (b) child constructs, and (c) family constructs. Garcia Coll and Szalacha's study expands on an ecological approach to child development by including additional factors like social position, culture, and media. They describe social position to include racism and discrimination and the constraining nature of the child's school and neighborhood. The authors called for research to use these constructs to connect with identity and schooling issues.

23

Common contexts of middle childhood development that affect learning include micro-level, such as family, culture, church, teacher, peers, and the broader society, and macro-level factors, such as the curriculum taught, geographical location, such as Florida, or policy. Context is essential in understanding the complexities of my participants' environment and what they describe as part of who they are as learners. Of particular relevance to my study is the mesosystem, which explores the connections between students' home environment and the school environment.

Culture and Language

In this study, complementing Garcia Coll & Szalacha (2004) middle childhood development, I emphasize using Vélez-Agosto et al.'s (2017) bioecological theory revision that develops Bronfenbrenner's model, shifting culture as an intricate part of the development process, versus Bronfenbrenner's isolating culture on the macrosystem. Vélez-Agosto et al. (2017) assert "Culture is not a separate system operating from a macro-level, but it is within everyday action (activities, routines, practices) and part of communities of practice through a language-mediated meaning-making system" (pp. 900–901). This comparison allows me to have culture at the center of development when looking at my data and explore conflicting cultural environments. This theory considers culture to have multiple external influences that impact how preadolescents learn and highlights the importance of identity formation and connections in elementary school students (Collett, 2019). Bioecological theories help explain that identities are not intrinsic or separate from environmental contexts and interactions; rather they are embodied and enacted in social practice (Vasudevan et al., 2010).

Multimodality: Investigating Identity With a Critical Lens

Multimodality theory can be used to investigate Latinx preadolescents' identity in school from the broader macro-level when looking across all the participants' digital stories, to the individual micro-level when examining each individual participant, as a lens to explore multicultural and multilingual narratives from traditionally marginalized groups (Cummins & Early, 2011). Multimodality builds off of what NLG (1996) termed multiliteracies that aim to increase diversity with culture and language by broadening what we define as literacy. NLG advocates pedagogy for literacies to go beyond monomodal design, from a single mode (i.e., pencil and paper) to multimodal, having multiple modes (i.e., images, text, sound) of meaning-making with a framework that includes critical framing and transformative practice. This relates to my study because by using digital storytelling I am using a critical frame that builds on both cognitive and social elements of literacy pedagogy, allowing preadolescents to reflect on what they know, critique their understanding, and scaffold knowledge in a new context. Through a transformative practice of multiple modes, preadolescents reimagine literacy and meaning-making practices by exploring their own realities and transforming how they view their identity.

Meaning-Making. By "meaning-making" in a multimodality form, I refer to Kress and colleague's (2003, 2010; Kress & Jewitt, 2003; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001) definition of the social semiotic theory (Hodge & Kress, 1988) that makes social interaction the center focus. Kress and van Leeuwen (2001) define *multimodality* as the "use of several semiotic modes in the design of a semiotic product or event" (p. 20). A major component of this theory is *modes*; *modes* comprise all semiotics beyond text or language. By situating the interaction historically, socially, environmentally, and culturally, I, as a researcher, will examine how students can be active in the production of meaning. Gee (2015) asserts meaning making in literacy is more than

cognitive ability, breaking down a monolithic view to include multiple sociocultural ecological dimensions of the student's social, cultural, historical, and institutional context practices. Thus, a multicultural and multilingual representation is critical in literacy when investigating culture and language with identity.

Transformative Linguistic Practices. Linguistic barriers can occur with multilingual students, so offering a multimodal approach allows the students different opportunities to capture the right word or words to express their thought (Lizárraga & Gutiérrez, 2018). Therefore, the multimodality framework grants the students the ability to interconnect cultural and linguistic knowledge at school. Angay-Crowder et al. (2013), Rowe and Miller (2016), and Pacheco & Smith (2015) used a multimodal theoretical framework to incorporate different semiotic meanings to understand historically marginalized multicultural and multilingual learners. According to these scholars, this platform permits students to take advantage of multiple linguistic repertoires, defined as translanguaging (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2018) and not be bound by stagnant literacy practices. Multimodality is transformative by incorporating translanguaging theory practices to "include the full range of linguistic performances of multilingual language users for purposes that transcend the combination of structures, the alternation between systems, the transmission of information and the representation of values, identities and relationships" (Wei, 2011, p. 1223). When students are describing their ethnic identity through multimodal theory, the "modes work in different ways with different effect, to create multilayered, communication ensembles" (Stein, 2009, p. 871).

Digital Storytelling. Digital storytelling is a tool for investigating and negotiating identity (Cummins & Early, 2011). Digital storytelling composition embraces multimodality framing and empowers students to draw from a range of linguistic repertoires and express

identities through using multiple modes (or modalities)—beyond and including text, sound, images, color, and animation—to tell a story that is usually 2–3 minutes (Cummins et al., 2015; Green, 2013; Hirsch & Macleroy, 2020; NLG, 1996; Smith & Pacheco, 2020). A multimodality framework (Angay-Crowder et al., 2013; Kress, 2003; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001; Pacheco & Smith, 2015) highlights the ideas that modes permeate accessibility to composing stories, include instructional flexibility, and promote the dynamic interaction among modes as significant ways to tell one's story (Anderson et al., 2018; Cummins et al., 2015; Jewitt, 2009). Multimodal forms such as photos are a "medium of seeing," a semiotic expression for participants to create meaning "as social beings with historical legacies" and "emergent identities" (Wissman, 2008, p. 14). Digital storytelling is an approach to create a multimodal project that allows for students to express, explore, and draw upon their cultural selves; it affords boundary-crossing between school and home to provide an "inversion in semiotic power" (Kress, 2003, p. 9).

Authentic authorship in literacy is restricted by the lack of opportunities available for Latinx preadolescents to share their cultural and linguistic knowledge (Ada & Campoy, 2004; España & Herrera, 2020). Students can transcend monomodal typical opportunities of paper-pencil writing that allow students to express themselves in empowering multimodal ways (Pacheco & Smith, 2015; Honeyford, 2014; Vasudevan, 2006; Zapata & Van Horn, 2017). Rarely do multicultural and multilingual students get to bring their home knowledge and interests into the classroom because it does not fit into the mandated daily lessons or the routine modes of school participation (España & Herrera, 2020; Vasudevan et al., 2010). Gutiérrez et al. (2009) argue, "Deficit notions about the cognitive potential of individuals from nondominant communities have persisted in social science inquiry, particularly where literacy is concerned" (p. 212). Multimodal literacy, such as digital storytelling is situated in social practice, breaking

27

away from monocultural static ideologies of literacy practice (Gee, 2015) but to include identity (Street, 2003).

Vasudevan et al. (2010) found identity is not the focus of curriculum in school, instead, other pressures such as standardized tests take precedence, especially for Title I and failing schools in the United States. Personal narrative texts, journal writing, and more recently digital storytelling provide opportunities for preadolescents to develop and display different identities, such as ethnic, cultural, racial, or linguistic identity (Castañeda et al., 2018; Hirsch & Macleroy, 2020; Skinner & Hagood, 2008). Stories shape the social realities for the participants and how they view themselves (Bruner, 1991; McAdams & Mclean, 2013; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). Prioritizing students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds affirms their ethnic identity, incorporates vital "funds of knowledge," and contributes to academic learning (Gee, 2015). Digital storytelling provides opportunities for storytellers to assert narrative authority in sharing their identity (Dyson & Genishi, 1994). Unfortunately, schools, teachers, and literacy practices often ignore this multicultural and multilingual ideological pedagogy (Taylor et al., 2008).

Rejecting monolithic practices, Stewart and Ivala (2017) argue digital storytelling is a form of resistance to current educational pedagogy that consists of stagnant literacy practices. Digital storytelling includes contexts that are rich with multiple modes that provide preadolescents with the opportunities to develop and express their identities across the production of multiple kinds of semiotic meanings and linguistic options representing a variety of stories and using a range of modes (Vasudevan et al., 2010). Using multiple modes of literacy as a nontraditional method of pedagogy, such as digital storytelling, can create innovative ways of engaging teaching and learning relationships, especially with multilingual and multicultural students to support positive identity development (Anderson et al, 2018; Angay-Crowder et al.,

2013; Cummins et al., 2015). Through the use of multiple modes, translanguaging, and social semiotic meaning making abilities, digital storytelling is a technological tool that interconnects culture and language to understand identity.

A multimodality framework provides a necessary lens for analysis of students' digital story creation, informing my second research question, "How does the multimodal tool of investigation, digital storytelling, illustrate aspects of Latinx preadolescents' culture and ethnic identity at school?"

Figure 2.2 illustrates how my integrated sociocultural theoretical frameworks will work together to give me an understanding of how Latinx preadolescents are navigating their EI in a fourth-grade classroom. Ethnic identity development (Phinney, 1990; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2005) will be informed by both ecological factors (i.e., classroom) (Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017), and multimodality (i.e., digital story) (Kress 2003, 2010; NLG, 1996).

Figure 2.2

Theoretical Framework of EI: Ethnic Identity, Ecological Factors, and Multimodality
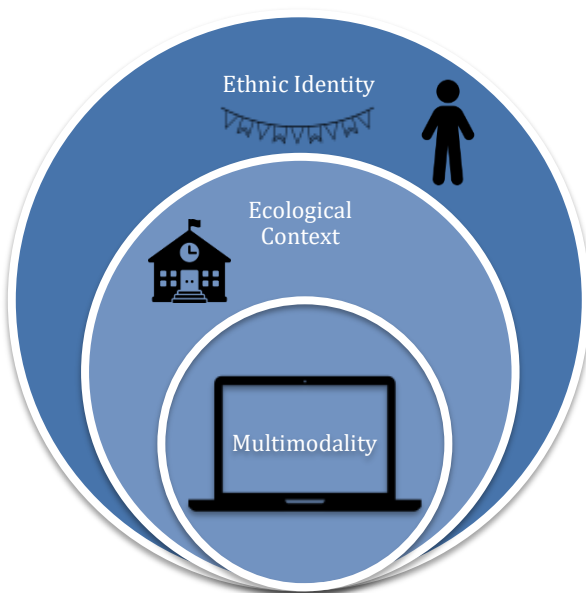
Literature Review

As the design and analysis of this study are guided by the theoretical framework, they are also shaped by findings from relevant research on ethnic identity development and multimodal literacy. The following literature review synthesizes main empirical findings first, focused on the broader views of the context of the study. Then, middle childhood development of ethnic identity and how it is navigated are explored. The second section of literature synthesis is on multimodal literacy, specifically digital storytelling as a tool for investigating identity. For this review, middle childhood is the main developmental age of focus; however, studies of young adolescents (Ages 7 to 15) are also considered because of limited research. Thus, studies focusing on students in elementary to middle school were primarily included. The findings from this review have direct implications for this study.

Middle Childhood and EI Latinx Development

In this section, I describe the current literature surrounding ethnic identity development during middle childhood. Eccels (1999) defines the middle childhood stage as occurring between 6 to10 years old. Eccels reports that although this phase is not typically considered the most dramatic change in one's life, this time is when tremendous changes are occurring because of the social contexts of school and peers. Building upon middle childhood research, Garcia Coll and Szalacha (2004) created a new conceptual model of understanding middle childhood development that encompasses race, culture, and social factors of neighborhoods and school that are often segregated due to low income. Prior models did not factor in essential cultural development considerations. The authors took into consideration not only traditional milestones in development but centralized students of color (Latinx, African American) and immigrants'

experiences by factoring in social positioning, culture, racism, and the media to create a more relevant and holistic view that is ecological.

Because of limited research during this developmental phase, I extended my search to also include young adolescence, Ages 11 to 15. That while the developmental spaces are different, they still add to our understanding of these ideas of abstract thinking, metacognition, family, peers, and media (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). The participants are in fourth-grade, 10-years-old, developmentally that is toward the end of middle childhood and right before young adolescence. Since this age is right at the border, it would be a benefit to understand the research in both middle childhood and young adolescence. I purposefully selected fourth graders because this study focuses on looking at aspects of EI development in 10-year-olds and how that impacts their learning.

Linking Bi/Multilingualism With EI and Multimodality

Research in the field of ethnic identity shows that when native language and culture were embraced in school during middle childhood, they had positive impacts on academics, social-emotional skills, and ethnic identity. Arredondo et al. (2016), Garcia and Kleifgen (2019), Gutiérrez et al. (2011), Canagarajah (2013), and Velasco and Garcia (2014) reported in their research the importance of language being dynamic and literacy needing to move beyond traditional monoglossic models, especially with bilingual students, by giving students an opportunity in their learning to use their full linguistic repertoires in education.

Linguistic identity is important for ethnic identity because it is one part of how children connect their ethnicity to their culture. Based on Arredondo et al.'s (2016) qualitative interview study of 25 Latinx students between the ages of 5–12 years old, positive ethnic identity occurs when all linguistic repertoires are embraced and connected to learning. Their participants took

part in activities that emphasized building upon their heritage language to learn the second

language (English), which in turn enhanced their literacy skills. More importantly, when ethnic

identity was included in their education, there was a positive effect on learning. Arredondo and

colleagues found six major themes emerged when ethnic identity was included in the students'

learning: cultural pride, including a sense of uniqueness for being able to speak another

language; appreciation for diversity, including opportunities that the students perceived as a

result of being bilingual; use of Spanish to create a sense of group membership and exclusion;

and bilateral language learning. These findings are similar to other studies that use

bi/multilingualism and culture as "funds of knowledge" (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2019; Gutiérrez &

Rogoff, 2003; Marshall & Toohey, 2010; Moll et al., 1992), meaning that language and culture

are resources for learning, not deficits.

Translanguaging is a linguistic theory that supports resisting language as a linear process

but one that is dynamic and can be strengthened through multimodality. Garcia and Kleifgen

(2019) found in a case study analysis conducted with middle schoolers, that translanguaging,

specific to literacy and multiliteracies deepened students' understanding of the text and created a

sense of *confianza* (confidence) in students' work, challenging traditional thoughts on literacy. In

another case study done by Velasco and Garcia (2004) with elementary students in Grades K–4,

they found translanguaging as a mode to not only create and collaborate with peers but also a

chance to build all their linguistic abilities. The authors focused on the writing process to not be

restricted, defining translanguaging as a term used to incorporate the dynamic production of

language as fluid, not stagnant.

Multicultural learners need to have a pedagogy that includes a hybrid practice, such as

translanguaging and multimodality, because of powerful "language-crossing" abilities and

identity leveraged from both home and school contexts (Gutiérrez et al., 2011). Gutiérrez et al.'s (2011) study with students in Grades K–5 highlighted the need for more modes in literacy to be integrated in education; "hybrid and multimodal practices are often not acknowledged in learning environments, formal and informal" (p. 235). Educators need to shift our orientation in literacy to go beyond the "monolingual/bilingual binaries" (Canagarajah, 2013). For example, in an ethnographic prospective study, Canagarajah (2013) found that through multimodal design, teachers are able to switch their orientation to literacy from one that is independent to more of a partnership where both the teacher and student share the construction of knowledge.

Scholars in the field of multimodality agree that a full linguistic repertoire is essential, not only for academic achievement but also to help with the complexities of multilingual and multicultural students accepting and affirming their ethnic identities (Cummins et al., 2015; Vasudevan et al., 2010), socially, intellectually, and culturally while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities (Anderson & Macleroy, 2017; Hirsch & Macleroy, 2020; Rolon-Dow, 2011). Teachers need to understand the student holistically, which includes home and school context. Thinking about the home language background and knowing the realities of students' lives makes this content even more meaningful, as teachers can then draw connections between academic content and students' prior knowledge from personal experiences (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2011). The strengths of these studies will be discussed further in the next portion of the literature review. These studies help researchers and educators understand the complexities of ethnic identity development with multicultural and multilingual students as influencing not only academic success and literacy skills but more importantly building positive ethnic identity.

Ethnic Identity: Methods and Positive EI

Researchers in the field of educational psychology have supported the need for students to develop a positive EI, meaning a positive connection with those similar in their ethnic in-group (Brown, 2017; Brown & Chu, 2012; Kiang et al., 2006; Mckown & Weinstein, 2003; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014a, 2014b; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2011, 2012, 2014; Vera et al., 2011).

In a meta-analysis, Rivas-Drake et al. (2014a) included 46 quantitative studies on the positive outcomes of having EI. Their focus was on *positive ethnic-racial affect* that focused on 10 positive outcomes with young adolescents. The studies took place primarily in middle and high school, with only one study conducted in an elementary school. They defined *positive ethnic-racial affect* as "how good, happy, and proud youth feel about their ethnicity or race" (Rivas-Drake et al., p. 79). Notable findings from Rivas-Drake et al.'s meta-analysis illuminate positive ethnic identity as having a significant effect on psychosocial outcomes of self-esteem, well-being, and academic school attitudes. This study highlights the need to understand a positive ethnic identity in education as schools become more diverse, and specifically related to the Latinx population, the largest minority group enrolled in U.S. schools (NCES, 2018).

Umaña-Taylor et al.'s (2017, 2018) study includes a small-scale randomized control trial intervention, the *Identity Project,* for young adolescents that showed similar findings to Rivas-Drake et al. (2014a). Umaña-Taylor et al. (2017) created a program to enhance and implement the curriculum to engage youth's (Ages 14–18) ethnic-racial identity (ERI) formation. ERI adds to the global understanding of EI by adding racial identity. By including race (e.g., Black) researchers acknowledge the intersectionality of ethnic and racial understanding. The intervention, using a pre- and post-test design, led to increases in exploration and resolution of ERI, which not only led to better grades but also higher self-esteem. The 8-week Identity Project

intervention included multimodal features such as taking photos and working with peers discussing commonalities and general themes for clarity, using a semiotic meaning-making design to describe ERI. This activity, along with seven others, helped build understanding with peers in what their ERI meant to them and helped the students learn about other ethnicities and cultures.

Furthermore, both Gillen-O'Neel et al.'s (2011) study and Rivas-Drake et al.'s review (2014b) focused on historically marginalized populations and their positive ERI development. Gillen-O'Neel et al. (2011) reported that 451 children (Ages 6–10, M = 8.56) from New York City were aware of stigma based on their ethnicity, particularly if they come from a stigmatized group. The researchers measured stigma awareness by public regard in both societal evaluations of their ethnic group and group social status. The children answered the questionnaires during school hours. Social identities and attitudes were measured using various questions on a Likert scale (1 = *none*, 5 = *all*), such as "How many Americans do you think feel that [child's ethnicity] people are important in America?" and "How many Americans do you think want to live near [child's ethnicity] people?" (p. 1474–1475).

Gillen-O'Neel et al. (2011) measured academic anxiety by adapting a math measure (Meece et al., 1990) asking questions on a Likert scale (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *very much*) including "When taking a test, how nervous do you get?" and "How much do you worry about what your parents will say if you don't do well at school?" (p. 1475). Results showed African American, Chinese, and Dominican students reported higher levels of academic anxiety than European American peers. The authors stated that acculturative stress, "the tension experienced when children attempt to resolve differences between their culture of origin and dominant culture," caused anxiety attributed to students awareness of belonging to a stigmatized group (p. 1481).

Additionally, Suarez-Morales & Lopez (2009) attributed acculturative stress as a factor for anxiety due to differences between native culture and dominant culture. Building on the study by Suarez-Morales & Lopez (2009), Gillen-O'Neel et al. (2011) found that ethnic-minority children who reported more awareness of stigma had lower intrinsic motivation. Yet, Latinx children showed, despite the stigma, they still had a high intrinsic motivation. These researchers conclude that schools need to offer support for positive ethnic identity development for socioemotional benefits.

In a review of ethnic-racial identity, Rivas-Drake et al. (2014b) found that a positive ethnic-racial identity among young adolescents of color improved psychosocial functioning, increased exploration and resolution of their identity, increased self-esteem, lowered depressive symptoms, and improved academic adjustment (i.e., better grades). Therefore, when young Latinx adolescents had a strong understanding of what their ERI was (as measured by the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure [MEIM]), they had higher self-esteem and higher interests in academics. Rivas-Drake et al. (2014b) define a strong understanding of ERI as "a composite of exploration, validation, belonging, and commitment and of affirmation and achievement, respectively" (p. 47).

The MEIM created by Phinney (1990) was highlighted as the most common and useful measure to use with Latinx students for defining ethnic identity in this analysis of positive ethnic-racial affect and academic adjustment. Out of the 46 studies in the meta-analysis (Rivas-Drake et al., 2014a) 22 of them used the MEIM.

Across multiple studies (Rivas-Drake et al., 2014a, 2017; Rogers et al., 2020; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2015), a common discussion regarding the future direction of the research was the need for more ecological studies to understand the contextual dimensions of EI. Rogers et al.

(2020) discuss in their lifespan model of EI, that an ecological study would add to the broader topography of current oppressive structures and systems for social justice, and equity in education. It is important to think about EI in the social processes and societal outcomes beyond the individual. Rivas-Drake et al. (2017) state that it is unclear the daily context of EI development with peers and their engagement with others. They recommended future research is needed to understand the school setting and relationship with EI development.

EI Definitions With Latinx Preadolescents

A limited number of studies have looked at how preadolescents describe EI, and the majority of the studies conducted with preadolescents have been done quantitatively (Benninger & Savahl, 2017; Freinauer & Cutri, 2012; Rogers et al., 2012). Across multiple studies, surveys such as the MEIM (Phinny, 1990) ask students to answer questions from a survey or questionnaire indicating the degree of agreement. When children are given the opportunity for themselves to state how they feel about their EI, it allows for them to explore and express themselves. Quintana (1998) and Umaña-Taylor et al. (2014) report that children Ages 6–10 typically describe ethnicity with concrete definitions and are open to teaching others about their ethnic group and to learn about others' ethnic group, whereas children Ages 10–14 had more abstract, social consequences, and trait-like perspectives regarding ethnicity.

Ethnic Identity and Inequities in Education. We have an education system in the United States that privileges Whites and disadvantages historically marginalized groups. Tatum (1999) states that White privilege is inescapable and present throughout all our lives. Scholars Bernal (2002), Ladson-Billings (2000), and Yosso (2005) ask, Whose knowledge is valuable and whose knowledge is discredited? School environment (Benjamin, 1997; Brown, 2006, 2017; Constante et al., 2020; Gillen-O'Neel et al., 2011; Hashtpari et al., 2021; Kiang et al., 2006;

Umaña-Taylor et al., 2012, 2014) is important in developing minority preadolescent ethnic identity because of interactions with teachers (Brown & Chu, 2012; Douglass & Umaña-Taylor, 2016; Mckown & Weinstein, 2003) and peers (Rivas-Drake et al., 2008, 2017; Shin et al., 2007).

Benjamin (1997), Brown (2006, 2017), and Kiang et al. (2006) reported the importance of the school environment when shaping historically marginalized students' EI, particularly Latinx young adolescents. The importance of EI in school has been reported for over two decades. Benjamin (1997), in an ethnographic study in a fifth-grade classroom, focused on five Mexican students. Twenty years later, Brown (2017), through a quantitative study with third-through fifth-grade Latinx immigrant children (8–12 years old, $N = 155$), found that school had implicit messages that the students used to help them make meaning of the ethnic differences among them. These implicit messages included the interaction between school and the children's ethnicity such as state policy implicitly favoring English in school even when the majority of the students' primary language is something else (i.e., Spanish), administrators not addressing slurs from White monolingual students to Latinx bilingual students and instead punishing Latinx students who defended themselves against these verbal assaults (Benjamin, 1997; Brown, 2017; Carter, 2014). Carter (2014) describes how national narratives and institutional ideologies build on these negative ideologies and practices in schools with both implicit and explicit actions. In Carter's ethnographic study done in a public middle school in the United States with Latinx students who spoke Spanish, White monolinguals at the school (administrators, teachers, and peers) perceived Latinx students as dangerous and secretive. The perception from monolinguals at the school was that Latinx students "choose" to be segregated, even though the school had selected the classroom for English learner support to be in the furthest area of the school and the school highly advocated that Latinx students go into vocational courses. These actions in the

school were informally pressuring Latinx students to disregard their ethnicity, problematizing a broader pressure of what identity was expected of Latinx students.

Brown (2017), similar to Benjamin (1997), stated that research is needed to continue to recognize schools as critical environments, in which children develop an ethnic identity, factoring in a more inclusive curriculum, environmental features, decorations, and policies going beyond the ethnic composition of their teachers or student body. In a synthesis of literature Umaña-Taylor et al. (2014) created developmental EI milestones across a lifetime showing EI as normative development that builds off one another. The milestones are situated in multiple bioecological contexts, particularly showing the school environment being foundational for children, leading to lifelong effects. Furthermore, Brown (2017), Benjamin (1997), and Carter (2014) emphasized the role that the school has on students' identity formation, which has historically "othered" multicultural and multilingual students, especially Latinx students. These studies along with Brown and Chu (2018) emphasize the school environment should reflect the diversity of students to help support positive EI development.

Supporting school as an environment of EI development, Kiang et al.'s (2006) results reported a clear connection between ethnic identity and psychological well-being between 14-year-old Mexican and Chinese students ($N = 415$). This study used a daily diary approach, so the researchers had multiple repeated measures to consider, asking students to report how many times in school they felt stressed, experienced happiness, and were anxious for over two weeks. They found that when students have higher ethnic regard (better understanding of their EI), meaning they have a strong connection to their ethnic identity rather than distancing themselves from their group membership, they displayed less daily anxiety. Kiang et al.'s (2006) study highlighted when multicultural and multilingual students are able to connect knowledge about

39

themselves, this understanding of self, transfers to supporting themselves throughout daily challenges. Furthermore, Constante et al.'s (2020) longitudinal study with Latinx young adolescents (13–14 years old) discussed the importance of socialization and that school is an important environment for EI development because schools are a source of investigating young adolescents' understanding of their ethnicity. It is a source of investigating because of the opportunity in school for ethnic socialization (youths' interaction with both family and friends) which were associated with greater initial exploration of students' ethnic identity that led to initial levels of resolution in understanding themselves.

Teachers. Teachers' interactions at school are essential in understating EI with Latinx preadolescents (Brown & Chu, 2012; Douglass & Umaña-Taylor, 2016; Mckown & Weinstein, 2003). Brown and Chu's (2012) results showed schools, particularly teachers, were a social factor in students' ethnic identities. When teachers valued diversity and multiculturalism, Latinx students had a more positive view of ethnic identity versus when teachers devalued diversity. Beyond the perception of diversity and multiculturalism with teachers, discrimination between students and their teachers also impacts EI development. Brown and Chu define discrimination as "negative behavior toward someone because of their group membership"; with teachers, it could include being graded unjustly (2018, p. 1477). Results of cluster analyses of ERI status with Latinx, Black, and White adolescents (13–19, $N = 1,378$) from both Brown and Chu (2012) and Douglass and Umaña-Taylor (2016) showed a strong sense of the student's EI not only predicted better academic outcomes but also became a protective factor toward discrimination from teachers but interestingly not from peers. A limitation from Brown and Chu (2012) was that teachers self-reported a diversity measure and the observations included only what the school had on display that was ethnically or culturally diverse, such as images or messages, without

stating how often these observations took place. The importance of how you are perceived at school, positive or negative, is a significant part of EI development (Douglass & Umaña-Taylor, 2016). Mckown and Weinstein (2003) found that African Americans and Latinx children (Ages 6 to 10, $N = 202$) were more aware of stereotypes than Whites and Asians. If a teacher held a stereotype, a broad belief about an ethnic group such as the student's academic aptitude, this belief would impact the everyday classroom experience. Building off that study, Mckown and Weinstein (2008) found ($N = 640$, 30 urban elementary classrooms) that because of children's awareness of teacher's stereotypes, due to lower expectations of African American and Latinx students set by the teacher biases, impacted cognitive performance. The teacher's expectation varied by a standard deviation of .75 and 1.00 higher for White and Asian American students. Marginalized students were more aware of their ethnic identity, connecting their identity to the teacher's behavior, affecting their ability to learn and having a negative reflection on their EI.

      Peers. Scholars in the field of EI have found that peers, similar to teachers, have a significant impact on EI development (Rivas-Drake et al., 2008, 2017; Shin et al., 2007). Rivas-Drake et al. (2017) found in a longitudinal study, that for young adolescents ($N = 353$, $M = 11.88$) in one middle school, friendships with diverse students (African-American, White, and Latinx) helped inform how they examined their ethnic-racial identity because of the social context of school. Understanding the micro-context of peers, they found that having cross-ethnic friendships was significant with exploring ERI because of the opportunity to navigate diversity. Shin et al. (2007) reported that if Black and Latinx young adolescents (12–15, $N = 132$) have a positive EI, it can be a protective factor, assisting not only with academic performance but with self-concept, not letting negative interactions with peers interfere with their development.

These studies (Rivas-Drake et al., 2008, 2017; Shin et al., 2007) support the importance of a positive ethnic identity as a resilience protective factor and how positive experiences with peers help build positive EI for Latinx students. A limitation of these studies is that they are survey and student reported; therefore, the data were not able to reflect contextual factors of student answers.

In a systematic review done about the construction of the self by Benninger and Savahl (2017) they found six main themes on how children (18 years old and younger) from 19 different ethnic backgrounds view themselves. They define the construction of self "in which children construct and assign meaning to the 'self'" (p. 545). These meanings impact how children behave, develop, and understand themselves and the environment around them. The six themes that emerged from the systematic review from most common to least were "multidimensionality, discursive practices, environmental conditions, oppression and marginalization, culture, and social support" (p. 9). Each one of these themes shows the complexity of sociocultural factors. The strongest theme was multidimensionality, which in this domain includes environment (i.e., school, home), academics, and ethnicity. Children found tensions between school and home environment expectations. For example, if a child felt that their school environment valued academic success in order to be successful but their family defined success differently, the child would struggle with identity issues. As a way to bridge those environmental differences, Feinauer and Cutri (2012) found that Latinx preadolescent fifth-grade students ($n = 72$) should be able to express their sense of belonging to their ethnic group in the hopes of creating a more inclusive pedagogy. They found that having a sense of belonging supported positive ethnic identity development highlighting the importance of bridging school and family connections.

Limitations of these studies include that data were limited to interview or self-reported; they did not include contextual factors like observations.

Additionally, Rogers et al. (2012) found that ethnic identity development during middle childhood becomes the building block for ethnic identity development throughout an individual's lifespan. Children described ethnic identity to include language, physical appearance, pride, relative social position, and culture. Specifically, the Latinx population referenced more positive traits and pride with being Dominican versus other ethnicities in the study (i.e., Black, White, Russian American, & Chinese American). Their study design included three surveys, were not audio-recorded, and asked only one question "What does it mean to be [ethnicity]?" Both Rogers et al. (2012) and Syed and Azmita (2008) discuss the importance of not generalizing ethnic identity to all ethnicities as responses are multifaceted. For researchers, describing the demographic they are working with, instead of generalizing, will help in understanding the complexities of EI with the Latinx population (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). Rogers et al. (2012) also point to the limited studies on ethnic identity during preadolescence. These studies illuminate the need for more research to be done on how preadolescence describe their EI because it is an age that can support positive connections for a lifetime.

Digital Storytelling With Multilingual and Multicultural Learners

In the second section of this literature review, the focus is on digital storytelling with multilingual and multicultural learners. Most research studies on multimodal storytelling and preadolescents were qualitative and descriptive, including case studies, usually focusing on a small group of two or three composers. Ethnographies, used to understand culture (Rolon-Dow, 2011; Vasudevan et al., 2010), were an equally prevalent type of design; particularly critical ethnography (Anderson & Macleroy, 2017; Anderson et al., 2018; Cummins et al., 2015; Hirsch

& Macleroy, 2020) was used to highlight forms of oppression with a social justice lens. Case studies, used to understand unique phenomenon, were next for prevalence (Castañeda et al., 2018; Cummin & Early, 2000; Pacheco & Smith, 2015; Ranker, 2008; Skinner & Hagood, 2008), followed by systematic reviews (Smith et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2020), qualitative (Angay-Crowder et al., 2013; Fitts & Gross, 2010; Green, 2013) and finally autoethnography (Pierce, 2014) design studies.

Digital storytelling (DST) is a new mode that intersects technology and storytelling. Most of the studies reviewed took place in school (Anderson & Macleroy, 2017; Cummin & Early, 2011; Fitts & Gross, 2010; Green, 2013; Hirsch & Macleroy, 2020; Pacheco & Smith, 2015; Vasudevan et al., 2010) with others occurring in summer programs (Angay-Crowder et al., 2013; Castañeda et al., 2018; Rolon-Dow, 2011), while one occurred in a structured after-school program (Pierce, 2014). Of the studies that occurred in schools, a majority were situated during English or reading language arts class or in courses like English as a second language. Multimodal literacy through digital storytelling was described in the studies as a type of storytelling using video (2–3 minutes long), in which students interweave photographs, images (created or online), music, and voice narration through a digital program (e.g., iMovie, Photostory, MovieMaker, PowerPoint). The majority of digital storytelling projects created in the research studies focused on academic content, followed by identity development, culture, language, and social justice issues.

The strongest theme throughout the research on preadolescents and digital storytelling was a reportedly high level of this medium being a powerful transformational tool for identity development because it broke down monoglossic language ideology and cultural ideals with multilingual and multicultural learners. The ability to connect all linguistic repertoires allowed

for students to build bridges through boundary-crossing between home, school, and community as preadolescents navigate between language, culture, learning, and identity (Angay-Crowder et al., 2013; Cummins & Early, 2011; Pacheco & Smith, 2015; Smith & Pacheco, 2020; Vasudevan et al., 2010).

In the next section of the literature review, the various multimodal factors that contributed to the transformative process of breaking language ideologies with DST, technology as a scaffold, empowering identity through DST, establishing cultural connections, and the intersection of DST and EI will be discussed.

Breaking Language Ideologies With DST

Devaluation of multilingual and multicultural students' identities was a common trend in the literature, as researchers sought ways to break the traditional educational pedagogy, like English-only laws; DST emerged as a tool that could break away from monoglossic language and monocultural ideology and enable researchers to adopt a social justice lens (Anderson et al., 2018; Anderson & Macleroy, 2017; Cummins et al., 2015; Fitts & Gross, 2010; Hirsch & Macleroy, 2020; Rolon-Dow, 2011).

Anderson et al., (2018), Anderson and Macleroy (2017), and Rolow-Dow (2011) use a social justice lens to break away from traditional monoglossic language and monocultural views through DST as a tool to looking into the lives of others and empowering multilingual and multicultural students to explore their culture and identity. Anderson and Macleroy (2017) found:

Through the creation and sharing of multilingual digital stories, space has been made for students to cross boundaries of language, culture and curriculum and in the process to extend sites of learning, building bridges between school, home and community, and

capitalizing on the extended possibilities for collaboration and communication opened up

by the digital media. (p. 500)

Findings across all three studies showed that DST empowered students as writers to

become active members of a community of practice. They were given the right to speak as a

multilingual and multicultural person, crossing boundaries of traditional culture, and developing

empathy for otherness. Anderson et al.'s (2018) critical ethnographic work of 500 participants in

Grades K–12 in the United Kingdom reported empathy in these studies, through examples of

students' ability to view their culture and "the other" through collaboration with peers. In both

Anderson et al.'s (2018) and Anderson and Macleroy's (2017) process of creating their digital

story (DS), students displayed empathy to help make meaning of different situations including:

how to respond to friendship; connecting to immigration; and how borders, whether physical or

psychological, are not crossed. Authorship of their story meant that students created a story that

mattered to them. Digital Storytelling is an authentic way for students to navigate their

multicultural and multilingual selves, having "the right to speak" (Darvin & Norton, 2014, p. 57)

and highlighting the importance of multiple stories being told "to resist essentialized,

monocultural views of citizenship and identity which deny their multiple affiliations, and the

attitudes and values arising from them, for there is no one reality and no single story" (Anderson

& Macleroy, 2017, p. 512).

Allowing students to create authentic narratives that break language ideologies occurs

when writing is of a different voice than the norm and narratives provide students with a

powerful opportunity to claim their voice in school (Delgado, 1989). Counter-storytelling is "a

method of telling the stories of those people whose experiences are not often told (i.e., those on

the margins of society)" (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 32) to resist injustices. Especially for

historically marginalized groups stories are critical to their deliverance. Vasudevan (2006) claims that "the call for counterstories intersects with the possibilities of multimodal composing wherein new digital technologies can be used to create not only new kinds of texts but also new kinds of spaces for storytelling and story-listening" (p. 208).

Rejecting dichotomous ideologies, Rolon-Dow (2011) found that using a critical race theory (CRT) framework helped with her DST project during a summer enrichment program to engage with preadolescents as they analyzed their stories. Rolon-Dow used the CRT framework to centralize race with an emphasis on social justice and to challenge dominant ideologies in the United States. The purpose of the stories was to create a better understanding of the counter and stock narratives. DST allowed the investigation of lived experiences that showed how stereotypes generated microaggressions. The stories highlighted the experiences of two participants, illuminating how their experiences were also perpetuated by society. The stories shared were from Tonya, a Black student discussing being the only person of color in an honors class, and Ester, an Asian student discussing the model minority myth. Tonya's story focused on family as a strength to help her continue in school by including multimodal semiotic modes of photos of her mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother accompanied by the text "I have many doors open to me that may not have been opened to my family" (p. 169). Through this process, Tonya began to question school administrators and teachers because of the social context of school, particularly the lack of diversity in her honors classes. In her narration, Esther focused on her relationship with peers and the pressure she felt from others to love math and science because of her Asian ethnicity, yet she disliked math and preferred music and humanities. Both stories reflected on the school environment that reinforced stereotypes and

perpetuated racism because no one questioned the current education system that encouraged these stereotypes.

According to the research, when the digital stories were "identity texts," about the authors themselves, engagement of participants in DST was found to be a powerful, transformational activity that allowed for multilingual and multicultural students to reflect, express, and explore their identities using 21st-century literacy skills (Cummins et al., 2015; Ranker, 2008; Skinner & Hagood, 2008; Pacheco & Smith, 2015).

Skinner and Hagood (2008) explore the intersections of cultural identities, foundational literacies, and new literacies practices of two dual language learners: Diego, a seven-year-old Mexican American student, and Allie, a 16-year-old Chinese American student. The researchers found that when these students created an authentic story that drew upon their unique knowledge and experiences, it was empowering and validated their identities. Allie described the juxtaposition of her identities of feeling not fully Chinese and not fully American as a "third culture kid" (TCK). Pollock and Van Reken (2001) describe "third culture kid" (TCK) as:

> A person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents' culture. The TCK builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK's life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background. (p. 19)

Allie's digital story became a mode to express a part of her identity as a TCK and her experiences when she was between 8–16 years old moving from China to the United States. She crossed the boundaries of her identities, using multimodal modes like photographs, evoking her emotions and memories.

48

Pacheco and Smith (2015) explained how translanguaging, sharing one's culture, and ethnic identity were transformative through the creation of a DS in a case study using a multimodal framework. Translanguaging rejects dichotomous practices allowing participants to use all of their linguistic repertoires to communicate. An example of translanguaging with a participant was Megan, an eighth-grade Latinx bilingual participant in an English language arts class. Megan selected a Spanish cumbia song and translated it to the English text, using English and Spanish throughout her creation of her DST. Her ethnic identity was shared with concrete factors of ethnicity and culture, through multimodal modes of photographs of family, traditional food, and a symbol that represents her cultural heritage, the national bird of El Salvador. Megan stated that her story required multidimensional meanings, that words alone did not describe her story; instead, she needed a combination of images, her narration, and music to fully explain.

Addressing the devaluation of particular identities, Cummins et al. (2015) created a framework to respond to current school devaluation of identity experiences of low socioeconomic status, multilingual, and marginalized groups of students. Cummins et al. created this framework by reviewing instructional policies and pedagogy that enable students to use multilingual repertoires to affirm identities. Reviewing work from indigenous and immigrant multilingual students and positioning them with multicultural and multilinguistic resources became a transformative process academically, while engaging participants in critical thinking through DST created affirming identities. A multilingual and multicultural participant stated through his narrative when he first arrived at the school the teacher gave him crayons and let him color, but he knew he was capable of much more. When they created their DS he said, "I am actually doing something. I'm not just a colouring person—I can show you that I am something" (Cummins et al., 2015, p. 558). Cummins et al. (2015) reported that students who are given

opportunities and supported through scaffolding to create an *identity text* transferred these experiences to empower themselves in other aspects of their lives with peers, teachers, and family members. Identity text breaks down language ideologies because students "see themselves as capable of becoming bilingual and biliterate…, creating literature and art, generating new knowledge, and thinking about and finding solutions to social issues" (p. 577).

Digital Storytelling (DST) as a Scaffold

Students are able to go beyond traditional pencil-and-paper composition by using the affordances of multiple modes of communication with technology. Teachers can transcend pedagogy using technology that allows for multimodal scaffolding for developing vocabulary, including visual aids, text modifications, and sound (Angay-Crowder et al., 2013; Fitts & Gross; Green, 2013; Hirsch & Macleroy, 2020; Hur & Suh, 2012; Skinner & Hagood, 2008; Smith et al., 2020; Pierce, 2014; Zapata & Horn, 2017). Digital storytelling composing with preadolescents uses technology to help scaffold unique semiotic resources (images, sound, text) when creating (Smith et al., 2020). Green (2013) and Hur and Suh (2012) both report technology helped scaffold vocabulary with preadolescents. Green (2013) partnered with a school librarian and a sixth-grade English as a second language teacher to help build vocabulary and guide collaboration with middle school students in the United States. Green used a social constructionism framework to show collaboration constructs with peers, particularly multilingual and multicultural students. Green noted students used more complex vocabulary than standard vocabulary when collaborating on their DS.

Hur & Suh (2012) worked with Korean dual-language learners (DLLs) in third and fourth grade in a U.S. summer program, finding that using DS technology helped scaffold new vocabulary as the students collaborated. Hur and Suh described the multimodal project as

fostering collaborations with peers and creativity, while allowing students to develop and share their stories provided ample opportunities to speak and use visual resources. The researchers asked the participants to read a book related to a scientific topic and then summarize the content using what they learned in class. The DLLs practiced their stories before recording their narrations. The practice allowed the students time to fix vocabulary mistakes or pronunciation, scaffolding language development. Even after the recording, teachers and peers could listen to their narrations as another mode of checking on their understanding, particularly fluency. For example, Susan, was a very shy participant at the beginning of the program and did not speak often, after completing the DS the teacher reported that Susan's "Photostory showed that she could be confident in speaking the content" (p. 330).

Castañeda et al., (2018) found in their case study of a summer camp literacy intervention with 7–13-year-old Mexican DLLs in the United States, technology helped scaffold fluency. For example, by using the iMovie app, José was able to record his narrative, and improved his fluency. There were also notable improvements in his writing for the text included in the DS, while his prime interest in the creativity piece provided different multimodal options. The participants were highly motivated, never getting off task, although the students were enrolled in this summer program as an intervention for their different academic struggles in literacy.

Angay-Crowder et al. (2013) found, using a multiliteracy framework, that technology also helped with scaffolding students' thoughts. Their DS framework identified 10 key steps and strategies to consider for a great digital story:

> (a) find your story; (b) map your story; (c) capture your audience's attention right away
> and keep it; (d) tell your story from your unique point of view; (e) use fresh and vivid
> language; (f) integrate emotions—yours and audience's; (g) use your own voice in the

script and in the audio; (h) choose your images and sounds carefully; (i) be as brief as you can be; and (j) make sure your story has a good rhythm. (p. 40)

Angay-Crowder et al. found that students expressed their ideas and thoughts better using DS through visuals, pulling emotion through music, using time and pacing to emphasize an idea, and through powerful voice or narration to draw in their audience versus when they were told to write about a story in a traditional paper-pencil way. Participants intersected multiple modes through technology to create meaning.

Similarly, Skinner and Hagood (2008) and Zapata and Horn (2017) both reported how multimodal resources helped participants be flexible in their literacy process in creating their stories. Zapata and Horn explain how the teacher worked with students, scaffolding the new multimodal material by modeling other completed multimodal stories, allowing the students to interact with the materials to learn their function in their creation, and helping them create their story. Through purposefully scaffolding, teachers showed students how to use the multiple modes in their DS. For example, Efrain incorporated his interest in beatboxing in his story, using different multimodal elements such as text, images, and narration to share his realities outside of school. The unique elements helped scaffold him through the process, which otherwise would not have been possible in "standard written English" texts (p. 309).

DST Helps Establish Cultural Connections

DST has also helped students establish cultural connections, incorporating multicultural and multilingual opportunities (Anderson et al., 2018; Anderson & Macleroy, 2017; Darvin & Norton, 2014; Hirsch & Macleroy, 2020; Fitts & Gross, 2010).

Fitts and Gross (2010) and Hirsch and Macleroy (2020) both used poetry as a multimodal starting point to create bridges with multicultural and multilingual student identities in their

digital story. Fitts and Gross (2010) created a *Where I'm From* (WIF) multimedia poetry project, which explored culture, cultural diversity, and identity. Completed in a third-grade classroom with 21 DLL Latinx students (heritage from Mexico, Honduras, Guatemala, or Nicaragua), the WIF project emphasized the importance of personal experiences, past achievements, family traditions, and events that have been meaningful in shaping students' identities.

Each activity in the study was strategically created to build off the other to dig deep into the identity of the students. First, participants had to create a poem answering the question "Where I'm From" and then based on the poem they created their digital story. They saw students' language as a resource and encouraged them to use it when creating their DS. Manuel, a participant, created his poem using translanguaging, in both English and Spanish. Another participant, Crystal, expressed her ideas through multicultural images. They found using multiple modes of composing allowed all participants to communicate their ideas and identities noticing some students' use of more concrete ideas such as Crystal's images, versus some more complex social ideas like in Manuel's, which included smells, sounds, and emotions. The students used iMovie or PowerPoint to create their DS. Participants shared stories with pride. Fitts and Gross (2010) reported after the DST project, teachers learned and expanded their understandings of Latinx students' experiences, helping break teachers' language ideologies of English only to bridge culture and identity.

Furthermore, Hirsch and Macleroy (2020) reported in their study done in the United Kingdom (London area) with 13- and 14-year-olds with multicultural and multilingual participants, DST was a powerful tool that allowed students to establish cultural connections and celebrate their resilience. The "struggling" students were now seen as creative by their teachers whereas they were viewed as struggling during traditional academic activities such as spelling or

53

handwriting. Furthermore, Vasudevan et al. (2010) reported that a fifth-grade African American participant, Michael, had been characterized by the teacher as challenging. However, throughout the process of creating a DS, Michael became positioned as an expert and a helper to other students because of his unique knowledge, excelling at the DST project. Michael became empowered and more active in his learning when allowed to connect his home life with school, composing a story that allowed him to use other strengths not traditionally seen in an academic setting. The authors reported Michael's attitude in school changed, smiling more, interrupting class less often, and becoming more positive, motivated, and enthusiastic about learning.

Angay-Crowder et al. (2013) and Ranker (2008) found multimodal storytelling amplified the creativity, motivation, and literacy engagement of Latinx preadolescents that then led to creating cultural connections with new content. The different modes reshaped how students viewed school, connecting both home and school knowledge. Multimodality afforded new ways to create and then share with an authentic audience. Similarly, Fitts and Gross (2010) encouraged participants by providing an authentic audience, having students present their DS in front of peers, teachers, family, and the community at the local library. The study by Fitts and Gross (2010) was the only one that included having students present their DS beyond the classroom and connecting with the community.

Conclusion

As shown by previous research presented above, there is a strong relationship between EI development in preadolescents, particularly Ages 9–11, and education (Rivas-Drake, 2014a, 2014b; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014, 2017), and DS is an introspective tool commonly used to investigate identity (Anderson & Macleroy, 2017; Anderson et al., 2018; Cummins & Early, 2011; Fitts & Gross, 2010; Hirsch & Macleroy, 2020; Vasudevan et al., 2010). However,

research has shown that there is minimal examination on how Latinx preadolescents, particularly

Ages 9–11, explore and express their identity at this age (Hashtpari et al., 2021; Umaña-Taylor,

2018; Quintana, 1998, 2007). Therefore, there is a need to better understand the contextual

factors that play a role in the development of EI among Latinx students in order to understand

how to better serve this growing population of students.

Purpose of Study

The focus of the current study is to investigate how Latinx fourth-grade students navigate

their ethnic identity in school. Because preadolescents are more abstract in how they describe EI,

we must examine EI through multimodality, specifically DS as a tool of investigation. For

preadolescents, school is a primary setting for learning about themselves. Digital storytelling is a

powerful tool for examining the EI development of preadolescents.

Chapter Three: Methods

This chapter explains the epistemological perspective underlying and framing this collective case study (Stake, 1995) of Latinx preadolescents navigating their ethnic identity. To gain a deeper understanding of how Latinx preadolescents understand and navigate their ethnic identity at school, this study will research the everyday practices of students in class using the investigative tool of digital storytelling. In this chapter, I describe the purpose of this study and the rationale for a case study as the selected methodology for understanding the phenomenon of ethnic identity through digital storytelling. Next, I outline the study design including research questions, the school context, the digital storytelling design, and the selection of students. As a qualitative researcher, I am the primary interpretive tool, gathering, organizing, and interpreting the information gathered from my participants using my "eyes and ears as filters" (Lichtman, 2013, p. 7). In order to demonstrate the trustworthiness of the data collection and analysis, I discuss my positionality and researcher role. Then, I discuss the data sources and collection procedures. Last, I explain the approach to manage and analyze these data.

Educational psychologist scholars have reported quantitative understanding for ethnic identity in preadolescents (Phinney, 1999, 2003; Quintana, 1995; Rivas-Drake, 2014a; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014), but have not addressed the contextual factors that influence the everyday development of ethnic identity in preadolescents (Constante et al., 2020; Shin et al., 2007). The dearth of contextual research of ethnic identity support for preadolescent Latinx learners has left educators with a limited understanding of how to assist and scaffold learning in a culturally and linguistically diverse way (Rowe & Miller, 2016; Umana-Taylor et al., 2014).

Cummins and Early (2011) call for *identity text* production to "be harnessed by teachers as an instructional tool to promote literacy engagement and achievement among marginalized students" (p. 9). Educators and researchers are seeking new and innovative ways to reach students who are multicultural and multilingual through authentic and creative storytelling (Ada & Campoy, 2004; Cummins et al., 2015). This study aims to promote positive identity development and learning among predolescents by connecting home and school communities (Cummins et al., 2015).

Whereas quantitative research relies on hypothesis testing, cause and effect, and statistical analysis to answer questions, qualitative research seeks to use rich description through words or visuals too intricate for quantitative methods to capture (Yin, 2009). Qualitative methods allow researchers to consider lived experiences "to address the complexity of cultural, social, and institutional issues" (Moore et al., 2013, p. 658). Therefore, qualitative methodology is necessary to gain access to humans in natural social settings using methods of observations and in-depth interviews (Lichtman, 2013).

In this collective case study (Stake, 1995), three Latinx fourth-grade students in an English language arts classroom in the southeastern United States engaged in creating a digital story to express their ethnic identity. Over the span of three months, I conducted close observations of students in the class (whole group, partner work, and small group), interviewed participants, and assisted them in co-creating a digital story to answer the question "Who am I as a learner?" I collected a variety of data from different sources and perspectives in order to assemble a holistic idea of Latinx students' experiences and understanding of their ethnic identity in school. This study contributes new insights into the lived experiences of Latinx preadolescents' ethnic identity development. Additionally, this study employs digital storytelling

as an introspective tool to further understand the construction of ethnic identity and empower the participating students to connect home and school cultures to who they are as learners. Through the creation of the digital story, I seek to understand the development of ethnic identity in preadolescents in terms of (a) how Latinx preadolescents navigate their ethnic identity at school and (b) through digital storytelling, how Latinx preadolescents understand home and school cultures.

Research Questions

In qualitative research, etic, or broader issues, begin the study and as issues "emerge, grow, and die" (Stake, 1995, p. 21), they develop into emic, or more pertinent issues to the case. Stake (1995) describes issues as becoming "more complex and more intriguing" (p. 24) thus refining the foci of the study. In this collective case study, I seek to understand the etic issues of how Latinx preadolescents develop their ethnic identity in school by investigating the emic issues relevant to each case. I address the following research questions:

3. In what ways do Latinx fourth-grade elementary school learners navigate their culture and ethnic identity at school?

4. How does the multimodal tool of investigation, digital storytelling, assist in meaning-making aspects of their culture and ethnic identity at school?

Study Design

The current research, rooted in an interpretivist paradigm, seeks to understand how Latinx preadolescents navigate their identities, employing a collective case study design (Stake, 1995). Within an interpretivist paradigm, the process of reality is always changing and co-constructed between the researcher and participant (Gribich, 2013). Stake (1995) describes a collective case study as "several cases are studied to form a collective understanding of the issue

or question" (pp. 3-4). The purpose of this study extends beyond interest in the intrinsic complexities of one student or process. More broadly, this study deepens understandings of how ethnic identity is developed in preadolescents broadly. Therefore, this study is designed as a collective case study in which each "case" or student was "instrumental to learning about" (Stake, 1995, p. 3) an in-depth understanding of ethnic identity development in Latinx preadolescents. I identified three students who, as a collection and individual (Stake, 1995), would shed light on the relationship between ethnic identity development in school with preadolescents through multimodal literacy. While this case is set within the broader context of identity development, digital storytelling provides an opportunity to investigate the process of how students express and explore their ethnic identity. The boundaries of each case are particular to the context and designed to reflect the development of ethnic identity in preadolescence, marked by time, grade level, and the creation of a digital story.

I identified three Latinx fourth-grade students who will comprise an individual case, comparing and contrasting issues of ethnic identity. This design draws from ethnographic methods to shed light on the holistic relationship between culture, ethnic identity, and learning in preadolescents. This case study offers the advantages of a detailed investigation of the thoughts and circumstances of particular individuals in a particular setting. Case studies are important because they highlight issues that warrant deeper exploration and mark the limits of generalizability and positivism (Stake, 1995). The accounts presented in this study are personal, with a rich description of the experience that is both narrative and multimodal.

Context and Setting: La Fresa Elementary

La Fresa Elementary is in an agricultural town in the transition to becoming suburban in the southeastern United States. This town has lots of farms that employed migrant workers and

community developments. Migrant students are transient and move many times a year, depending on the season. Although my participants were not migrant, this is still important to consider in the larger political and social context that shapes identity. This state has the third-largest number of identified English language learners (ELLs) in the United States. With high school graduation rates of Latinx (65%) lower than White (89%) monolingual peers (NCES, 2018), a positive ethnic identity that connects home and school cultures could assist with academic success (Rivas-Drake, 2014a, 2014b; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2016, 2018).

This current study conducted is at a public elementary school, La Fresa Elementary (pseudonym) serves pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. In the academic year 2019–2020 district documents for La Fresa Elementary indicated the school's ethnic composition as the following: 55% Latinx, 30% Black, 12% White, 1% Multi, and 2% Asian (Florida Department of Education [FDOE], 2020). Multilingual multicultural students make up most of the district, with Spanish (74%,) being the top language spoken at home within the ELL population (Data retrieved from https://www.sdhc.k12.fl.us/, January 14, 2021). La Fresa Elementary is classified as an "achievement school" and Title I school. An "achievement school" is a term used in Florida to identify a school that has received a C, D, and/or F grade for its academics. Achievement schools receive extra funding under the Florida Department of Education (FDOE; 2020). The year this study was conducted, the school had received a D and was working toward earning a C the following year. This funding provides additional resources like quality research-based professional development to teachers who service high concentrations of ELLs, as well as academic programs to assist ELLs' academic achievement and English language acquisition; however, multicultural and multilingual lessons are not integrated. The classroom teacher meets weekly with her fourth-grade team and subject coaches to discuss the prescribed lesson plans for

what is taught. School and district administrators discourage deviating from those lesson plans. This school was purposefully selected because of school demographics.

Title I is a federal term used to identify and provide supplemental funds for schools with large concentrations of low-income students to assist in helping students achieve educational goals. La Fresa Elementary contains a student population of majority Latinx population (55%), a high concentration of ELs (50%), with over 41% of Latinx students not on grade level, and nearly all (97%) receiving free/reduced-price lunch (Data retrieved from https://www.mysdhc.org/, January 14, 2021). This school was chosen because it is located in a region with a high concentration of students and families who are Latinx and speak Spanish. The students selected were in an English language arts (ELA) classroom with 60% Latinx students and 30% were classified as English Language Learners (ELLs). The classification of ELL was only used on students who needed extra assistance with learning English. If a student was multicultural and multilingual and was proficient in English they would not be classified as ELL.

Observation Block of Morning Routines and ELA

The first 30 minutes of the day would be the unstructured time where the students would follow the morning routine: unpack their backpack, hand in homework, and mark themselves as present by going to the smartboard and drag their name over to present. After they completed their morning tasks, they were able to play games with classmates. The morning show would come on to signal the start of their academic day. After the morning show, the teacher would have a morning meeting where the students would come to the front of the room and sit in a circle. The topic of the morning meeting changed from time to time but the intention was to build classroom community and students got to practice a speaking presenting skill (e.g., tell me your favorite cartoon character and why) or math skill (e.g., what are multiples of six). All students

61

would participate. Then the whole group lesson would begin followed by literacy centers. During the literacy center time, other support staff would enter the room such as the English as a second language resource teacher (ESOL). The teacher would list four different centers on the front whiteboard: word study (vocabulary word of the day), independent reading, writing (picture posted and student would write about it), and technology (go on the classroom computer and read a book, practice grammar). The fifth group would work with her in a small group. The students would move with their table groups of four, to the different tasks. The seating arrangement was five groups of four.

ELA Teacher Mrs. Smith

The classroom teacher is a White, monolingual native English speaker. Often, she noticed lessons lacked relatability to the students she taught. When possible, she would try to start discussions about a topic being covered with a connection from the students. She would tell me her frustrations with the restrictions she had with texts and writing prompts given to her by the district, saying that her students needed more support than what was provided. She would use a rubric provided by the district to grade writing assignments. The rubric would be on a 4-point scale that would score for (a) purpose, focus, and organization, (b) evidence and elaboration, and a 2-point scale for (c) conventions of standard English.

I would often arrive early to class before the students arrived and check-in with the teacher, Mrs. Smith. She told me about some challenges with her students' academic attitude when they are trying to learn something new; most students when learning something new needed help with their self-esteem and self-confidence. She would tell me that her class was mostly below level and she had a hard time getting the students to complete the tasks given by

the district. Mrs. Smith was purposefully selected for this study because she represents the majority demographic that serves Latinx population students.

Selection of Cases

Student "cases" were selected through purposeful sampling, a strategy used when the researcher "wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned" (Merriam, 2009, p. 77). As a collective case study, I sought students who would yield a rich analysis of ethnic and linguistic negotiation between home and school. In selecting students with the relevant characteristics for the current study, I looked for students who identify as Latinx, represent a range of linguistic abilities, and could benefit from expressing and exploring their ethnic identity. The range of linguistic abilities could be bilingual, classified as ELL or exited the ELL program or never classified as ELL. These attributes provided a variety of multilingual and multicultural students. After discussing the criteria with the classroom teacher, I asked her to suggest possible participants. I screened these students to see who would be open to discussing their culture and ethnicity. From this subgroup, the pool of students was further narrowed to include those who would be available for the full course of the study, have parental consent, and participate in student assent. Throughout this process, I administered all forms according to the guidelines approved by my university's IRB. From this group, I selected three students. Because of the small sample, Stake (1995) suggests the selection of cases prioritize "balance and variety" and "opportunity to learn" (p. 6).

Since the classroom teacher recommended the students to me, the students may have felt an obligation to participate. To alleviate apprehensions, the researcher emphasized with each participant that communication is confidential, participation is not for a grade or shared with the teacher or peers, and that they can discontinue anytime. Children were given assent forms

63

indicating that they too volunteered to participate in the study. The three cases, Angela, Elisa, and Abby, were in Mrs. Smith's ELA class and were selected based on the above criteria (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1

Participant Self-Identified Ethnicity, Language of Participants, and Demographic Data

Case	Angela	Elisa	Abby
Cultural/ethnic identity	Mexican	Puerto Rican-Mexican	Mexican
Age	10	10	10
Gender	F	F	F
Grade	4th	4th	4th
Language at home	Mostly Spanish, English with her mom	Spanish	Mostly Spanish, English with older siblings
Language at school	English	English	English
School classification	Exited ELL program in 3rd grade	Never classified as ELL	Currently classified as ELL

Data Collection

To construct a holistic, descriptive understanding of a bounded system or case (Merriam, 2009; Stake, 2005) requires a variety of data from multiple perspectives. The bounds of this case are at the school throughout a three-month process of data collection with the researcher and students (Table 3.2). These data sources include student observations, audio recorded student interviews, artifacts relating to the classroom, photo analysis, and the creation of a digital story. After the researcher reflected on observations and interviews, students engaged in a follow-up interview to further clarify and explain certain statements and stories. Member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) with the participants throughout the collection of data ensures authenticity in data collection and analysis. Member checking occurred during the process of creating digital stories; I asked students to explain the personal significance of semiotic choices of the selected music

and text used in their stories. This form of member checking enhances the validity and credibility

of the products created. The current study includes triangulation of all data findings from the

interviews, observations, and the digital story to ensure a holistic interpretation (Merriam, 2009)

of how fourth-grade Latinx preadolescents navigate ethnic identity in school.

Table 3.2

Data Sources and Collection by Week

Data source	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Observation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Digital story project			X		X	X	X*	X*	X*	X	X	X
Interviews (pre and post)		X										X

*Photo analysis conversations were audio-recorded and coded

Volunteering: Fall 2019

My research officially began in January of 2020. However, four months prior to

beginning formal observations and the digital storytelling sessions, I observed the whole class

and volunteered in the fourth-grade class to get to know the students. I volunteered in the class in

which I would conduct my study. Anticipating my interest in working with this fourth-grade

group, the school granted me permission to volunteer with Mrs. Smith's fourth-grade class. The

volunteering occurred once a week for three hours over the course of a four-month period. The

initial volunteer period allowed me to understand some of the formal aspects of the school,

observe some of the language practices in class, build relationships with the teacher, and

acquaint myself with the fourth-grade students. After observing the class, the students got used to seeing me by the time my official observations began; the students welcomed me into their class.

Beginning of Research: Spring 2020

Observations

Across data collection, close observations (Patton, 1990) of three focal students throughout three-months during, 15 minutes before students arrived, 30 minutes of arrival and morning routine time, 30 minutes of free time/games and the 90-minute ELA block weekly occurred to answer research question number one, for a total of two hours and 45 minutes a week. The literacy block was selected to observe school-based language practices, students' use of such language practices, as well as how students make decisions selecting peers to collaborate with across group work, and what technology is being used in the classroom. Heath and Street (2008) recommend that ethnographers study language along with other modes to help understand the social, cultural, and linguistic observations of individual encounters through field notes. Observations are key for triangulating the data and played a role in data analysis by providing insight into behaviors and helping me understand or contradict what is done during the digital storytelling project. The observations provide a foundation for understanding identity development in a classroom during analysis.

This study included field notes for each observation using a template to record information related to participants' friendships, classroom assignments/activities, topics covered, and expression of identity (e.g., clothing worn, linguistic choices). Also, reflective memos and personal notes were created after each observation (Emerson et al., 2011). Lastly, classroom artifacts were collected, copied, or photographed as a means to provide a holistic view of

participants' ethnic identity development, including artifacts of the physical space (e.g., posters on the walls, seating layout, etc.).

Designing and Conducting the Digital Story

In answering Research Question 2, how does the multimodal tool of investigation, digital storytelling, assist in meaning-make aspects of their cultural and ethnic identity at school? Data collection included both the process of engaging in the digital storytelling workshop, as well as the finished project. The work of Angay-Crowder et al. (2013) focused on multilingual and multicultural students, primarily Latinx middle schoolers in a digital storytelling summer workshop, provided the foundation of my instructional model. Their design included four components: (a) situated practice, (b) overt instruction, (c) critical framing, and (d) transformed practice (p. 37) of a multimodality framework (NLG, 1996) that formed the foundation for my digital storytelling design.

Situated practice means "immersion in meaningful practices within a community of learners who are capable of playing multiple and different roles based on their background and experiences" (NLG, 1996, p. 85). Students are positioned as experts in the topic they write about. *Overt instruction* is "active interventions on the part of the teacher and other experts that scaffold learning activities … that allow the learner to gain explicit information" (p. 86). It does not imply a formulaic or rote memorization, but rather students develop a "conscious awareness and control over what is being learned" (p. 86). Students and teacher work together to co-create meaning using metalanguage to describe various processes and elements of meaning in the digital storytelling. Situated practice and overt instruction, although important, are not enough to help foster critical thinking of language and culture. Thus, the next two processes help extend and apply their knowledge in new contexts. *Critical framing* situates literacy both in cognitive

67

and social dimensions; students begin to question, explore, and critique what they have learned. Last, *transformed practice* involves meaning-making from exploring, expressing, and redesigning from one context to another. The digital story project includes photos students take in the school in context. Then when they describe and place them in their digital story, they are reformulated to create a new context, juxtaposing and integrating ideas, remaking their own realities that suit their needs and purposes. Each of these components creates "immersion in meaningful practices within a community of learners who are capable of playing multiple and different roles based on their background and experiences" (NLG, 1996, p. 85).

Third Space

The digital storytelling workshop took place outside the student's classroom where the students were pulled out of class. We would meet in the school's library or art room that was empty. We created a third space where students would share thoughts and not have other classmates listening. We created norms during this time and said that what we discussed would not be share with others only if the student wanted it to.

The purpose of the digital storytelling project is to support multicultural and multilingual students to express and explore their ethnic identity using 21st-century multimodal literacy skills. In the digital storytelling workshop, students participated in nine weekly sessions answering the question, "Who am I as a learner" (Table 3.3). In the sessions, participants met for 60 minutes once a week for the nine weeks in this digital storytelling project. Table 3.3 shows the different sessions and topics covered in the digital storytelling project.

Table 3.3

Sessions, Topic, and Multimodality Framework

Session	Topic	Multimodality framework (NLG, 1996)
1 & 2	Introduction and building a foundation about digital storytelling	Situated practice
3 & 4	Meaningful photo taking	Overt instruction
5 & 6	Meaning-making with photos	Critical framing
7 & 8	Designing the digital story	Critical framing
9	Sharing and Reflecting	Transformed practice

Introduction and Building a Foundation for Digital Storytelling

(Sessions 1 and 2)

The first and second sessions included situated practice in which all participants introduced themselves to the group and were positioned as experts on the topic. The students received an introduction to the project, an explanation of what is a digital story, and a description of what would be accomplished. The study aims to scaffold learning through overt instructions of what students need in a digital story. To assist with that, a PowerPoint based on Angay-Crowder et al.'s (2013) multimodal design that integrated Bull and Kajder's (2004) seven elements of effective digital stories in an ELA classroom and Robin's (2008) 10 key steps and strategies to consider for a great digital story delineated what the digital story would include:

- Find your story
- Map your story
- Capture your audience's attention right away and keep it

- Tell your story from your unique point of view

- Use fresh and vivid language

- Integrate emotions—yours and audience's

- Use your own voice in the script and audio

- Choose your images and sounds carefully

- Be as brief as you can be

- Make sure your story has a good rhythm (p. 40)

Students brainstormed ideas, working in partnerships, Abby and Elisa and Angela and Leslie (not the scope of this study) on how they wanted to answer the question, "Who am I as a learner?" Find your story involves answering, "What message do you want to send to your audience?" Map your story occurs after brainstorming ideas; the students were encouraged to think about what images could help them tell their story and plan out in advance before taking photos throughout the school.

Introduction to Meaningful Photo Taking (Sessions 3 and 4)

Weeks 3 and 4 included overt instruction, an introduction to taking photos with a purpose for the digital story. We worked together to co-create meaning using metalanguage to describe various processes and elements of meaning in the digital storytelling. During this step, students used iPads provided by the researcher to take photos. The students took at least 10 photos. On average, they took about 12 throughout the school to create a digital story that answers the question, "Who am I as a learner?" First, participants and I met to discuss where they wanted to go to take pictures and why (audio-recorded). We then walked around the school halls, cafeteria, main office, special areas like the art room, library, and gym to take photos. In the digital story, the meaning behind the photo rather than the quality of the photo is the primary purpose (Wang,

1999). After brainstorming and mapping out an idea for their story, I asked the students to explain to me their purpose of their story and where they would like to go to take pictures. Afterward, no other instruction was given on taking photos besides how to focus the iPad for a photo, turn on and off the iPad, center images, and snap the photo.

Meaning-Making With Photos (Sessions 5 and 6)

Sessions 5 and 6 (audio-recorded) included critical framing, in which students participated in meaning-making with photo selection and reflected on the photo choices taken for the digital stories. Students began to question and critique what they had learned. Specific interview protocols were used to structure this interaction (see Appendix A). Students worked in pairs to analyze their photos. These conversations were audio recorded, transcribed, and coded in the analysis process. Based on the SHOWeD method (Harley, 2012), 12 or 13 photos were selected to structure the session:

S—What do you See here?

H—What is really Happening here?

O—How does this relate to your Own life?

W—Why/What does this situation concern/mean to you?

D—Are you going to keep it for your Digital story?

After each session, I asked the participants if they saw a theme with their photos; they created names for each photo, describing what that photo means to them and how it fits into their overall story. The theme in the digital story explains a pattern the students saw with the photos that they took or end message they want to share with the audience. The participants selected the photo to be in their digital story if they thought it helped explain their theme; if not they would not use it.

This activity helps build on my meaning-making of their choices and connecting it to their identity during analysis.

Designing the Digital Story (Sessions 7 and 8)

Sessions 7 and 8 included critical framing, in which students designed a digital story using the app Adobe Spark, a free resource that can be used in public schools. Again, students question what they have learned using different modes to express ideas. It allowed the students to reframe literacy beyond paper and pencil by providing an opportunity to express who they are through multiple modes, by assembling, editing, and revising the content in their story. Participants selected pictures, set a timer for each picture on the screen, wrote the text that would go with the picture, changed the order in which they wanted the slides to appear, and lastly, selected the music. Guidelines for writing the text included the questions: "What do you want your audience to understand or take away from that photo?" and "How does it fit into your overall theme?" The different modalities allowed the creators to have non-linguistic as well as linguistic modes of composition. The researcher encouraged participants to incorporate multilingual and multicultural resources in their digital stories. I modeled this with an example digital story and would ask them if they would like to use Spanish or elements of their culture in their story.

Sharing and Reflecting (Session 9)

Session 9 included transformed practice, in which students shared their digital stories with an audience. The process culminated in an authentic authorship project that provided students with the opportunity to present their stories to a wider audience, including their classmates, teacher, and family. The students presented in class and shared experiences on the creation of their digital story. Peers could ask questions about their story such as, "What was it

like to make the project?," "What did you learn from doing it?," "Whom did you have in mind as an audience for your work?," and "What and how would you have done differently?" (Angay-Crowder et al., p. 43). After sharing with the class, participants individually reflected on the experience in an interview.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Given the personal and sometimes intimate nature of culture and ethnicity, a romantic interview style was used to build rapport and facilitate an atmosphere conducive to discussing such personal information (Roulston, 2010). Roulston (2010) defines romantic interviewing style as:

- The interviewer establishes rapport and empathic connection with the interviewee

- Produces intimate conversation between interviewer and interviewee in which the interviewer plays an 'active' role

- Generates interviewee's 'self-revelation' and 'true confessions'

- Produces in-depth interpretations of participants' life-worlds (p. 8)

I was an active participant during the interviews, meaning I contributed to conversations with personal contributions that the student might relate to. For example, I would say a term in Spanish or provide my cultural knowledge on a celebration to help the participant elaborate on their answer. Through personal contributions, participants would think critically about their ideas and help generate an interviewee "self-revelation" and "true confession." The aim was to gain a rapport with my participants that would result in gaining in-depth data that would help me understand their ethnic identity.

Interviews were conducted before Session 1 and after Session 9 (Interview Protocol in appendices). The initial interview aimed to gather background information about the

73

participant's ethnic identity and multimodal experiences. To explore participants' multicultural and multilingual identities, I followed Isaac's (2014) unpublished dissertation about linguistic separation and power by asking questions like, "What languages do you speak or hear at home?," "How would you describe yourself to someone who wouldn't know you?," "Do you feel like your school is welcoming to your culture?," and "Have you ever engaged in a lesson that asked you to express your culture or language?" To understand the foundation of digital storytelling of students, the interview design incorporates the following situated practice and overt instruction objectives based on Angay-Crowder et al.'s (2013) workshop: "what digital storytelling is," "how it can be created," and "why students need to consider their purpose and audience in digital storytelling" (p. 39). These objectives led us to have a conversation about culture, ethnicity, and learning (see Appendix for interview protocol).

After students shared their digital stories in Session 9, a retrospective design interview (Dalton et al., 2015) was audio-recorded, individually, to reflect on the process of creating their digital story. The interview protocol allowed the students to give rich descriptions of their use of literacy as well as other dimensions of self, discuss their language choices, how they learn, and their culture. Interviews help researchers understand beliefs and attitudes held by a participant about their lived experiences (Roulston, 2010). The post interview aimed to illuminate participants' reflections on the process of digital storytelling and on the process of cultural and ethnic identity construction. This interview provided a summative reflection on the lived experience of each participant during the digital storytelling process. This interview process is an aspect of understanding the data collection and answering both Research Questions 1 and 2. This allows collaboration between both the participants and the researcher throughout the study.

Data Analysis

"There is no particular moment when data analysis begins" (Stake, 1995, p. 71). From the first observation to the first interview, impressions and interpretations occur simultaneously (Merriam, 2009). However, analysis of the various qualitative rich descriptions needs to "organize and make sense of the data in order to produce findings and overall understanding of the case" (Simons 2009, p. 117). The data analysis is "taking something apart" to "give meaning to the parts" (Stake, 1995, p. 71). Data analysis happens in an iterative process that requires the researcher to describe "emerging insights, hunches, and tentative hypotheses directing the next phase of data collection, which in turn leads to the refinement or reformulation of questions" (Merriam, 2009, p. 102). From the initial field observation, I wrote a reflective memo to document interpretations as they emerged. I conducted member checking throughout the creation process of the digital story, asking the students questions such as "Is this what you mean?" or "Can you clarify what you meant by this?" In the following, I describe how data was prepared for analysis and provide a brief description of my analytic approaches.

Coding

Interviews with students and photo analysis sessions (Weeks 4, 5, only 6 for Angela) were transcribed using the online tool *Temi*, and analyzed for similar patterns and significant themes in conjunction with the digital stories and coding them. Consistent with case study procedures described by Stake (1995), I draw on multiple sources of data (observations, interviews, and digital stories) to develop a detailed description of the case. Following Saldaña's (2016) method, I employ two major stages of coding, including the first and second cycle of coding as a generative and recursive process of reviewing all the data.

I began the data analysis by listing the codes and looking for meaning through "direct interpretation" of single instances and "categorical aggregation" of multiple instances to identify themes (Stake, 1995, p. 74). When possible, I utilized in vivo coding, a qualitative process in which the language used to label codes and issues reflects the participants' actual words (Creswell, 2007). A priori codes (ethnicity, culture, language practices, language, family) were used since the focus of this study is ethnic identity. I used 77 descriptive codes that were regrouped in an iterative process that created the two major themes for Research Question 1 in the first stage of analysis: (a) funds of knowledge and (b) cultural discontinuity (see appendix). I used the 77 codes in Research Question 1 plus an additional 25 codes from the digital story process and end product for Research Question 2, four major themes evolved: (a) scaffolding process, (b) emotional vulnerability, (c) speaking without words and authentic storytelling, and (d) developing a sense of self and belonging (see appendix). I developed interpretations and assertions based on the descriptions and issues. This analysis seeks to understand how the children present themselves and negotiate culture, ethnicity, and learning while at school through literacy, as well as other dimensions of self.

Cross-Case Analysis

The cross-case analysis assists in deepening understanding of ethnic identity development, laying the groundwork for common themes, guiding processes, and enhancing transferability (Miles et al., 2020). This second cycle of coding collapses codes into smaller central themes. These central themes are guided by the research questions. The cross-case analysis affords not one "best" way or one truth but rather multiple truths to be viewed side by side in others' lives to describe various angles (Emerson et al., 1995). Through close readings of the cases, I keep in mind the question of the development of ethnic identity, then the multimodal

76

representation of identity through the digital story, looking for common and contrasting cases. From the second wave of analysis, I developed individual themes or themes that were seen between two out of the three participants by comparing and contrasting multiple analysis of data in an iterative process. For Research Question 1, three themes emerged: (a) perfect student/myth of meritocracy, (b) learning attitude/afraid in class, and (c) otherness. For Research Question 2, two themes developed: (a) silence of culture and bilingualism and (b) connecting cultural and ethnic identity in learning. Chapter 4 will include the thick description (Stake, 1995) of each case and Chapter 5 will discuss the broader understandings of ethnic identity in the cross-case analysis (Miles et al., 2020).

Positionality of the Researcher

To build rapport with students, I volunteered in the classroom to get to know students and for them to become familiar with me. I entered the study from a personal and professional identity as a Puerto-Rican, bilingual, public school teacher who also attended schools in the district where this research occurred. I grew up speaking Spanish at home; while at school, I spoke only English. My parents started to speak English at home with me once I was in school. My parents did not integrate any Spanish books or personal history of their education in Puerto Rico with my learning. My ethnic (Puerto Rican), linguistic (Spanish native language), and regional identities (attending and teaching in schools in Florida) may have given me insight into these students' ethnic and linguistic contexts, as I experienced similar conditions to theirs while attending school at a young age.

Reflexivity

My methodology informs my approach to reflexivity in this study by understanding that I am an insider. Separating myself from the students is hard. Lichtman (2013) states that

minimizing bias is like looking for objectivity; it is not only foolish but not possible (p. 165).

Simmons (2003) defines reflexivity:

> To be reflexive is to think about how your actions, values, beliefs, preferences, and biases
>
> influence the research process and outcome. It is an active process, an intentional,
>
> conscious, looking back … on the actions you take and decisions you make to deliberate
>
> how they influence your study. (p. 91)

Reflexivity is understanding that there may be multiple factors influencing understanding, but the researcher and students only know the interpretation that is given.

Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of the data analysis is essential for ensuring the quality of a study. Throughout the data analysis trustworthiness was supported through researcher reflexivity, member checks, and triangulation (Merriam, 2009) of data across multiple observations over time. Throughout the digital story sessions, participants defined the themes and issues they saw in their own story, thereby avoiding "the distortion of fitting data into a predetermined paradigm" (Wang & Burris, 1997, p. 382). I openly invited participants to test my interpretations, reflect on their own experience, and examine the context of who they are as a learner.

Ethnical Consideration

Ethical considerations were used in this study to protect the lives, beliefs, and experiences of the participants. Pseudonyms were used for the participants and educational institution. Interview data were also coded by pseudonym to ensure full anonymity. Assent and consent were obtained by the participants and their parents. To ensure privacy, the interview

recordings and transcripts were stored in a password protected computer in different database locations to ensure they were kept confidential.

Limitations

There are limitations to the scope and design due to the abstract nature of ethnic identity and doing applied research. The study is bound by the school and does not include family input. Because ethnic identity is complex and multilayered, including family voices could assist in understanding. Additionally, as Jewitt (2009) advises, multimodal research can seem "impressionistic" or "problematic if it offers endless detailed descriptions and fails to make clear the broad questions it seeks to answer" (p. 26). By integrating theories and relying on multiple sources of data and perspectives, I aim to reach a thorough and data-driven understanding of ethnic identity negotiation.

Chapter 4: Findings

The purpose of this study was to (a) explore the ways fourth-grade Latinx elementary school learners navigate their culture and ethnic identity at school and (b) through the use of multimodal digital storytelling (DST), discern how DST assists in meaning making aspects of students' cultural and ethnic identity at school. This chapter is a report of the findings within a collective case study of completing a digital story project over three months with three unique Latinx students. Each session in the design of the digital story was instrumental to understanding the phenomenon of ethnic identity development during middle childhood. The uniqueness and complexity of each student's personal background bound each case and the creation of the digital story. As a collective case, all cases shared contextual features such as the English language arts (ELA) teacher, school context, interviewer, and classroom with 60% Latinx students. In addition, each case was strikingly unique and required the digital story sessions to evolve in response to the needs of each student. This chapter provides a thick description with vibrant accounts of each case and the findings in response to the research questions.

The following two research questions guided this study:

1. In what ways do fourth grade Latinx elementary school learners explore/navigate their culture and ethnic identity at school?

2. How does the multimodal tool of investigation, digital storytelling, assist in meaning make aspects of their cultural and ethnic identity at school?

The reporting of the final case is "more than an aggregation of sections but a shaping of them into a narrative that makes the case comprehensible" (Stake, 1995, p. 124). Yin (2009)

asserts that a case will have implications for an overall understanding of a general phenomenon. Stake (1995) discusses the multilayered contextual intricacies of discussing the "issues" in a case study, "issues are not simple and clean, but intricately wired to political, social, historical, and especially personal contexts" (p. 17). Both Stake and Yin describe the goal of the case is to describe the study comprehensively, in which the phenomenon is better understood. I adopt the role of "Case Researcher as Teacher" and as "Advocate" (Stake, 1995, 91–94). As a teacher, my crucial role is to report findings that show rather than tell, providing an opportunity to learn. As an advocate, my interpretations are to make the cases understandable as I investigate the emic issues (Stake, 1995). Also, I hope to lead the reader to believe what I have come to believe, that these findings inform the broader etic issues of understanding cultural and ethnic identity development.

For the first research question, data were gathered across three months of observation, a pre-focus group semi-structured interview (FG) and a post individual semi-structured interview (RDI), and classroom artifacts. For the second research question data included in the analysis were the nine weeks of digital story (DS) sessions, project process, end product, and post interview used to capture how each participant expressed and explored their identities. The digital story sessions included conversations throughout creating the digital story, photos participants took or images selected, the SHOWeD method to analyze photos, final product of the DS, and personal memos.

I carefully arrange themes first to answer Research Question 1 common to all three participants, themes shared by two participants, and individual themes. Next, I arrange themes to answer Research Question 2 in the same order. The findings include quotes from participants to

gain a better understanding of participants' meaning making aspects of their cultural and ethnic identity at school.

Meet the Participants

Angela

Angela is a bilingual (Spanish and English) 10-year-old girl with long brown straight hair that she often wore in a low ponytail and brown eyes that peered out from behind glasses. She is taller than most of her classmates. She identified her ethnicity as Mexican and her religion as Catholic. She lived with her grandparents. Her mother did not live with her but would visit often. Her mom had Angela when she was 18 and just about to graduate from high school. Her grandparents took primary custody of her, and her father was not in her life. She visited Mexico often with her grandparents and remembers going to Mexico as young as three years old. During the project, the researcher learned she lived within walking distance to the school. When she described who she was, she said, "I'm Mexican, speak Spanish and English, my name is Angela, [I] am nice" (Angela, Focus group [FG], 12:12). Her favorite food is a mixture between, "Mexican food, tamale con molé, and pizza" (FG, 14:13).

She self-selected the name Angela for this study because she thought it was a beautiful name. She would always be the first person to spot me in her class and say hello. She would enter the classroom, follow the morning routines set up by the teacher, and get ready to head over to the morning show where she would present the school news. Angela would grab her two friends, Leslie and Abby (Case 3), who also identified as Mexican, and they would head over together to the media center (library) to set up and do the morning show for the school. During the whole-class discussion, she was quiet unless called upon. In a small group, she would ask many questions of her best friend Leslie but also get off task easily. Angela's social network in

class and outside of class was similar to her ethnic, linguistic, and cultural background. Leslie was often her partner in class, and they would work together. Leslie would help answer Angela's questions and keep her on task, as she was the stronger student. Angela's favorite outfit was a zip-up gray hoodie with black leggings she would pair up with sneakers. She had been at La Fresa for as long as she could remember, and she was classified as ELL but exited out of the program a year before in third grade. She is considered below level by her teacher.

Elisa

Elisa is a bilingual (Spanish and English) 10-year old girl with shoulder-length brown hair and brown eyes. She smiled often showcasing her braces. She dressed casually, in jeans, Minecraft T-shirts, and an oversized hoodie. Elisa identified as Puerto Rican-Mexican. Her father was born in Mexico and her mother was born in Puerto Rico. Her grandparents on her father's side were born in Mexico and her grandparents on her mother's side were born in Puerto Rico. She had never visited Mexico or Puerto Rico, but she said she would like to go visit someday. When she first described who she was in the pre-interview, she said "Hi, I'm Elisa" (Elisa, FG, RDI, 12:00). Her hobbies include playing sports and video games. Her favorite food is tacos.

In whole-group instruction, she would occasionally raise her hand to answer questions to participate. In the small group, she was a listener, appeared reserved, and would primarily work by herself. She would take her time writing her answers to show her beautiful penmanship. Her mother worked at the school as head custodian and she would often come into the class and check in on her. Elisa would get embarrassed and hide her face and make noises when her mom talked to her in fragmented English. She had a pet dog whom she loved; she wore a necklace of a dog to remember him, and he would be the center of many of our conversations together. In

class, she would sit quietly working by herself and thinking through her work. Her social network outside of class was comprised of the boys who had similar ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds to her. She liked to play sports and would often play with them during recess. She would follow the classroom morning procedures in the morning, but she would do so at her own pace. She had been at La Fresa Elementary since kindergarten and had not been classified as ELL. She is considered below level by her teacher.

Abby

Abby is a bilingual (Spanish and English) 10-year-old, petite girl, shorter than most of her classmates, with short brown hair just above her shoulders that she wore down and straight most of the time. Abby would describe herself in the pre-interview as someone who speaks Spanish and English, is kind, likes spicy Mexican food, and mangos. Abby described herself throughout the study with the ethnic labels of Latino and Hispanic but also as Mexican-American. During the project, the researcher learned she lived farther out from the school but would get dropped off at her uncle's house in the morning to walk over to school. She is also a first-generation immigrant; both her parents were born in Mexico along with her grandparents. Abby was born in the United States. She has never been to Mexico, but has a summer vacation planned to go for the first time.

She self-selected the name Abby for this study because she, "Just love that name" (RDI 17:00). She would come to class right before the bell rang and quickly followed the morning routines before going with Angela (Case 1) to the morning show. During the whole-class discussion, she was like Angela in that she was quiet unless called upon. In a small group, she would participate and helped keep others on task. Abby's social network in class and outside of class were alike to her ethnic, linguistic, and cultural background. She would talk to her friend

84

Leslie, also Mexican, during class, who would go with her after school to the Boys & Girls Club. Abby's favorite outfit consisted of leggings, a casual t-shirt, and sneakers. She had been at La Fresa Elementary since kindergarten and was classified as an English language learner (ELL). She is considered below level by her teacher.

Research Question 1

In what ways do fourth-grade Latinx elementary school learners explore/navigate their culture and ethnic identity at school?

Funds of Knowledge

The first theme that emerged to address Research Question 1 was funds of knowledge. Funds of knowledge is defined as including language and culture as resources for learning (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2019; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Moll et al., 1992). Within this theme, three subthemes emerged: (a) cultural funds of knowledge, (b) linguistic funds of knowledge, and (c) linguistic landscape**.**

Cultural Funds of Knowledge

All three participants have perceptions that the school welcomes their culture. Angela first laughs as she mentions that "They celebrated Cinco de Mayo" (Angela, FG, 22:41). At the post interview, Angela elaborates on how her school welcomes her culture, saying, "Because they like they let any culture come in and they don't have to be specific" (Angela, RDI, 6:48). She notices that the school has students of different cultures and they may attend class. Elisa and Abby respond similarly in their individual interviews. Elisa references ethnicity/culture accessibility to the school, saying, "Because I see different kids, like Spanish kids. And they let them into the school" (Elisa, RDI, 25:41). But upon further investigation, she does not remember

Table 4.1

Themes From Research Question 1 with Angela, Elisa, and Abby

RQ 1	Theme: Funds of Knowledge				
Participants	Angela	Elisa	Abby	School	Cross-case Findings
Evidence	Interview	Interview	Interview	Observation Notes	Interpretation
Sub theme: Cultural funds of knowledge	"They celebrated Cinco de Mayo." "Because they like they let any culture come in and they don't have to be specific." "Yeah, they said draw a picture of your culture." "Um, I don't remember but she [teacher] hung it up on the wall."	"Because I see different kids, like Spanish kids. And they let them into the school." "I don't think so, they [teachers] never talk about Puerto Rico, Mexico, or Spanish."	"They [teachers] help us with something we still need help on and we can learn something new." "Aspects of my culture that are really important to me is my family." "They [teachers] never talk about Mexico."	Mrs. Smith teaches writing prompts given to her by the district, that do not connect with students' culture. Writing Prompt 1: Informative essay, explain how service dogs can be beneficial to people and the importance of having them trained properly. Writing Prompt 2: Opinion essay, should animals be kept at the zoo?	All of the participants though, perceived their culture to not be included in the class and the teacher also does not see the students' culture represented in the curriculum supplied by the district. The participants full cultural knowledge is not being used in class.

Table 4.1 (Continued)

Sub theme: Linguistic funds of knowledge	Exited ELL program in 3rd grade.	Never classified as ELL.	Currently classified as ELL.	Spanish was only observed with Ms. Vega during 45 minutes of literacy centers.	The linguistic funds of knowledge are not included in their ELA class. The only time the participants hear Spanish in the class is with Ms. Vega.
	"Spanish is used only with Ms. Vega, when you need to learn English and do better in class."	Agreed that Ms. Vega was the only person who she ever heard speak Spanish in class.	Agreed that Ms. Vega was the only person who she ever heard speak Spanish in class.	Whole group lesson students were not able to define the term conquistador, a Spanish cognate.	The participants' full linguistic knowledge is not being used in class.
	"She [Ms. Vega] teaches you, like sometimes we go there and we learn vocabularies just in case. Like my cousin, he came here, and he didn't [speak English], he spoke all Spanish. So, he went with her to learn vowels of English versus the vowels in Spanish."		"No, cause some teachers don't understand it [Spanish]…Cause if we have uh, like uh, a writing assignment and then they don't like [it], and then if we write in Spanish and they said, what is that? What does that say?"	Bilingual books added to classroom library but no students were reading them or even knew where they were located.	
	"I've worked with Ms. Vega… In third grade I wouldn't want to take tests because I wasn't really clear on vowels."				

Table 4.1 (Continued)

Sub theme: Linguistic Landscape				ELA was an English-only environment. Rubric highlights English-oncly grammar.	English only linguistic landscape emphasized what knowledge was valued.	
RQ 1	Theme: Cultural Discontinuity					
Participants	Angela	Elisa	Abby	Cross-Case Findings		
Evidence	Interview	Interview	Interview			
Cultural Discontinuity	Bilingual; Speaks Spanish at home with family. Grandpa helps with homework. "Like my Grandpa, he knows he's good at math so he helps me with math cause he's in construction and they buy me clothes and sometimes they, if I didn't have my dad, he said I had everything I needed here."	Bilingual; Encouraged to speak Spanish at home with family Parents are my teachers too. "Mrs. Smith, my mom, and my dad." - Help her learn. "That I speak two languages. Um, I have a different background." "I have to [speak Spanish]." – at home	Bilingual; Speaks Spanish at home with family. Family is important when learning. "Cause sometimes you can forget about [who you are] and you're like, keep thinking about other things and you're not thinking about like your feelings, your family, and the stuff that are important to you."	The students create cultural discontinuity, differentiating how they should behave when they are at school and at home. Family can also help them learn. Family celebrations are important along with traditional food from their culture.		

Table 4.1 (Continued)

	Family celebrations and special food.	"My Dad said if you, if you don't start saying Spanish stuff to us, then you're not going to get something."	Family celebrations are important.	

a time when her culture or Spanish language was included in any class lessons, "I don't think so, they [teachers] never talk about Puerto Rico, Mexico, or Spanish" (Elisa, RDI, 25:49). Elisa references she attends the school, and she is aware of other Spanish kids. Because of that perspective, the school is accepting of her culture.

Abby first mentions in the pre-interview that the school is welcoming to her culture because they serve Mexican food in the cafeteria. In her post interview she acknowledges teachers help her learn something new, but they do not talk about her culture or ethnicity, saying, "They [teachers] help us with something we still need help on and we can learn something new" (Abby, RDI, 5:20). Abby describes her struggles in class by stating that is hard to remember who she is and what is important to her, like her culture. She identified her family as something she can forget about when she is learning. She acknowledged her family was an important aspect of her culture. "Aspects of my culture that are really important to me is my family" (Abby, RDI, 3:40). Abby said that continued family support was important to her learning, but it was something she could forget when she was in school.

Particularly during English language arts class, the participants did not remember or only briefly described an activity or lesson that allowed them to use their cultural or linguistic knowledge. Angela says, "Yeah, they said draw a picture of your culture." But upon more probing to see what the purpose of that was in her class she said, "Um, I don't remember but she [teacher] hung it up on the wall" (Angela, RDI, 7:26). Angela could not recall the purpose of the activity. Elisa is not able to remember a time when her culture was included, "I don't think so" (Elisa, RDI, 25:49). Similarly, Abby says, "They [teachers] never talk about Mexico" (Abby, RDI, 5:52).

During a conversation before students arrived in class, Mrs. Smith described to me her frustrations with the district and the lessons. She notices that the topics given for writing prompts do not relate to her students, especially her multilingual and multicultural students. The lesson that day included an opinion writing prompt on whether or not animals should be kept in a zoo. The students needed to use information from multiple passages to answer the question. Mrs. Smith relates the topic to video games to try and connect the writing prompt. The writing prompt before that, about a month ago, was to write an informative essay explaining how service dogs can be beneficial to people and the importance of having them trained properly. She notices that most of her students do not have experiences with what the writing prompts ask, making them difficult for the students to answer the questions. She says 16 out of her 20 students are more than one grade below level and numerous are ELL. "The district wants us [teachers] to bring up the school grade but they do not help us." She asks me for advice on how to include more relevant lessons.

The participants shared their experience with their cultural funds of knowledge. All of the participants showed growth in identity development across the three months. As evidenced through their DST and will be discussed further under research question 2.

Linguistic Funds of Knowledge

All the participants agreed that Spanish was not used in their ELA class unless you were classified as ELL with the English resource teacher (ESOL). The participants notice when Spanish is and is not used in class. Abby made comments about feeling as if she does not belong at the school. Abby continued to say that teachers do not understand Spanish, so it is not included in any of her ELA classes, "No, cause some teachers don't understand it [Spanish]…Cause if we have uh, like uh, a writing assignment and then they don't like [it], and

then if we write in Spanish and they said, what is that? What does that say?" (Abby, RDI, 6:17–6:38). Abby acknowledges the teachers do not speak Spanish, so she cannot use her bilingualism in class.

The only time students spoke Spanish in the classroom was with Ms. Vega, the ESOL teacher. Angela said, "Spanish is used only with Ms. Vega, when you need to learn English and do better in class" (Angela, FG, 23:57). Ms. Vega works with students who are classified as English language learners (ELLs). Both Elisa and Abby agreed with Angela in our focus group about Ms. Vega. Angela added, "She [Ms. Vega] teaches you, like sometimes we go there and we learn vocabularies just in case. Like my cousin, he came here, and he didn't [speak English], he spoke all Spanish. So, he went with her to learn vowels of English versus the vowels in Spanish" (Angela, FG, 25:01). Ms. Vega would speak Spanish to the students to help them learn English.

The school classified Abby as an ELL, but she rarely worked with Ms. Vega. Abby got special accommodations for testing and would get pulled out of the class to complete the state standardized tests. Angela exited the ELL program the year before in third grade; she did not receive any services from Ms. Vega currently in the fourth grade. But she remembered her prior experience with Ms. Vega of working on different English grammatical areas that she needed help on to be academically successful. "I've worked with Ms. Vega… In third grade I wouldn't want to take tests because I wasn't really clear on vowels" (Angela, FG, 23:57). Angela discusses not wanting to take assessments because she did not understand vowels and Ms. Vega helping her. The school did not classify Elisa as an ELL and Elisa did not remember ever working with Ms. Vega.

Ms. Vega would come into the classroom during the last 45 minutes of the ELA block during literacy centers. Mrs. Smith would create four centers, time them for about 15 minutes each, and then the students would travel with their table group to each center. Ms. Vega was part of the support staff that would come in and sit with the students who were classified as ELL and who would ask for help. She primarily sat with one student who had recently immigrated and had limited English.

The observations show tensions of what linguistic knowledge is preferred in the classroom. In a whole group lesson the participants struggled with vocabulary and could not define the term conquistador, a Spanish cognate. The participants looked confused when Mrs. Smith read the word conquistador, as a vocabulary word and they could not define it. They looked at the text for context clues, using strategies the teacher taught. Following up with Angela, Elisa, and Abby, I asked if they knew what the word conquistador in Spanish was and they defined it, but they did not connect that knowledge in class. The typical method to figure out a term a student did not understand was to use a dictionary. Angela and Elisa both typically had dictionaries near them when doing work. I would often see them reaching for their dictionaries to figure out a word they did not understand. The school would give dictionaries to students, especially those classified as ELL.

During another observation, I noticed the classroom got new bilingual (Spanish and English) books for their classroom library. When I followed up with the teacher, Mrs. Smith, she said that the district provided the books but not any instructions on how to implement them in class. She noticed the students did not read them and she did not know how best to integrate them into the school-based activities. I questioned Angela, Elisa, and Abby if they read any of the bilingual books. None of them even knew where the books were in the classroom library. But

Abby went in search of them. Abby brought back a bilingual book, and we sat down to read one. Abby read both the English and the Spanish parts of the books. She smiled after reading the book and said, "That was cool." Abby later told me that was the first time she read in both English and Spanish in class.

The participants notice that their linguistic funds of knowledge are not included in their ELA class. The only time they hear Spanish in the class is if they are classified as ELL and Ms. Vega, the ESOL teacher is assigned to help you.

Linguistic Landscape. Through an environmental print analysis, I found that the English language arts (ELA) classroom was an English-only environment, filled with a linguistic landscape of posters and text explicitly telling students expectations and values. The linguistic environment included monolingual English decorations of school guidelines, behavioral expectations; C.H.A.M.P.S. (**C**onversation, level voice students use during activity; **H**elp, how students ask for help during activity; **A**ctivity, what is the task or objective; **M**ovement, how much movement the students are allowed; **P**articipation, how the students show they are taking part in the activity; **S**uccess, academic knowledge, the end goal), and strategies to assist in taking standardized tests. Additionally, students were also taught and graded by the ELA writing rubric, which includes points toward English-only grammar, specifically spelling.

As the participants explore and navigate their culture and ethnic identity at school, they notice preferred monolingual language of English through instruction, linguistic environmental print, expectations, and values of the school. The students would separate their cultural and linguistic knowledge at school.

Cultural Discontinuity

The second theme that emerged to address Research Question 1 was cultural discontinuity with all three participants. Cultural discontinuity is defined as language or cultural patterns from multicultural and multilingual children that differ from the dominant school environment (Lovelace & Wheeler, 2006). The participants showed separation between their ecological environment of one identity at home and then another identity at school.

All participants discussed the importance of strong family support during our interviews and that when they are home, they speak Spanish and when they are at school they speak English. When discussing what is important to their identity and culture, family is stated.

Elisa reflects on what is important to her identity and culture, "That I have a family" (Elisa, FG, 17:15). Abby agrees saying that her family is important to her too, "I have a family" (Abby, FG, 17:20). Angela includes her ethnicity, saying her family and being Mexican are important to her identity and culture, "I have a family, Mexican, and get to hang out with family" (Angela, FG, 17:28).

When the students are at home, both Angela and Elisa acknowledge their family can help them learn. Angela says, "Like my Grandpa, he knows he's good at math so he helps me with math cause he's in construction and they buy me clothes and sometimes they, if I didn't have my dad, he said I had everything I needed here." Similarly, Elisa states who helps her learn, "Mrs. Smith, my mom, and my dad" (Elisa, RDI, 15:59).

Abby discusses her thoughts when she is in class, "Cause sometimes you can forget about [who you are] and you're like, keep thinking about other things and you're not thinking about like your feelings, your family, and the stuff that are important to you" (Abby, RDI, 11:13).

Abby recognizes when she is in class learning, she can forget about her family and what is important to her.

When Elisa describes herself to someone who does not know her, she says, "That I speak two languages. Um, I have a different background" (Elisa, RDI 21:01-21:17). Elisa is bilingual (Spanish/English) but prefers to speak English. At home her parents want her to speak Spanish. "I have to [speak Spanish]" (Elisa, FG, 12:52). Following up with Elisa's linguistic ability I ask her about what languages she speaks or hears at home, "My Dad said if you, if you don't start saying Spanish stuff to us, then you're not going to get something" (RDI, 20:43). She identified her parents notice she prefers to speak English and does not want to speak Spanish at home, so they are trying to encourage her to speak Spanish when she is at home. Abby similarly says, "I speak Spanish" (Abby, RDI, 2:27). Angela says she primarily speaks Spanish at home with her grandparents, but sometimes speaks English when her mom comes to visit.

Elisa's theme of being different is also consistent with her understanding of her bilingualism. In her post interview, in an understanding of her identity and culture saying she compares herself to her peers. "I'm different, a little. Like, I do different stuff than other people" (RDI, 23:08-23:39). She noticed that she may have different family practices than others. In describing her "different" background, she refers to celebrations and food that she eats.

> Elisa: Like... like sometimes we do Spanish stuff and sometimes we do English stuff.
>
> R: And what do you mean by Spanish and English stuff?
>
> E: Like sometimes parties, we will do stuff.
>
> R: Parties? And what kind of parties?
>
> E: Usually [we have] balloons. We would usually [have] Spanish foods.

R: Spanish foods, like what?

E: Like rice, we would eat beans.

R: Arroz y habichuelas, rice and beans?

E: Yeah. (Elisa, RDI, 21:31–22:36)

Elisa's comment about being "different" connects to the food that she eats and activities that she does with her family. She gives specific examples of food that she eats at celebrations with her family and friends. She connects her culture and ethnicity with the food she eats and celebrations she has with her family, acknowledging that they may not be the same as her peers.

Abby similarly states that something important to her culture are the celebrations she has with her family. Angela also mentions important celebrations with family connecting to her religion of being Catholic.

Angela: In December we go to each other's [family] houses and we do this thing where we sing songs and we talk about, God and how he helped us and we, em, they have special foods for us.

R: And what kind of special food is it?

A: It is like hot chocolate and tamales and bread. The hot chocolate is called la abuelita. (Angela, RDI, 4:04-5:10)

Angela includes special food that she eats and celebrations about her favorite time with family.

The participants' connection to learning opportunities depended on the environment. If they are at home, they speak Spanish and their family helps them learn and when they are at school, they speak English and the teacher helps them learn. The cultural discontinuity created tension accessing home knowledge at school.

Theme With two Participants: Angela and Elisa

Perfect Student/ Myth of Meritocracy

Angela and Elisa wanted their work to be "perfect" and to be perfect students and there was a right and wrong way to work. Both participants agreed to the importance of working hard to reach their goals. Angela showed her perfectionism in second guessing herself in class by asking her friends clarifying questions or using her dictionary to spell words out. Elisa showed her perfectionism in her writing, her writing journal at the beginning of the year she said was "sloppy" and then she showed me a recent entry where her handwriting had improved. It was important for her to have perfect handwriting. Proving to herself that if she worked hard, she could achieve perfection. Angela and Elisa perceive that working hard will lead to them being perfect students. This theme of being perfect would also continue later on during their digital story.

Individual Theme: Angela

Afraid in Class

An analysis of observations produced the theme of Angela being afraid to ask questions and participate in class. Mrs. Smith describes students as being afraid to take part in class when learning something new and they needed help with their self-esteem and self-confidence. "The students were often waiting to get yelled at. You could see it in their body language. They were afraid to even try or make a mistake." As a learner, Angela was timid in front of the entire class and did not like to participate in whole group activities. Angela says, "Sometimes I get nervous in class and asking questions" (Angela, RDI, 11:18).

During a whole group discussion on the important details from their St. Augustine article, Angela gets called up to the front of the class to lead the class in going over their homework. At

first Angela says no, she is shy to come up. Mrs. Smith says, "We will all help you." The teacher continues to encourage, until Angela finally anxiously goes up to the front of the classroom, visibly a little shaky. Students answer questions and Angela writes answers on the smart board hesitantly. Angela, worried about perfection, stops often to ask how to spell certain words. By accident Angela nervously deletes the slide she was working on. She puts her hands up to cover her face, which has turned a slight shade of red in embarrassment. The teacher quickly comes to the front of the room to fix the mistake. Angela breathes a sigh of relief, finishes the next few questions, then quickly sits back down.

During the analysis of the digital story in the second section, Angela elaborates more on why she is afraid in class.

Otherness

Angela perceives her bilingualism as unique to her non-Latinx peers. When asking about how she would feel about sharing her ethnicity or culture in the class with others, she states her ability to speak Spanish differs from her peers.

> Like I don't really care like expressing my culture because I talk a lot in Spanish at my house and a lot of people know that I talk Spanish and they sometimes say "talk Spanish talk Spanish." But I don't really like to. I only talk [speak] it when I know people who do and I'm used to and I know. (Angela, RDI, 8:01)

In sum, Angela would prefer not to share her culture because her non-Latinx friends ask her to speak Spanish. She saw her culture as a novelty to her non-Latinx friends. She would prefer to speak Spanish with people she knew, had a similar background to her, and was used to.

Research Question 2

How does the multimodal tool of investigation, digital storytelling, assist in meaning-making aspects of their cultural and ethnic identity at school?

Collective Analysis: The Digital Story Project

For a nine-week session, three fourth-grade Latinx students participated in a digital storytelling (DST) project. The study elicited data through the researcher's reflective memos and observations, the process of creating the DST project, including a photo analysis by individual students using the SHOWeD method, the DST end product, and a coded semi-structured pre-post interview. The participants needed a minimum of 10 photos but could have selected more if they wanted to.

Angela's Journey Through the Project

Angela was excited to work on the digital story project with people who had a similar cultural background to her. Angela states how she feels working with her partner, "Yeah. Cause they have a kind of like the same culture" (Angela, RDI, 10:20). Her partner, Leslie, is not part of the scope of this study but also identified as Mexican. Angela was well-liked by her peers and always had the latest gossip about the class to share before we began our sessions. During the initial brainstorming session on what it means to be a learner, at first, she struggled to think about ideas, but she sat and listened to others. As the different sessions went on, Angela would speak up frequently, responding or asking clarifying questions. After some brainstorming, Angela discussed her love for her family, especially her mom, pet dogs, horses, and favorite Mexican food. Ultimately, she created her digital story with two themes, encouragement and traditions.

Creating her Story

Although Angela took photos as an individual, much of her analysis of the photographs and creating her DS in this study was completed with a partner. Angela's photos were personal to her as a learner, and she selected the photos she wanted to take and include. She was the only participant to select multiple photos in her end product that incorporated her ethnicity, culture, and translanguaging. She took a total of 10 pictures and selected an additional two photos from Adobe Spark to help her tell her story that she titled 'Encouragement/Traditions'. We analyzed the 10 pictures using the SHOWeD method that assisted in meaning-making aspects of her sense of self, cultural and ethnic identity at school. Looking at the pictures that Angela selected, they included school expectations, beliefs, values, guidelines, the morning show, and photos of her family traditions of raising horses, Mexican ethnicity and culture through images of Mexico City, the Mexican Flag, and a female dressed in traditional Mexican attire dancing. These pictures would be the foundation of her digital storytelling project of what does it mean to be a learner (see Appendix I for the complete story). The song she selected was in Spanish called "El Burrito Sabanero" [The little donkey]. The audience for whom she created this story was herself.

Elisa's Journey Through the Project

When I first started working with Elisa on the digital story project, she told me she never held an iPad before. She grabbed the iPad and said, "Woah" (Session 3, 2:57). She was excited to get started and spend time editing photos and creating her designs for her story. However, in the first session she said she was not sure how she felt about sharing her culture. Elisa worked with Abby (Case 3) throughout the process of creating the digital story. They were friends and would often talk with each other during class. During the initial brainstorming session on what it means to be a learner, she was quiet and did not know what to put down. She listened to others

before listing her dog. Creating the digital story, Elisa would often stop and ask how to spell certain words, speak about her younger brother and connect her learning to ways she would teach him how to play sports. As the different sessions went on, Elisa would state learning new things at school as her main theme for her digital story.

Creating her Story

Although Elisa took photos as an individual, much of her analysis of the photographs and creating her DS in this study was completed with her partner Abby (Case 3). Elisa's photos were personal to her as a learner as she took and selected the photos in her story. She took a total of 11 pictures and selected one photo from Adobe Spark. We analyzed the photos using the SHOWeD method that assisted in meaning-make aspects of her sense of self, cultural and ethnic identity at school. Her first photo was of a large dictionary located in their school library; it would become the inspiration for her digital story. "Because you learn new words. I learn new things every day" (Elisa, Session 3, 7:00–7:18). I asked how does it relate to your life? "I always like to learn new things, like about different animals. If you're stuck on a word, you can always grab out a dictionary and use it" (Elisa, Session 3, 7:47). She mentions that sometimes she doesn't have a computer or the Internet but she has access to a dictionary. She selected music from Adobe Spark under the happy column titled *right beside you*. Looking at the 12 pictures that Elisa selected, they included school rules, expectations, guidelines, values, sports, and a dog that represented her pet. She spent a lot of time on the design of her story through the editing of photos to make sure it focused on what she wanted and customizing the time on the screen before the next image would show. "Oh, I'm just I'm just trying to go over the lines. It's a perfect picture now done. It's Perfect" (Elisa, Session 5, 16:06). She wanted her audience to be

able to read and see the image before moving on to the next one. The audience she created this story for was her family (see Appendix J for the complete story).

Abby's Journey Through the Project

Abby spoke in short, quick sentences and did not elaborate unless probed to do so. She was happy, always smiling, generous to help others, responsible because she had a large family and she helped take care of her younger siblings, and learning was important to her. It took some time to build a rapport with her, but when I did, she spoke with me about all parts of her ethnicity, culture, and learning. In the first session, she said she felt okay sharing about her culture. In class, she kept to her same main friends. I would often see her working with Elisa on different class assignments. During the initial brainstorming session on what it means to be a learner, she was quiet and wrote some ideas about culture and family. As the sessions went on, she would need encouragement to keep working on her story, but in the end, she said being able to make the digital story was special. When I reminded her she would present her digital story to her class, she worked more on her project. In the end, she would settle on a theme of "never give up."

Creating her Story

Although Abby took photos as an individual, much of her analysis of the photographs and creating her digital story in this study was completed with her partner Elisa (Case 2). Abby's photos were personal to her as a learner as she took and selected the photos in her story. Abby selected the most photos taken by her around the school, of the three participants, 15 pictures, but did not include two of them because she did not like how the pictures were blurry, ending up with 13 pictures total in her DS. And she was the only participant that did not select any images from Adobe Spark. These selected photos helped her tell her story of "never give up." We

103

Table 4.2

Themes in Research Question 2: Scaffolding of Ideas, Emotional Vulnerability, Speaking Without Words and Through Authentic

Storytelling, and Developing Sense of Self and Belonging

R2	Participants		
Theme	Angela	Elisa	Abby
Scaffolding Process: Following the Rules	Include images of the school guidelines in digital story, includes the text *Do the right thing*. Include images of a poster that says, "When life isn't going right, go left." In digital story, includes the text *Do the right thing*.	Include images of the school guidelines in digital story, includes the text *The school rules*. Include images of a poster that says, "When life isn't going right, go left." In digital story, includes the text, *Keep trying*.	Include images of the school guidelines in digital story, includes the text *The rules in the school*. Include images of a poster that says, "When life isn't going right, go left." No text.
Emotional Vulnerability	Shared story about family that she normally would not share. "I normally don't like to tell people this but…"	Shared experiences about feeling different and did not like to talk about it.	Shared vulnerable story about sister passing away.
Speaking Without Words and Authentic Storytelling	Images and music portrayed thoughts beyond language such as adding images of Mexico, Spanish song "El Burrito Sabanero", stated she did not like writing and found it easier to express her ideas with multiple modes.	Did not like writing, "I don't like writing 4 paragraph essays." Preferred to use multiple modes to share ideas and design story. "I like to design."	Her strength was storytelling, "I love telling stories." Answered questions with a story.
Sense of Self and Belonging	"I know all about my culture." Awareness of cultural, bilingual practices, and used translanguaging.	"I learned who I am." Expanded on how she could express her culture and identity.	"I learned we belong." Expanded on how she could express her culture and identity.

analyzed the 15 photos using the SHOWeD method that assisted in meaning-make aspects of her sense of self, cultural and ethnic identity at school. Looking at the pictures Abby selected, they include school rules, expectations, guidelines, values, inspirational quotes, and the morning show she worked at. These pictures would be the foundation of her digital storytelling project of what does it mean to be a learner (see Appendix K for the complete story). The music she selected was from Adobe Spark under the theme uplifting called *trek further*. The audience she created this story for was her family.

Themes Across all Three Cases

When reviewing all three participants' process, end product of the digital story, and post reflection interview, four themes emerged (a) scaffolding of ideas, (b) emotional vulnerability, (c) speaking without words and through authentic storytelling, and (d) developing a sense of self and belonging (Table 4.2).

Scaffolding Process Through Creating a Digital Story

The nine sessions of the project were broken down into different steps needed to create the digital story (DS). I paired each participant with another student that they considered a friend to help them co-construct their individual DS. In Sessions 4 and 5 for Abby and Elisa and Sessions 3, 5, and 6 for Angela, the SHOWeD method helped scaffold conversations of photo analysis with the participants. Students offered their unique perceptions about the picture taken that was significant to them. The participants actively participated in self-reflection and created themes and sub-themes of their ideas about the pictures that were taken. The participant gave each picture a name, then wrote the name on a piece of paper titled themes with the number of the photo after discussing it to create their larger overarching theme about what it means to be a learner.

105

At first, when discussing the photos, the students just read off what the poster or image says without saying what they think in their own words. When I asked them the question "What do you see?" they would say "words." As I went through the different questions, the students would elaborate on their thoughts. The SHOWeD method starts off by asking the students simple questions like "What do you see here?" and moves through more complex questions asking students why the photo is important to them. Angela said, "It's hard answering that last question that says," pointing to "Why is it important?" and says, "then you got to really think of it and say, okay, so if I really want this, to bring out best [in my story]" (Angela, Session 5, 35:03).

When analyzing the guidelines photo, Angela starts her responses with concrete thoughts and then through probing employing the SHOWeD method she displays more abstract thoughts:

Researcher: What do you see here?

Angela: Uh, words that telling you not to let other people tell you what to do?

Angela gives a concrete explanation, "words telling you…". I probe further with the second question:

R: So, what's really happening in this picture?

A: Like maybe somebody's getting bullied, the person that's getting bullied can see this and can tell him to stop bullying them because she's not alone. She has the power to stick up for herself. And when they bully, you can tell the teacher and they would get in trouble.

Angela now starts to explain in more detail what is happening in the picture that she selected that is an image of a poster with the word bully in a large circle with a slash on it. I follow up with the third question:

R: How does this relate to own your life?

A: Maybe when you don't want to get in trouble and that you see somebody getting

bullied and you don't want them to bully you, you can stand up to them. And when they

bully you can tell the teacher and they would get in trouble. Have the courage to stand up

to them.

The fourth question prompts Angela to discuss why the photo is important to her:

R: Why is this important to you?

A: Because maybe some people don't have happiness and some people feel down all the

time, they probably need something to encourage them.

Angela now states feelings of happiness and brings it back to her theme of encouragement. The

fifth question asks whether they are going to keep the photo for their DS:

R: Are you going to keep this photo for your digital story and what would you like to

name it?

A: Yeah, happiness. (Angela, Session 3, 20:14-21:40)

The SHOWeD process allows for more elaborated self-reflection of the photo students

select. This process is used for all the photos the participants took. If the participant did not want

to keep the photo, they would give the reason why. Abby was the only participant to remove two

photos because of the quality of the photo. Elisa and Angela chose to keep all the pictures they

took.

School Rules and Expectations. All three participants took photos and shared about rules of the school. In the process of making the DS, the number one theme when the participants answered who they were as learners included the school rules and expectations. They include the guidelines of the school in all of their digital stories (Table 4.3). The guidelines of the school say: Guidelines for success: Responsible, motivated, safe, problem solvers, and respectful (image retracted). When putting the photo in their DS, the text that accompanied it addressed the expectations or rules of the school. Elisa titled it *The rules in school,* Angela titled it *Do the right thing*, and Abby titled it in all caps, *FOLLOW ALL THE GUIDELINES*. Angela mentions doing the "right" thing often, citing the rules of the school and who had the power. (Sessions 3, 5, & 6).

Table 4.3

SHOWeD Questions for Guidelines of School

Participant	Angela	Elisa	Abby
What do you see here?	Looking like people might look at it… because it's at the center of the school.	Words.	Words that say responsible, more motivated, safe, problem-solver, and respectful.
What is really happening in that picture?	Like it is telling you to be responsible, be motivated, like it kinda tells you what to do in the school. And then like, when you feel down, you can be motivated by not letting other people make you sad.	Um, like yeah. Like if you read these words, help you like figure out through your life or something. Like if you give up on a test and you can just read the words and it will make you feel better.	Like how you're supposed to act at school.
How does this relate to your own life?	Umm because you can follow like, just by words, you can know what the school wants, what you can follow, what the school is about. The expectations are.	Cause I always think of these whenever I'm like, like I say these words in my head and then like… I just say it in my head. I think I actually do it.	Um, to be safe or how to act and stuff.

108

Table 4.3 (Continued)

Why is that important to you?	Because it helps me know what the school wants us to do. I see it every day.	Because my cousin is mean to me. My cousin said that, um, I can't do this stuff. I just say it in my head. I think I actually do it.	It's important cause some people don't know, cause some people don't know what to do. And, and it's, this is just for an example. It's everywhere. It's the expectations for everyone.
Are you going to keep it for your DS and name?	Yeah, Fresas*.	Yeah, motivation.	Keep it, know what to do.
Text with image in DS	Do the right thing	The rules in school	FOLLOW ALL THE GUIDELINES

In the beginning Elisa says, "Words" (Elisa, Session 4, 18:09), Abby reads directly off the poster, and Angela mentions that the poster is in the middle of the school. In the next question Angela and Abby state how you are supposed to act in school, making meaning with what the guidelines mean to them. Most notably, while each participant recognized the guidelines as expectations for them in school, none could provide a cultural connection. The guidelines were in English only. Angela says, "Like it is telling you to be responsible, be motivated, like it kinda tells you what to do in the school" (Angela, Session 5, 21:21). In the third and fourth questions, the participants state what the school wants and their expectations. Angela says, "You can know what the school wants, what you can follow, what the school is about. The expectations are" (Angela, Session 5, 22:07).

Angela and Abby notice the guidelines poster is located in the center of the school. Angela says, "Like it kinda tells you what to do in the school." When asking her to elaborate and why it was important to her, she responded, "Because it helps me know what the school wants us to do. I see it every day" (Angela, Session 5, 21:21–22:07). Abby says, "It's everywhere. It's the

expectations for everyone" (Abby, Session, 5, 14:57). The guidelines were posted in the classroom and all over the school. Collectively, through an analysis of the data, it was determined that the guidelines were the rules of the school and the expectations that tell you how to act in school.

Continuing with creating meaning with environmental print in the school, all the participants included a poster that said, "When life isn't going right, go left." (Table 4.4). Angela included that image with the text again saying, "Do the right thing." When explaining how it relates to her life, she said

> Because it can motivate you like encourage you to do something… Life, if you want to do the right thing and not get in trouble you can always tell [ask] the teacher how do I get better at doing this and they will tell you. They will tell you if you do the bad thing, do the good thing. (Angela, Session, 5, 33:15–34:35)

Abby says, "Keep trying." When she is describing why she selected this image she says, "Like whenever I ain't going right. Just go get someone to help you." And Elisa's does not include any text with the image. Elisa makes meaning on how she learns and who helps her understand what she is supposed to do in school. "All these pictures, like you, learn how to do all these types of things. You learn your new teacher and then in the school and the things that you're supposed to be doing" (Elisa, Session 3, 9:33). When Elisa addresses how she learns she states the teacher and again reiterates behaviors she is supposed to be doing, she is centering the identity that is preferred in the school and does not mention family or culture.

Table 4.4

Image in DS for Poster "When life isn't going right, go left."

Participant	Angela	Elisa	Abby
Image with or without text in DS	WHEN LIFE ISN'T GOING RIGHT, GO LEFT! Do the right thing	WHEN LIFE ISN'T GOING RIGHT, GO LEFT!	KEEP TRYING WHEN LIFE ISN'T GOING RIGHT, GO LEFT!
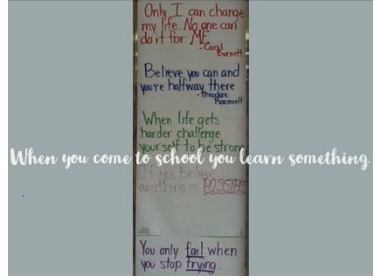
Continuing with creating meaning with environmental print, posters from the school, Abby and Elisa include the same poster made by an educator at the school with famous quotes (Table 4.5). Although they worked together, they each came up with a different text for the images in their digital story. Elisa titled it *When you come to school you learn something*, and Abby titled it, *Never give up, always follow your dreams*. The image has quotes from prominent older White people, Carol Burnett, Theodore Roosevelt, and Albert Einstein on it. This poster helped the participants create meaning with whose knowledge is valuable. All quotes were in English. Through the process of creating the digital story, it allowed for investigating meaning behind photos selected, scaffolding thoughts in meaning-making at school in what behaviors, and ultimately what identity is preferred.

Table 4.5

Abby and Elisa Same Image of Famous Quotes in DS

Participant	Abby	Elisa

Table 4.5 (Continued)

Image with or without text in DS		

Emotional Vulnerability

Throughout the sessions, participants would share personal stories about their family, struggles, or experiences in school. These stories helped make meaning about their culture or ethnicity using images from school. The personal stories occurred during the photo analysis phase using the SHOWeD method or during the reflection of the digital story. Abby selects a photo she took to analyze using the SHOWeD method. The photo is of a poster outside her classroom door that says, "I am in charge of how I feel and today I am choosing happiness." When I asked her why it is important to her, she said:

> And it's important to me because like, um, my sister that died from a car accident and it wasn't this week or something… One of my mom's family [died], she had to go to Mexico. She told me to do something like that, just like the poster. So, like it's really important to my mom too. (Abby, Session 4, 11:10–12:30)

Abby reflected on the words on the poster, and it reminded her of what her mom had told her when her sister and other family from Mexico had passed. Abby connects what is important to her mom to a poster that is posted in front of her class. She said sometimes she can feel sad in class and has to tell herself to choose happiness saying, "And then I tell myself today, I am

112

choosing happiness" (Abby, Session 4, 12:35). She connects her cultural knowledge of what her mother said to how she behaves when she is in school.

Elisa selects a photo she took to analyze using the SHOWeD method. It is of a sign with the word bully and a large circle with a line going through it. Elisa describes why it is important to her. She shares experience with bullying and how she stands up for herself. "My cousin is mean to me, [tells me] I can't do this stuff. I just say in my head. I think I actually can do it… So, I pushed him on the floor" (Session 4, 19:57).

The meaning-making process of creating the digital story helped Elisa discuss her feelings about her identity and culture. During the reflection of the digital story project, Elisa discusses her feelings of being different at school. Elisa was the only participant in the study that identified as both Puerto Rican and Mexican. Her classmates primarily identified as Mexican. She explains her understanding of her identity and culture. "I'm different, a little. Like, I do different stuff than other people" (RDI, 23:08–23:39). The vulnerability created a space where Elisa had the language to express how she felt after creating the digital story.

Angela describes a personal story about her family she normally would not tell people. In describing herself she added, "And I really, really don't like to tell people this, but ah, my mom and my dad divorced, so I don't really have a dad" (Angela, RDI, 1:53). Angela later mentions why her grandparents have primary custody of her. "Yeah. They [grandparents] took care of me. When I was, when I was born, they, my mom and them, cause my mom had me when she was very young and she kinda didn't know what she was doing so that they had her support" (Angela, RDI, 14:48). When I asked what was it like to make this project Angela said, "It was fun to have other people and I like expressing what I feel…cause they kinda of the same culture" (Angela, RDI, 10:20–10:39). Angela notes that the people completing the project with her have the same

113

culture. Angela adds that when she was making her digital story, she felt more comfortable to ask for help than when she is in class. "I could ask for help like with you and not to be afraid to ask other people for help" (Angela, RDI, 10:39). All three participants shared aspects of their identity that were emotionally vulnerable that occurred through the meaning-making process of creating the DS or reflecting on the process. Most notably, Angela connects seeing her culture reflected with the people she helped create the DS with. When working with people who looked like her, she said she is not afraid to ask for help in the process of creating the DS because people who had a similar culture as her were working with her to create the project.

Speaking Without Words and Authentic Storytelling

The participants used multiple modes to express ideas and create their story. Reflecting on the process of creating a digital story, Abby said her strength was stories. "Like what you're good at? Um, I think stories" (Abby, RDI, 15:22). Adding that she liked to tell, write, and create her own stories. Elisa did not like writing; she states she liked the design aspect of a digital story. When analyzing a photo of her math teacher, she discussed the subject she disliked the most. "I would say writing. I don't like four paragraphs" (Elisa, Session 5, 10:05). Her favorite part about creating the digital story was "That you got to like take the picture, we got to like pick what we want for our music, and write the words on the pictures" (Elisa, RDI, 0:28). She stated her favorite part was after she took the photos and began to create her story. Angela stated she likes to show who she is through pictures, "I kind of like to show, like in pictures what, what you are like" (Angela, RDI, 11:30).

The participants selected the music in the digital story last once they created the rest of the story. Abby selected instrumental music found under the happy column in Adobe Spark titled *right beside you* to match with her theme, never give up. Elisa similarly picked an instrumental

114

song from Adobe Sparks titled *trek further* to match her theme, I learn new things. Angela was the only participant who selected a song not in Adobe Spark and that had lyrics. The song she selected was in Spanish called "El Burrito Sabanero" [The Little Donkey] to go along with her theme of traditions/encouragement.

In Session 7, after their session on Adobe Spark creating their digital story, we discussed meaning-making with traditional paper pencil story writing compared to meaning-making with a digital story. Abby and Elisa both said traditional stories put the focus on writing while digital stories were easier to create and you could use music and photos to create your story. Angela similarly said the same as Abby and Elisa, but added that digital stories have a stronger emotional element because of the unique abilities of presenting ideas.

Developing Sense of Self and Belonging

Participants reflected on their experience of creating the digital story (DS) and who they are as a learner. When I asked Abby how she felt about expressing her culture and who she is through her DS, she said, "Good." When I asked her to elaborate on how she felt when she shared her digital story with her class, she said, "I learned we belong… like all are welcome here" (Abby, RDI, 7:17). Adding that she felt special when she got to make her digital story. The end of her digital story said, "Always remember who you are." From pre-interview to the post-interview reflecting on the creation of the DS, Abby expanded on how she felt about expressing her culture. In the pre-interview she said, "I have a family" (Abby, FG, 17:20). In the post-interview she said, "Aspects of my culture that is really important to me is my family. They're always been there. And then if we needed help with something, they help us. I'm from Mexico, I speak Spanish and English" (Abby, RDI, 3:18–3:45). Abby could expand on her meaning of her culture and ethnicity at the end of this project.

115

When I asked Elisa what is one thing that she learned from the experience of making a

DS, she responded about meaning-making about her identity, "I learned who I am" (Elisa, RDI,

1:27–2:07). When asking her to elaborate on what she learned about who she was, she

responded, "It's good to have all these things that you can learn with" (Elisa, RDI, 2:15). Elisa

notices many ways to make meaning and learn. From the pre-interview when asking Elisa about

what aspects of her identity or culture were really important to her, she said, "That I have a

family" (Elisa, FG, 17:15). At the end of the project, asking Elisa the same question, she

expanded her answer, "I'm different a little. Like I do different stuff than other people. I have a

different background. Like sometimes we do Spanish stuff and sometimes we do English stuff"

(Elisa, RDI, 23:32). Elisa was able to elaborate on her explanation of what is an important aspect

of her identity and culture after the process of making the digital story.

Reflecting on the process of creating a DS of traditions and encouragement, Angela said

that her favorite part was, "Hmm. I like when teachers like help us learn about other cultures"

(Angela, RDI, 8:41). She responded that she liked to create her digital story with her family

traditions and that includes parts of Mexico and some Spanish. In keeping with her theme of

traditions, her digital story includes an image of a heart saying, "Be you do not change for

someone." Emphasizing that she loves her traditions, at the end of her digital story she says, "I

love who I am." The process of making a DS assisted in participants' meaning-making aspects of

their sense of self and belonging at school. Abby and Elisa could expand on their thinking of

how to describe what aspects of their identity and culture were important to them after the

process of making the DS. Angela stated that her culture and languages helped her create

meaning in her DS for her traditions section.

Theme Across Two Participants: Abby and Elisa
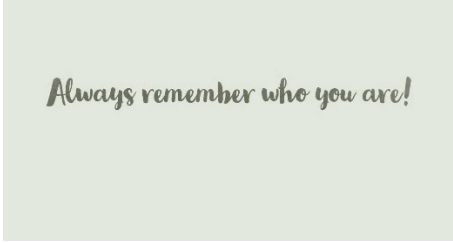
Silence of Culture and Bilingualism

The only part of Elisa's digital story that she connects with her culture or family is her dog (Table 4.6). The first image is of a dog and the title of her digital story is MY LIFE. She does not include any other part of her family; however, she mentioned to me that her parents are also people who help her learn. She wears a necklace given to her by a family member of her dog to school every day to remind her of her dog. "Yeah, because he [dog] is mine" (Session 5, 29:40). Her ethnicity, culture, and linguistic funds of knowledge are absent from the final product. Abby discusses her home as a place she learns and does her homework. In her final reflection she drew a picture of herself as learner, at home doing her homework (Table 4.6). Throughout the analysis of photos, she mentioned advice and encouragement her mom tells her that is included in her theme of the story "never give up" in school. The last slide says, "always remember who you are" but in the end product, she does not include family, culture, or bilingualism (Table 4.6).

Both Abby and Elisa, throughout the process of creating the story, mention their family, bilingualism, and culture; however, and they do not put that in their end product. They worked together throughout the process, took the photos together, and that could have impacted what was important. Their focus of the digital story was on the rules of the school show, posters they see every day, and the teachers who are in the class with them.

Table 4.6

Elisa and Abby's Slides in Digital Story That Pertained to Silence Theme and Abby's Drawing of

Herself as a Learner

Case	Image
Elisa First slide	
Abby Last slide	
Abby Drawing of herself as a leaner	

Individual Theme Angela

Meaning-Making: Connecting Cultural and Ethnic Identity to Learning

The creation of the digital story is a space for Angela to express and explore her

identities; she embraces her full cultural and linguistic funds of knowledge. Angela describes she

118

did not feel the same restraints she felt in the class of being perfect: "Sometimes I'd like to make stuff be perfect [in class]" (Angela, Retro Design interview [RDI], 12:01). When making her digital story she said, "I really like I did a good job. Sometimes I don't do a good job, but I think I did a good job" (Angela, RDI, 13:06). She reflects on her DS as being good and she acknowledges that sometimes she does not do "good" work, judging that the work might not be perfect. Then she states again, I think I did a good job, reiterating her belief in how she did but not saying that it was perfect. She enjoyed making the digital story, stating she preferred not to rely on writing as much. "I kind of like to show, like in pictures what, what you are like" (Retro Design interview, 11:30). Angela referred to the different modes of DS, including images combined with her music selection. In addition, the text she wrote helped her tell her story beyond traditional monomodal literacy of writing. Through the different modes, she could communicate her cultural and ethnic identity. She selected images from the Adobe Spark stock photos to showcase Mexico and her Mexican culture from the very beginning of the digital story with the Spanish song she selected, "El Burrito Sabanero" [The Little Donkey]. "El Burrito Sabanero" is a Christmas song, and Christmas was her favorite holiday with her family and included important traditions.

The introduction shows Mexico's flag in the center, in Mexico City (Table 4.7). The last image is of a Mexican female wearing a traditional dress dancing. She told me she thought she was beautiful and the text over the image said, "Be Valiente [brave] in who you are." The last slide in bright blue reads, "I love who I am!" It was really important to Angela to showcase both her cultural traditions and words of encouragement to explain who she was as a learner. She wanted to encourage her classmates and share her traditions. When discussing her photos, I asked Angela to think of a theme for her story. I defined a theme as a pattern she saw or an end

119

idea she wanted her audience to understand. The first time she planned out her digital story she wanted it to be in two parts, "I think it can encourage and have traditions" (Session 3, 26:08). She wanted to include two themes, Mexican culture and traditions along with words of encouragement to answer the question who she was as a learner. Angela's primary audience was herself as inspiration for her story. She was writing to herself to help her feel encouraged and to remember her traditions.

Table 4.7

Angela's Cultural and Ethnic Identity Examples From Digital Story

Mode	Digital Story Example
Song	"El Burrito Sabanero" [The Little Donkey]
Introduction image in Mexico City with Mexican flag	
Last image in digital story with Mexican female, translanguaging	
Last slide in digital story	

Note: Hernández, O. (2019) "untitled image." Adobe Spark.

Personal Memo Reflection

Finally, my research reflective memos mirrored student sentiments of feeling the need to silence my cultural and linguistic funds of knowledge in this particular classroom space (Table 4.8). I found myself refrained from speaking in Spanish. The longer I was there, questioning whether students interpreted the "right thing" or the school's rules as the "White thing" based on digital story choices, and feeling frustration over the lack of tools available to access a culture not represented in the classroom due to lack of technology.

Table 4.8

Reflective Memo Quotes

Quotes from Researcher's Journal	Code
I noticed I stopped asking students questions in Spanish until we worked on the digital story.	Silence of bilingualism
Why did only one student include their ethnicity and culture in their digital story?	Silence of bilingualism and culture
Technology resources at school insufficient	Cultural meaning-making tools not available to students

Summary

Chapter 4 presented detailed findings through themes that were generated from close analysis of data collected from participants of this study. Research Question 1 sought to understand how fourth-grade Latinx elementary learners explore/navigate their culture and ethnic identity at school. Two themes emerged from the analysis of the data to address the research question: (a) funds of knowledge and (b) dichotomous identity. Research Question 2 sought to understand how the multimodal tool of investigating digital storytelling assisted in meaning-

making aspects of students' cultural and ethnic identity at school. Four themes emerged: (a) scaffolding process, (b) emotional vulnerability, (c) speaking without words and through authentic storytelling and (d) developing a sense of self and belonging. Chapter 5 presents a discussion of the findings of this study. Also presented are implications and recommendations for education and future research.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of how Latinx fourth-grade students explore/navigate their cultural and ethnic identity in school and how multimodal digital storytelling could assist in meaning-making aspects of their cultural and ethnic identity development. To gain this understanding, I observed classroom behavior, coded the environmental print in the classroom, audio recorded, transcribed and coded semi-structured interviews, audio recorded, transcribed, and coded the dialogue that occurred in the process of making the digital story, and coded the end product of the digital story.

Previous research suggests that Latinx ethnic identity (EI) development during middle childhood differs from that of European American children (Garcia-Coll & Szalacha, 2004; Quintana, 1998, 2007). Therefore, further exploration of the differences in middle childhood development is essential. The goal of the present study was to investigate the factors of how Latinx fourth-grade students navigate their ethnic identity in school. Because preadolescents are more abstract in how they describe EI, we must examine EI through multimodality, specifically DST as a tool of investigation. To better understand EI development during preadolescence in this population, three Latinx fourth-grade students at La Fresa Elementary took part in this study. Chapter 5 presents a discussion of the findings of this study within the context of cultural and ethnic identity development and furthering the knowledge in the field. This chapter will include a summary and discussion of the findings, implications for education, and future directions.

Table 5.1

Comparison of Demographic and Dispositional Factors Explaining Understanding of Culture and Ethnic Identity at School and Themes after the Digital Storytelling Project

Participants	Angela	Abby	Elisa
Ethnic Regard	High Visited Mexico often Pride in being Mexican Spoke Spanish at home Included culture/ethnicity in DS	Medium Never visited Mexico Pride in being Mexican Spoke Spanish at home	Low Never visited Puerto Rico or Mexico Hide Spanish dresses in closet Did not want to speak Spanish at home
Cultural/Ethnic Identity	Mexican/Catholic	Mexican-American	Puerto Rican-Mexican
Age	10	10	10
Funds of Knowledge	Spanish used only with Ms. Vega if you were classified as an ELL They let all cultures in the school, so that means the school welcomes everyone's culture. Bilingual (Spanish and English) Exited ELL program in third grade	Justified not using Spanish in class because teachers do not understand it Noticed that in class they never talk about Mexico. Bilingual (Spanish and English) ELL	Everyone is allowed to attend the school, so that means the school welcomes everyone's culture. Noticed that in class they never talk about Puerto Rico or Mexico. Bilingual (Spanish and English) Was never classified as ELL
Attitude Toward Learning	Afraid in class to participate or ask questions	Participated in class and asked questions	Participated in class and asked questions

	Feelings of otherness Did not enjoy writing Focused on not being able to spell words Wanted to do work perfectly	Enjoyed writing and telling stories Felt good about her work	Did not enjoy writing Focused on not being able to spell words Wanted to do work perfectly
Cultural Discontinuity Between Home and School	At home speaks Spanish Cultural celebrations with her family connect to her religion	At home speaks Spanish Forgets who she is in class and what is important to her	At home speaks Spanish Feels different from others
After Digital Story Project			
Sense of Self/ Belonging	She said she knew everything about her culture. She enjoyed working with others who had a similar culture. Wanted to learn more about others' culture	Felt like she belonged Discussed how hard it is to remember what is really important to her when learning	Better understood who she was Could explain why she felt different
Positive EI Support	Reinforce her EI beliefs	Understand her EI beliefs	Acceptance of EI

There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbook, teachers, and curriculum.

—Lau v. Nichols, 1974

Identity Development in Preadolescence

Prior to beginning to explore the first research question, cultural and ethnic identity development were examined. Although identity development during middle childhood is under investigated, it is still worth discussing. Most of the time, preadolescents demonstrate their understanding of their cultural and ethnic identity with concrete examples of food, language, and family. This aligns with research already conducted with this population that Latinx preadolescents express their understanding with concrete examples, social status, and ethnic perspectives (Quintana, 1998). Feinauer and Cutri (2012) found that Latinx preadolescents in fifth grade express their belonging to their ethnic group through concrete and descriptive ways. Interestingly, the present study shows that understanding of ethnic identity development increases across the time of the digital storytelling project. A possible explanation is that as children get the ability to express their thoughts and make connections through multiple modes (images, music, and text) with their digital story, they become more aware of their learning environment and sense of self. They begin to notice what is acceptable behavior in class and what knowledge has value in school.

Barriers to Learning in School

The findings within this study and the observations conducted point to several barriers to learning and ethnic identity development for Angela, Elisa, and Abby, consistent with the literature on minoritized students, and discussed further in this section. These barriers include limited connections to both cultural and linguistic knowledge which deny access to critical

resources for engaging learning (Garcia Coll & Marks, 2009), an English only linguistic

landscape that permeates an understanding that English is the only language valued (Przymus

and Huddleston, 2021), a lack of professional development and engagement by staff in culturally

relevant practices (Ladson-Billings, 2011), limited technological resources to engage students in

multimodal ways of learning (Narey, 2017), and a clear cultural discontinuity between home and

school (Lovelace & Wheeler, 2006). These barriers make it difficult for the participants to fully

embrace their ethnic identity.

Scholars have shifted the focus on what knowledge is valuable to ethnic minority youth

by defining funds of knowledge as including all linguistic and cultural knowledge for learning

(García & Kleifgen, 2019; Gutiérrez & Rogoff, 2003; Marshall & Toohey, 2010; Moll et al.,

1992). My findings align with research conducted with this population. Garcia Coll and Marks

(2009) discuss that through categorization of ethnic identity (EI) in schools it allows or denies

access to certain resources critical to the development of multicultural and multilingual students.

Carter (2014) found that Latinx students could not use their full funds of knowledge because of

negative institutional ideologies and practices that problematize Spanish. Ultimately, Carter

reported, the pressure of what was acceptable behavior in the school limited Latinx identity

development. These cultural and linguistic resources are critical to students to make connections

in learning. When these resources are denied, it creates daily tensions that translate to various

contexts the child navigates.

During the English language arts block, all participants could not remember a time where

they had discussed their cultural heritage of Mexico or Puerto Rico. Angela connected a class

project of drawing a picture as the only time she remembered her culture being included in class,

yet she could not remember the purpose of the activity. The activity was intended to include

students' culture, yet it failed to provide a meaningful connection or purpose. The activities or the text assigned for students to read or write aligned to a standard but did not consider the various cultures and linguistic knowledge the students possessed. The participants missed opportunities to respond or connect all funds of knowledge to their daily activities. It should be noted that often these students could discuss the connection with cultural and linguistic knowledge if I explicitly asked them. However, students would hesitate to answer questions in class, showing low levels of confidence and a limited ability to make connections when responding to assignments.

Furthermore, Carter (2014) states the national narrative and institutional ideologies present "choices" or illusions that Latinx culture is accepted in the school, but actually the school disregards their ethnicity and provides a broader pressure of what identity is expected for Latinx students. Table 5.1 illustrates different examples of how cultural forms of knowledge were not observed or spoken throughout various forms of data. In terms of cultural knowledge, the participants in the current study all said at first, they felt their culture was accepted at the school because they could attend. This thought was established because of the demographics of the school. Angela noticed the school had students from different backgrounds who attended and various cultures that were represented. She recognized her ethnicity in other students in the school, so that meant that her cultural and ethnic identity was included. Elisa noticed "Spanish kids" attend and are accepted at the school. The focus shifted from demographics of the students to the teacher with Abby. Abby attributed the teachers helping her when she needed help and learning something new as being accepting of her cultural and ethnic identity. However, the data analysis showed that the students' full funds of knowledge were not included. Missed opportunities to connect full funds of knowledge occurred when the students learned new

128

concepts, vocabulary, or wrote writing responses with their cultural knowledge not included as a resource. Instead, the writing prompts included themes of service dogs and if animals should be kept at the zoo with the guidelines of a strict rubric for the students to follow in order to show mastery of the content. The focus of the writing activities centered on English grammar and explaining thought in a formulaic way that prioritized monolingual Eurocentric knowledge. Elisa mentioned that she disliked writing because of the forced structure of four paragraphs.

The restrictions on language in the classroom at La Fresa Elementary is consistent with that of monolithic language ideology in U.S. schools for bi/multilingual students in prior studies (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2018; Gutiérrez et al., 2011; Flores & Schissel, 2014; Valenzuela, 1999). In terms of language practices at La Fresa, they focused on English only lessons taught and a text heavy linguistic landscape. Angela noticed that the only time she heard Spanish in the class was when Ms. Vega, the English resource teacher, would come in and work with students classified as English language learners (ELLs). Elisa and Abby both agreed. Angela also reflected when she needed help learning vowels, she worked with Ms. Vega. That is the only time she could remember Spanish being incorporated with her learning. Angela viewed using her Spanish at school to be merely an obstacle to learning English. Abby was classified as ELL but did not mention an experience working with Ms. Vega. Instead, she defended why teachers do not use Spanish in the class. Abby stated that the teachers do not understand Spanish, so that would create more questions than answers for them.

Drawing from ecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Vélez-Agosto et al., 2017) preadolescents are embedded within more than one environment (e.g., family, peer, community). School environment is a critical social factor in developing marginalized preadolescent ethnic identity (Benjamin, 1997; Brown, 2006, 2017; Constante et al., 2020; Garcia Coll & Marks,

2009; Gillen-O'Neel et al., 2011; Hashtpari et al., 2021; Kiang et al., 2006; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2012, 2014). Many studies have demonstrated a clear connection with teachers impacting students' learning or what they accepted knowledge to be in the classroom (Brown & Chu, 2012; Douglass & Umaña-Taylor, 2016; McKown & Weinstein, 2003).

The linguistic landscape in the classroom and at La Fresa Elementary was a monolingual linguistic environment atmosphere of what language schools prefer, providing explicit and implicit messages about what identity is preferred. Angela, Elisa, and Abby's social semiotic meanings of the linguistic environment made about what linguistic knowledge is valued, is consistent with other studies' findings on the influence of learning and ethnic identity development (Brown, 2017; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014a; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2012). Their digital stories highlighted the school's rules, values, and expectations. Angela also included a text that said "do the right thing" twice in her digital story to emphasize the importance of the school rules. She discussed how students had to behave in the right way as to not get into trouble. She would always make it a point to say she is a kind person. Elisa also noted the rules in school as part of who she was as learner. Elisa focused on following the rules in order to learn new things. Abby also shared that she needed to follow the guidelines to be a good learner. All three of the participants emphasized the importance of the rules to be a good learner. All participants pointed to the school guidelines as support for what they needed to be academically successful. However, the guidelines did not include their home culture.

These findings are consistent with Przymus and Huddleston (2021) who found that linguistic landscapes, like posters and signs at school, send messages to students about the status of language and the speaker of that language. Przymus and Huddleston state these messages can negatively affect multilingual multicultural students and perpetuate hegemony found in areas that

130

are often overlooked and never questioned areas in the school. The participants only saw or thought they could use Spanish in the class if students were having trouble with English. These beliefs were reinforced by what they saw daily with the English resource teacher who would come in and help the students classified as ELL. These English only images and the English only instruction in school are not neutral but reflect the reality of what culture and language teachers expected from students (Freire, 1970). My research aligns with what Bartlett (2007) reported, students become products of their linguistic environment, the classroom's semiotic meaning making with the organization and privileging of the monolinguistic paradigm, strengthening hegemonic beliefs of English. With monolithic language and Eurocentric practices, scholars have asked "Whose culture has capital in education, and whose knowledge gets valued or discredited?" (Bernal, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Yosso, 2005).

Ladson-Billings (2011) asserts the problem in teaching is not in what the teachers do, but rooted in how they think about multiple social contexts within education, "about the students, about curriculum and about instruction" (p. 34). The term culturally relevant pedagogy is a broader picture of what cultural knowledge is valued, beyond a specific activity or lesson for one day, but rather what is needed is a deeper understanding of the beliefs that manifest in the pedagogical practices and rationales that then translate into practice in the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2011). The teacher acknowledged that the lessons supplied by the district lacked relatability to the students, and she reached out to me for help. Mrs. Smith felt frustrated with the resources that she had and was unsure of what to do on her own. She would ask me for advice on how to implement activities or topics that the students could relate to more. The school received bilingual Spanish/English books for the classroom library. However, the students had read none of the books and did not know where they were in the classroom library. After sitting with Abby

and reading one of the bilingual books, she was engaged and thought it was cool. The teacher did not know how to integrate the books into her daily lessons and was not instructed on how to implement them.

All the participants perceived their teacher as someone who helped them learn. Their teacher was essential in helping them understand what to do in class, the values, and the expectations. Throughout the analysis of the data, it became apparent that the participants did not consciously perceive that their cultural and linguistic knowledge were part of learning in school. This cultural mismatch between home and school is consistent with other studies that emphasize the messages the school sends to students is that English only is the language used and thus what identity is preferred (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2000; Gutiérrez et al., 2011; Valenzuela, 1999). Valenzuela (1999) found that schools are formally and informally set up in ways to discredit linguistic and cultural knowledge and, by consequence, teachers do not create meaningful connections with their students. Zapata and Horn (2017) found that instructional obstacles were restricted by current classroom monomodal and monolingual practices. Additionally, Gutiérrez et al. (2011) states that literacy practices need to be more inclusive of culture and language and found that multimodal composition made that possible. Furthermore, Narey (2017) explains current monomodal (paper and pencil) literacy practices benefit the written word and fail to incorporate other multimodal literacy (e.g., sound, image, text), to help bridge home and school knowledge.

Technology accessibility in class was also a challenge. Although the ELA classroom had three desk-top computers, one laptop, a smart board, and the Internet, technology was inconsistent. Technological issues consistently occurred with the Internet not working, computers not working, or the limited computers in the class made it difficult to create and

complete digital assignments. The classroom included a technology center; during breakout group work, the tasks for that center included English grammar activities, read books online, or practice for assessments. Other than those opportunities on the computer, multimodal literacy practices were not part of the curriculum at La Fresa Elementary. Gutiérrez et al. (2011) and Narey (2017) made a strong case to include more multimodal literacy practices that incorporate different modes of learning, like digital storytelling, to reject monolithic ideologies. Zapata and Horn (2017) state that modeling and teaching these practices to teachers and students is essential in making these multimodal practices successful. These different modes leverage language as dynamic and encourage both home and school knowledge to be used but are an issue in lower income schools like Title I, where accessibility to technology is difficult (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2018).

Schools view culture and language as a barrier instead of an opportunity for learning. The school's classification code for multilingual students used at La Fresa (and all schools in this district), was English language learner (ELL) which is monolingual centered. The term ELL is framed as a deficit, not acknowledging the student's full linguistic repertoire. Scholars prefer the asset-based term dual language learner (DLL) or emergent bilingual (EBs) because it acknowledges all linguistic capabilities (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2018; Gutierrez et al., 2011). Both DLL and EBs highlight the value of the multilingual learner.

Disconnect between home and school created another layer of barriers. Cultural discontinuity occurred between the participants' home and school language practices. The term cultural discontinuity is defined as language and culture patterns from multicultural and multilingual children that differ from the dominant school environment (Lovelace & Wheeler, 2006). Examples of cultural discontinuity include "pronunciation, vocabulary, grammatical

133

structure, and use of cultural specific language in social interaction" (Lovelace & Wheeler, 2006, p. 304). Both Angela and Elisa stated that if they worked hard, then they could succeed academically. Their work ethic demonstrated they were aiming for perfection. They would question their answers and not feel confident in completing assignments. This disconnect reinforces what knowledge is acceptable and what identity is preferred in school (Valenzuela, 1999). Angela and Elisa both stated that they struggled with writing, especially with grammatical and vocabulary issues. Taggart (2017) found, with Latinx high school students, that the more cultural discontinuity based on Eurocentric cultural values that a student experienced, the worse they did academically. Meaning that the more Latinx preadolescents felt their culture and language did not belong in their learning, the worse they will perform academically in the future. Taggart's study aligns with my findings because Angela felt the most cultural discontinuity and felt the most insecure about her academic abilities. Solórzano and Yosso (2002) explain challenges in dominant ideologies in education, like the myth of meritocracy, that by working hard you can achieve your goals. Instead, they argue that dominant groups in U.S. society distort and use deficit models to silence marginalized communities' knowledge.

The Myth of Meritocracy

The message students were receiving alluded to working hard and you will reach your dreams or perfection in Angela and Elisa's example, this is the myth of meritocracy. It is evident that the dominant culture has advantages over minoritized groups. Yosso (2005) and other critical scholars (Bell, 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001) state the myth of meritocracy, is an illusion to cover up deficit-based models that hide power and privilege of dominant groups in the United States. If we fail to disprove this myth, we risk further reinforcing oppression and deficit perspectives about minoritized populations.

This study centers students voices to dismantle oppressive voices in school. Digital storytelling is a tool to break linguistic ideologies and create resistance, share counterstories to disrupt the standard status quo (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). My work expands the work of Vasudevan et al. (2010) that states students who come from minoritized backgrounds need new modes of communication to provide a variety of opportunities to display knowledge.

Peers as a Support System

Peer interactions in schools help to explain the complexities of how students are positioned in the English-dominant macro-level spaces of the classroom and how tensions occur in identity development (Collett, 2019). Even though there was diversity in La Fresa, by the fourth grade when data collection began, students grouped themselves by language, which consequently affected the divisions across students' social networks. Language and ethnicity become the two variables structuring students' interactions with peers and subsequently their participation in certain activities. The students' ethnicity and native language divided students into social networks. These networks often determined who students ate lunch with, worked with in the class, and socialized with at recess. Angela, Elisa, and Abby were acutely aware of their ethnicity and this awareness guided their decision making throughout the day. Collett's (2019) findings align with mine, in that her fourth-grade participants self-grouped by ethnic and racial divisions within social networks. Similar to Brown (2017), I found that although the school's population includes a majority of Latinx students, the structural context of the school features White European American (such as Theodore Roosevelt and Carol Burnett). There was a disconnect between the Latinx student population and the White European American values displayed in the physical context of the school.

The Role of Family

Studies show youth with strong family connections have a more developed positive EI (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2009, 2014). The participants in this study all had a strong connection to their family (Table 5.1). Through the process of creating the digital story, students mentioned their family as support systems. Angela described her family as people who help her remember and keep her cultural traditions. Both Abby and Elisa said that their family was their primary audience and inspiration for their digital story. Angela and Abby had a more positive EI. Yet Elisa had a lower ethnic regard, despite having a strong family connection. An explanation for feeling different and hiding part of who she is, is that she was one of the few students who was Puerto Rican and Mexican, while most of the students in the class and school identified as Mexican.

Considering Angela's High Ethnic Regard

Kiang et al. (2006) found that when students have a higher ethnic regard, they display less daily anxiety in school. Angela was the participant who had the strongest ethnic regard (understanding of ethnicity), stating her pride in being Mexican, bilingual, and visiting Mexico often; yet she was the participant with the strongest classroom anxiety. Angela displayed anxiety in class, whether it was to ask a question or participate in whole group. Angela was aware of her ethnicity and those like her. She was the first to say when Spanish was included in class and who was Latinx at the school. Angela's anxiety aligns more with findings of Gillen-O'Neel et al. (2011) who reported that when preadolescents are aware of stigma from their ethnicity, it leads to stress and academic anxiety. Angela clearly has feelings of otherness at school. She perceives her bilingualism as unique to her non-Latinx peers. Brown (2017), Benjamin (1997), and Carter (2014) emphasize the role that the school has on student's identity formation, which has

historically "othered" multicultural and multilingual students, especially Latinx students. These studies, along with Brown and Chu (2018) emphasize the school environment should reflect the diversity of students to help support positive EI development. Gee (2004) states that "academic language both creates an 'other' and then insists that the 'other' be pretty much like the 'author'" (p. 84). The school's message of English-only and dominant culture ultimately creates Angela's feeling of otherness and then insists on what identity is acceptable to be academically successful. The digital story project helped reinforce her positive EI development. In addition to helping Angela, the digital story project helped Abby better understand her EI and Elisa accept her identities.

Researcher Positionality

When students see their culture and language represented, they are more open to learning and feel their identities are accepted (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2000). My positionality of sharing a similar culture and linguistic knowledge may have helped the students make linguistic connections (Bristol & Martin-Fernandez, 2019). The students felt more comfortable talking Spanish, sharing their vulnerabilities, had more of a sense of belonging, had a better understanding of self, and were less afraid when they worked with me. A research synthesis showed positive social-emotional development benefits along with learning for Black and Latinx students when the teachers share the same ethnic/racial identities of their students (Bristol & Martin-Fernandez, 2019). Rivas-Drake et al. (2014a) reported benefits of a positive ethnic identity development like self-esteem, well-being, and academic school attitudes because they can see their cultural and linguistic knowledge valued.

Identity Development Through Digital Storytelling

Drawing from a multimodality theory (New London Group [NLG], 1996), Kress and colleagues' (2003, 2010; Kress & Jewitt, 2003; Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001) definition of the social semiotic theory (Hodge & Kress, 1988) makes social interaction the center focus of creating. A surprising finding is that the participants in this study were better able to explain their cultural and ethnic identity at the end of the digital storytelling project. The design multimodality framework of the digital story included *critical framing* that led to *transformed practice*. Students were positioned as experts in their story and encouraged to question what they had learned. The last few slides on Angela and Abby's digital story reinforce their sense of self. Angela said, "Be Valiente in who you are" and "I love who I am." Angela incorporated translanguaging, using all her linguistic repertoire. Abby similarly added a slide about her sense of self, "Always remember who you are." This transformed into meaning-making about who they were as learners and opportunities to explore and express from one context, the photos, their classroom, to a new context, the digital story. Angay-Crowder et al. (2013) similarly found their digital story project to be a powerful tool when reflecting on their identities, based on their experiences and meanings during a summer program. What is unique about my study is the triangulation thorough the observations to connect classroom behaviors with the process and product of the digital story to confirm or contradict what they created.

My findings also align with Garcia and Kleifgen's (2019) case study analysis conducted with middle schoolers—multiliteracies deepened students' understanding of themselves and created a sense of *confianza* (confidence) in students' work, challenging traditional thoughts on literacy. Anderson & Macleroy (2017) found that creating a DST opened up a space to have complex conversations about culture and language and moved beyond the cultural discontinuity.

138

What is unique to my study is that you could see the growth in understanding of one's culture through the process of digital storytelling. From the pre to post interviews, participants were better able to articulate how they felt about their culture and identity, moving from concrete examples of family to more sophisticated thoughts on how their culture was or was not represented in the school and how they felt when learning (Table 5.1). The following quote is an example from Abby after completing the digital story project.

> Cause sometimes you can forget about [who you are] and you're like, keep thinking about other things and you're not thinking about like your feelings, your family, and the stuff that are important to you. (Abby, RDI, 11:13)

The quote shows how Abby felt when she was learning. She struggled to remember her cultural knowledge when she was in school. She felt tensions between home and school.

Implications for Education

This study shows that digital storytelling is one way to expose monolithic language and cultural practices by the school by pointing out what student funds of knowledge are ignored. The study answers the call made by Rowe and Miller (2016) to help find strategic learning tools for culturally and linguistically diverse students to help build positive identity development. Mrs. Smith was frustrated on how to make the class materials relatable to her multicultural and multilingual students and felt limited with the resources and knowledge she had. The findings from this study and culturally relevant literature (Ladson-Billing, 2011; Yosso, 2005) support training for teachers to include culturally relevant pedagogy to help incorporate all funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). When teachers change their perspective from a position of sympathy ("you poor dear"') to one of informed empathy ("I understand your feeling"), the understanding of students develops to a deeper understanding of what is needed beyond one

activity. This informed empathy requires the teacher to feel *with* the students rather than feel *for*

them (Ladson-Billings, 2011). These beliefs build a bond between the student and teacher, along

with continuing to hold high standards for all students. Researchers and teacher prep programs

are obligated to re-educate candidates we currently attract toward a more expansive view of

pedagogy (Bartolome, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

The complexity of cultural and ethnic identity development supports educators to engage

in these topics in schools. Each student who did not see themself represented in the school

experiences cultural discontinuity, a disconnect between their home and school cultures. Yosso

(2005) encourages community knowledge to be part of the curriculum, such as culturally

relevant pedagogy. Scholars agree that literacy practices should support all linguistic repertoires

to empower preadolescents to see their identities as learners (Gee, 2004; Gutiérrez et al., 2011;

Skinner & Hagood, 2008).

The unique incorporation of digital storytelling fostered the deeper understanding of

cultural and ethnic identity development. Anderson et al. (2018) suggests we expand the process

of digital storytelling in an interdisciplinary way in how we view language, learning,

engagement, and digital technology. Digital storytelling is one way for teachers to support a

positive identity development through authentic storytelling, encourage critical thinking, support

a sense of belonging, cross boundaries bridging home and school, breakdown monocultural

pedagogical curriculum, and ultimately affirm identities (Cummins et al., 2015; Gutiérrez et al.,

2011; Smith et al., 2020).

The contextual barriers of technology at school play an influential role. I encountered

several roadblocks in implementing the study in its original design. For example, even though I

supplied the students with the iPads, the internet could not successfully connect to it. I had to use

my personal hotspot to connect the iPads to the internet. The iPad also did not connect to the school computer to download photos to work on Adobe Spark. I had to take extra steps to help the students complete their stories. Technology issues, particularly for a Title I school, are a barrier of accessibility and exasperates inequalities. All schools and students deserve access to technology to enhance student learning (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2018).

By understanding the perception of Latinx students, educators can work with the school or community to see what is needed in the school environment to help all students feel welcomed to express their culture within the school. If students feel free to express their home culture within the school, they are more likely to feel connected and build a positive cultural and ethnic identity. The cumulative effect of this could in turn produce more academic success and contribute to lowering the disproportionately high dropout rates of Latinx students.

Many authors have discussed the importance of multilingual multicultural students to create their own authentic story (Ada & Campoy, 2004; España & Herrera, 2020; Quiroz, 2001). Multimodal literacies is one mode that can be strategically used (Angay-Crowder et al., 2013; Liu et al., 2018; Pacheco & Smith, 2015; Rowe & Miller, 2016; Skinner & Hagood, 2008) and it is one way of bridging both home and school culture (Anderson & Macleroy, 2017; Cummins et al., 2015; Hirsch & Macleroy, 2020; Smith et al., 2020).

If this workshop was done in a classroom setting, teachers would need to set norms and discuss the vulnerability of the project. They could do each section during a literacy block time where students would work in partnerships. Strategic partnership is essential for students to feel comfortable to share ideas about themselves. Using digital storytelling provides an avenue for crossing boundaries in a meaningful way that would dig deeper into the students' home and

school culture (Lizárraga & Gutiérrez, 2018). Digital storytelling would be an option to include more of the students' language and culture in the curriculum.

Implications for Research and Future Directions

The present study has important implications for research surrounding ethnic identity development, especially with Latinx preadolescents. This study found ethnic identity development during middle childhood to be significant in school settings for a sense of belonging and funds of knowledge. This type of curriculum can be particularly powerful for multicultural and multilingual preadolescents, as it allows them to express and explore meanings of who they are and centers their narrative (Skinner & Hagood, 2008). In addition, Latinx preadolescents develop differently due to cultural and linguistic knowledge and experiences. One finding that adds something new to the body of knowledge and speaks to the uniqueness of middle childhood Latinx students' development is the importance of contextual factors during the creation of a digital storytelling project that was used as an introspective tool that helped deepen understanding of EI. The contextual factors of school, peers, and family helped gain overall insight into the participants' identity. This phenomenon is not one that has been found elsewhere and might be generalizable only to this sample, however it warrants future research. Most research on ethnic identity development is quantitative and is done during adolescence in middle and high school.

Another implication is that EI is occurring during middle childhood (7–11 years old) thus research should continue with this age group. Throughout the process of creating the digital story the participants were able to develop the language to articulate better their understanding of self and how their culture and ethnicity played a role in who they are. They also began to take notice

of their learning environment and how that supported or did not support their cultural and ethnic identity. This needs to be explored further.

Most EI studies include surveys or interviews that are student or teacher reported but do not include additional contextual factors like observations to triangulate the data. More research is needed that incorporates more contextual factors that involve multiple ecosystems (school, family, community, peers) to help understand what factors preadolescents take into consideration in school to help build positive EI development for all students (Rogers et al., 2020). Another area of interest is how EI develops transnationality, between grandparents, parents, and children to understand how they may build or shape one another (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2013). Angela has the highest ethnic regard and she lives with grandparents. This needs to be explored further. Bridging multimodality and EI development is another area in which more research is needed. Only a few studies have tied the two concepts together (Anderson & Macleroy, 2018; Cummins & Early, 2000) to break monolingual language ideologies and perspectives in literacy and challenge current school and classroom practices.

Future research should consider different Latinx populations in order to understand more complex contextual factors. The Latinx population is vast and has many different implications. Although all three participants identified as Latinx, within that they each identified ethnically differently. Angela identified as Mexican, Abby identified as Mexican-American, and Elisa identified as Puerto Rican-Mexican. Elisa was different in her Latinx background than Abby and Angela and represented her EI differently. Some themes among all participants were the same but some themes were different. Heterogony of labeling Latinx students is problematic and future research is needed to continue to understand the contextual differences. This needs to be further explored. The work highlights the importance of ethnic identity development and finding

ways to develop positive EI that bridge both home and school knowledge using digital storytelling as an introspective tool.

Limitations

This study did have limitations that will be presented within this section. In qualitative research, the main reason for data collection is to understand the environment and not obtain control over influencing factors. Conducted over 12 weeks, this study was conducted in a school setting and did not include family. In gaining deeper bioecological understanding of embedded environments, adding the context of family could help support deeper findings. Although the conversations were audio recorded, video recording may have helped in understanding more of the context.

The number of students in this study was both a limitation and delamination. Including three cases was instrumental in providing insights into similarities and differences across a diverse set of students. Nevertheless, the number of students represents a small sample of the feasibility of implementing a digital storytelling project. This was done in a Title I school in the southeastern United States. The school context needs to be considered if making transferability claims. Therefore, the context of each case represents features unique to their lived experiences, context, and the co-construction experience of the creation of their digital story. Furthermore, the interpretations of the finding are based on my ontological perspective and lived experiences. The findings from this study should be considered in light of the limited time frame, the number of participants, and the school context.

Conclusion

Research understanding ethnic identity development during middle childhood is still in its beginning stages. It has been well established that a positive EI has many developmental

benefits (Brown, 2017; Brown & Chu, 2012; Kiang et al., 2006; McKown & Weinstein, 2003;

Rivas-Drake et al., 2014a, 2014b; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2011, 2012, 2014; Vera et al., 2011)

therefore, research conducted to understand and promote positive EI should continue. The

present study and previous research have shown that Latinx EI development differs from that of

European Americans (Garcia-Coll & Szalacha, 2004; Quintana, 1998, 2007). Researchers and

educators need to be aware of the differences in Latinx middle childhood development in order

to understand how to better serve them.

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Appendices

Appendix A: IRB Certificate

CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 28-May-2019
Expiration Date 27-May-2022
Record ID 41111009

This is to certify that:

Jennifer Barreto

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

Not valid for renewal of certification through CME.

Human Research
(Curriculum Group)
Social / Behavioral Investigators and Key Personnel
(Course Learner Group)
1 - Basic Course
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

University of South Florida

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?we819a290-cdad-4536-b913-11e2ea0e99de-41111009

Appendix B: Parent Consent Form #1 English

![USF University of South Florida logo]

Parental Permission for Children to Participate in Research Involving Minimal Risk

Information for parents to consider before allowing your child to take part in this research study

Pro # 00037695

The following information is being presented to help you and your child decide whether or not he/she wishes to be a part of a research study. Please read this information carefully. If you have any questions or if you do not understand the information, we encourage you to ask the researcher.

We are asking you to allow your child to take part in a research study called:

Cuéntame: Tell me your digital story

The person who is in charge of this research study is Jennifer Barreto. This person is called the Principal Investigator. However, other research staff may be involved and can act on behalf of the person in charge. She is being guided in this research by Dr. Lisa Lopez.

The research will be conducted at Burney Elementary.

Purpose of study:

The purpose of this study is to understand how students reflect, explore, express, and recreate their lives and identities using digital storytelling as a method for engaging students to create a digital story.

Why is your child being asked to take part?

We are asking you for your child to take part in this research because the classroom teacher has agreed to participate. We would like to select as many Latino children that have one parent at home that speaks Spanish to participate in small-group instruction on creating a digital story of how they view themselves. If your child is selected to participate in the small-group instruction, his/her participation will help us determine how Latino children reflect, explore, express, and recreate their lives and identities using digital storytelling.

Study Procedures:

If your child takes part in this study, s/he will be asked to participate in small-group instruction on creating a digital story of how they view themselves. Progress will be monitored weekly through observations and the story they create. The researchers will analyze the conversations and the creation of

the digital stories to better understand ethnic identity development. The findings of this study will provide information to classroom teachers, school administrators, and parents about providing digital literacy instruction to help Latino children in classroom explore, think critically, foster academic achievement, and leadership skills through creating their own story.

If your child takes part in this study, s/he will be asked to:

- If you child is a candidate to be a part of our study, we will conduct a brief, 15 minute interview with your child to answer the ethnic identity survey (MEIM).

- Your child will be asked to participate in small group of 4-5 children. Each lesson will take 60 minutes to complete. Children will receive instruction once a week for 8 weeks in there construction of their digital story. This instruction will be conducted in your child's classroom, computer lab, or a nearby hallway. This instruction is designed to complement typical fourth-grade instruction. This instruction will be delivered only by the principal investigator.

- Finally, audio recording may be completed in the small group of conversations had during instruction. These audiotapes will be used to understand better the construction of their digital story. In addition, short portions of tapes, without identifying names of children, may be used for scholarly presentations to teach others how students form their identities. Audio recordings will be stored electronically on password protected computers in our research lab for 5 years after completion of the study at USF. After 5 years, the audio tapes will be deleted.

Total Number of Participants

About 10 children and 1 teacher will take part in this study at Burney Elementary.

Alternatives / Voluntary Participation / Withdrawal

If you decide not to let your child take part in this study, that is okay. Instead of being in this research study your child can choose not to participate. You should only let your child take part in this study if both of you want to. You or child should not feel that there is any pressure to take part in the study to please the study investigator or the research staff.

If you decide not to let your child take part:

- Your child will not be in trouble or lose any rights he/she would normally have.

Instead of being in this research study, your child will continue to receive routine instruction provided by his/her classroom teacher.

You can decide after signing this informed consent form that you no longer want your child to take part in this study. We will keep you informed of any new developments which might affect your willingness to allow your child to continue to participate in the study. However, you can decide you want your child to stop taking part in the study for any reason at any time. If you decide you want your child to stop taking part in the study, tell the study staff as soon as you can.

Benefits

The potential benefits to your child include:

- Your child will learn how to create a digital story and may be understand more about who they are.
- The results of this study will provide more information for classroom teachers, school administrators, and parents regarding the role identity of students play in development.

Risks or Discomfort

There are no known risks to those who take part in this study.

Compensation

Your child will receive no payment or other compensation for taking part in this study.

Costs

It will not cost you anything to let your child take part in the study.

Conflict of Interest Statement

No conflict of interest.

Privacy and Confidentiality

We will do our best to keep your child's records private and confidential. We cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. Your child's personal information may be disclosed if required by law. Certain people may need to see your child's study records. These individuals include:

- The research team, including the Principal Investigator, study coordinator, and all other research staff.
- Certain government and university people who need to know more about the study, and individuals who provide oversight to ensure that we are doing the study in the right way.
- Any agency of the federal, state, or local government that regulates this research. This includes the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP).
- The USF Institutional Review Board (IRB) and related staff who have oversight responsibilities for this study, including staff in USF Research Integrity and Compliance.

We may publish what we learn from this study. If we do, we will not include your child's name. We will not publish anything that would let people know who your child is.

You can get the answers to your questions, concerns, or complaints.

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this study, call Jennifer Barreto at (813) 263-7281.

If you have questions about your child's rights, or have complaints, concerns or issues you want to discuss with someone outside the research, call the USF IRB at (813) 974-5638 or contact by email at RSCH-IRB@usf.edu.

I freely give my consent to let my child take part in this study. I understand that by signing this form I am agreeing to let my child take part in research. I have received a copy of this form to take with me.

_____   _____
Signature of Parent of the Child Taking Part in Study   Date

_____
Printed Name of Parent of the Child Taking Part in Study

_____
Printed Name of Child Taking Part in Study

_____
Birthdate of Child Taking Part in Study

Check and initial one:

☐ _____ If you give permission for audio recording to be used for public display.

☐ _____ If you give permission for your child to participate in the study but not for audio recording to be used for public display.

Statement of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

I have carefully explained to the person taking part in the study what he or she can expect from their child's participation. I confirm that this research subject speaks the language that was used to explain this research and is receiving an informed consent form in their primary language. This research subject has provided legally effective informed consent.

_____   _____
Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent   Date

_____
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

Appendix C: Parent Consent Form #1 Spanish

Autorización Parental Para La Participación de Niños en Estudios de Riesgo Mínimo

Información Que Padres Deben de Considerar Antes de Dar Autorización a Su Hijo(a)

Pro # 00037695

La siguiente información le está siendo presentada para ayudarle a decidir si usted y su hijo(a) desean participar en un studio investigativo. Por favor lea esta información cuidadosamente. Si usted tiene alguna pregunta o si no entiende la información presentada, le sugerimos que le pregunte a la personal conduciendo el estudio.

El estudio investigativo del cual deseamos que participe se llama:

Cuéntame: Dime tu digital cuento

La persona encargada de este estudio es Jennifer Barreto. Esta persona es denominada como la Investigadora Principal. Sin embargo, otros miembros del grupo investigativo estarán envueltos y podrán activar en representación de lapersona a cargo. La investigadora principal de este estudio está bajo la orientación del Dr. Lisa Lopez.

Este estudio se llevará a cabo en salones de Burney elemental.

Propósito del estudio:

El propósito de este estudio es entender cómo estudiantes reflejan, exploraran, expresaran y recrean sus vidas e identidades mediante la narración digital como un método para involucrar a los estudiantes a crear un cuento digital.

¿Porqué se hijo(a) ha sido invitado a tomar parte en este estudio?

Le pedimos a su hijo a participar en esta investigación porque el maestro ha accedido a participar. Nos gustaría seleccionar a tantos los niños latinos que tienen en casa un padre que habla español para participar en la instrucción de grupos pequeños en la creación de una cuenta digital de cómo ven a sí mismos. Si su niño es seleccionado para participar en la instrucción de grupos pequeños, su participación nos ayudará a determinar cómo niños latinos reflejan, exploraran, expresaran y recrean sus vidas y identidades con cuenta digital.

Procedimiento del estudio:

Si su hijo participa en este estudio, se le pedirá que participe en instrucción en grupos pequeños sobre cómo crear una cuenta digital de cómo se ven a su mismos. El progreso se monitoreará semanalmente a través de las observaciones y la historia que crean. Los investigadores analizarán las conversaciones y la creación de historias digitales para comprender mejor el desarrollo de la identidad étnica. Los hallazgos de este estudio brindarán información a los maestros, administradores escolares y padres sobre cómo proporcionar instrucción de alfabetización digital para ayudar a los niños latinos a explorar, pensar críticamente, fomentar el rendimiento académico y las habilidades de liderazgo a través de la creación de su propia historia.

¿Qué hará su hijo(a) si toma parte en este estudio?

- Si su hijo es candidato para ser parte de nuestro estudio, realizaremos una breve entrevista de 15 minutos con su hijo para responder la encuesta de identidad étnica (MEIM).

- Se le pedirá a su hijo que participe en un grupo pequeño de 4-5 niños. Cada lección tomará 60 minutos para completar. Los niños recibirán instrucción una vez por semana durante 8 semanas en la construcción de su historia digital. Esta instrucción se llevará a cabo en el aula de su hijo, en el laboratorio de computación o en un pasillo cercano. Esta instrucción está diseñada para complementar la instrucción típica de cuarto grado. Esta instrucción será entregada únicamente por el investigador principal.

- Finalmente, la grabación de audio puede completarse en el pequeño grupo de conversaciones que se tuvieron durante la instrucción. Estas cintas de audio se utilizarán para comprender mejor la construcción de su historia digital. Además, porciones cortas de cintas, sin identificar los nombres de los niños, pueden usarse para presentaciones académicas para enseñar a otros cómo los estudiantes forman sus identidades. Las grabaciones de audio se almacenarán electrónicamente en computadoras protegidas por contraseña en nuestro laboratorio de investigación durante 5 años después de la finalización del estudio en USF. Después de 5 años, las cintas de audio serán eliminadas.

Número Total de Participantes

Cerca de 10 niños y 1 maestro participarán en este estudio en Burney .

Alternativas/Participación Voluntaria/Remoción

Si decide no permitir que su hijo participe en este estudio, está bien. En lugar de participar en este estudio de investigación, su hijo puede elegir no participar. Solo debe dejar que su hijo participe en este estudio si ambos lo desean. Usted o el niño no deben sentir que existe ninguna presión para participar en el estudio para complacer al investigador del estudio o al personal de investigación.

Si decide no permitir que su hijo(a) participe:

- Su hijo no estará en problemas o perderá los derechos que normalmente tendría.

En lugar de participar en este estudio de investigación, su hijo continuará recibiendo la instrucción de rutina proporcionada por su maestro de aula.

Después de firmar este formulario de consentimiento informado, puede decidir que ya no desea que su hijo participe en este estudio. Le mantendremos informado de cualquier novedad que pueda afectar su disposición a permitir que su hijo continúe participando en el estudio. Sin embargo, puede decidir que desea que su hijo deje de participar en el estudio por cualquier motivo y en cualquier momento. Si decide que quiere que su hijo deje de participar en el estudio, infórmeselo al personal del estudio lo antes posible.

Beneficios

Los beneficios potenciales para su hijo incluyen:

- Su hijo aprenderá a crear una historia digital y puede comprender mejor quiénes son.

- Los resultados de este estudio proporcionarán más información para los maestros de aula, los administradores escolares y los padres sobre el papel que juega la identidad de los estudiantes en el desarrollo.Riesgos o Incomodidad

No existen riesgos o incomodidades conocidas en aquellos que participan en este estudio.

Compensación

Su hijo(a) no recibirá pago u otro tipo de compensación por tomar parte en este estudio.

Costos

A usted no le costar nada el permitir que su hijo(a) participe en este estudio.

Declaración de Conflicto de Interés

No hay conflicto de intereses.

Privacidad y Confiabilidad

Mantendremos los reportes de su hijo(a) en este estudio privados y confidenciales. Ciertas personas podrán necesitar ver los reportes de su hijo(a). Cualquier persona con acceso a estos reportes deberán mantenerlos en confidencia. Estos individuales incluyen a:
- El grupo investigativo, incluyendo al Investigador Principal y el grupo investigación de le Universidad del Sur de la Florida.

- Cierto personal gubernamental y universitario que necesitan mayor conocimiento sobre el estudio e individuos que proveen supervisión para asegurar que el estudio se está llevando a cabo de manera correcta.

- Cualquier agencia de gobierno federal estatal o local que regula este estudio.

- La Junta de Revisión Institucional de USF, conocida en inglés como, "The USF Institutional Review Board" (IRB) , y personal relacionados con la responsabilidad de supervisar este

estudio, incluyendo personal de USF Complimiento e Integridad Investigativa, conocida en inglés como "USF Research Integrity and Compliance."

Es posible que publiquemos lo que aprendemos a través de este estudio. De así hacerlo, no incluyéremos el nombre de su hijo(a). No publicaremos nada que le permitirá a otros saber quién es su hijo(a).

Puede obtener respuestas a sus pregutas, dudas, o quejas.

Si tiene alguna pregunta, duda, o queja concerniente a este estudio, comuníquese con la Srta. Jennifer Barreto al (813) 263-7281.

Si tiene alguna pregunta relacionada con los derechos de su hijo(a), dudas, o quejas sobre este estudio, que desee discutir con alguien no relacionado con este estudio, llame al USF IRB at (813) 974-5638 o envíe un correo electrónico a RSCH-IRB@usf.edu.

Consentimiento Para Que Mi Hijo(a) Participe en Este Estudio Investigativo

Libremente doy mi consentimiento para que mi hijo(a) participe en este estudio. Queda entendido que mi firma en este documento es mi acuerdo para que mi hijo(a) tome parte en esta investigación. Recibí una copia de este documento para mi propio archivo.

_____   _____
Firma del Padre del Nino(a) Participando en el Estudio   Fecha

_____
Nombre Impreso del Padre del Niño(a) Participando en el Estudio

Declaración de la Persona Obteniendo el Consentimiento

He explicado cuidadosamente a la personal tomando parte en este estudio lo que el o ella puede esperar de la participación de su hijo(a). Confirmo que esta persona habla el idioma utilizado para explicar este informado en su idioma principal. Esta persona ha provisto consentimiento informado y legal.

_____   _____
Firma del Padre del Nino(a) Participando en el Estudio   Fecha

_____
Nombre Impreso del Padre del Niño(a) Participando en el Estudio

_____
Nombre Impreso del Niño(a) Participando en el Estudio

Fecha de Nacimiento del Niño(a) Participando en el Estudio

Compruebe y una inicial:

☐ _____ Si usted da permiso para que la grabación de audio se utilice para la visualización pública.

☐ _____ Si da permiso para que su hijo participe en el estudio pero no para el audio grabación para ser utilizada para la exhibición pública.

Declaración de la Persona Obteniendo el Consentimiento

He explicado cuidadosamente a la personal tomando parte en este estudio lo que el o ella puede esperar de la participación de su hijo(a). Confirmo que esta persona habla el idioma utilizado para explicar este informado en su idioma principal. Esta persona ha provisto consentimiento informado y legal.

_____   _____
Firma de Persona Obteniendo el Consentimiento   Fecha

_____
Nombre Impreso de la Persona Obteniendo el Consentimiento

Appendix D: Child Verbal Assent

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Script for Obtaining Verbal Informed Consent
Information to Consider Before Taking Part in this Research Study
Title: Cuéntame: Tell me your digital story

Pro # 00037695

Overview: You are being asked to take part in a research study. The information in this document should help you to decide if you would like to participate. The sections in this Overview provide the basic information about the study. More detailed information is provided in the remainder of the document.

Study Staff: This study is being led by Jennifer Barreto who is a doctoral student at The University of South Florida. This person is called the Principal Investigator. She is being guided in this research by Dr. Lisa Lopez. Other approved research staff may act on behalf of the Principal Investigator.

Study Details: This study is being conducted at Burney Elementary and is supported/sponsored by Hillsborough County. The purpose of the study is to understand how students reflect, explore, express, and create who they are using digital stories. The research includes 8 visits which will take about 60 minutes each, once a week for 8 weeks.

Participants: You are being asked to take part because you have one parent that speaks Spanish at home. We want to see how you view yourself through the creation of a digital story.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation is voluntary. You do not have to participate and may stop your participation at any time. There will be no penalties or loss of benefits or opportunities if you do not participate or decide to stop once you start. Your decision to participate or not to participate will not affect your student status, course grade, recommendations, or access to future courses.

Benefits, Compensation, and Risk: We do not know if you will receive any benefit from your participation. However, some people have experienced learning more about who they are and you will learn how to construct a digital story. There is no cost to participate. You will not be compensated for your participation. This research is considered minimal risk. Minimal risk means that study risks are the same as the risks you face in daily life.

Confidentiality: Even if we publish the findings from this study, we will keep your study information private and confidential. Anyone with the authority to look at your records must keep them confidential.

Would you like to participate in this study?

Appendix E: Teacher Consent Form

USF
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SOUTH FLORIDA

Informed Consent to Participate in Research Involving Minimal Risk

Pro # 00037695

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Research studies include only people who choose to take part. This document is called an informed consent form. Please read this information carefully and take your time making your decision. Ask the researcher or study staff to discuss this consent form with you, please ask him/her to explain any words or information you do not clearly understand. The nature of the study, risks, inconveniences, discomforts, and other important information about the study are listed below.

We are asking you to take part in a research study called:

Cuenteme: Tell me your digital story

The person who is in charge of this research study is Jennifer Barreto. This person is called the Principal Investigator. However, other research staff may be involved and can act on behalf of the person in charge. She is being guided in this research by Dr. Lisa Lopez.

The research will be conducted at Burney Elementary.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to understand how students reflect, explore, express, and recreate their lives and identities using digital storytelling as a method for engaging students to create a digital story.

Why are you being asked to take part?

We are asking you to take part in this research study because you are a fourth-grade teacher who is working with Latino children who are Dual Language Learners. If you consent, we will identify children in your classroom who will participate in creating a digital story. Children who qualify for the study will receive weekly small-group instruction. If you agree to participate and parents provide their consent, your participation will help us determine how DLL students reflect, explore, express, and recreate their lives and identities

Study Procedures:

If you take part in this study, <u>you</u> will be asked to:

- Help us identify the Spanish-speaking children in your classroom who have at least one parent at home that speaks Spanish.
- Complete a questionnaire at the beginning of the study to gather information about your ethnic identity (MEIM).
- Audio recording will be used in the classroom when working the small-groups. These recordings will be kept in a locked cabinet at USF 5 years after the final report is submitted to the IRB.
- The expected duration of participation will include two visits a week, 60 minutes with student and 60 minuets observing class for two months.

Total Number of Participants

About 11 individuals will take part in this study at USF.

Alternatives / Voluntary Participation / Withdrawal

You do not have to participate in this research study.

You should only take part in this study if you want to volunteer. You should not feel that there is any pressure to take part in the study. You are free to participate in this research or withdraw at any time. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits you are entitled to receive if you stop taking part in this study.

Benefits

The potential benefits of participating in this research study include:

- Gaining experience with how to implement the use of multiliteracy modes in a classroom to help with a dual language learner.
- The results of this study will provide more information for classroom teachers, school administrators, and parents regarding the role identity of students play in development.

Risks or Discomfort

This research is considered to be minimal risk. That means that the risks associated with this study are the same as what you face every day. There are no known additional risks to those who take part in this study.

Compensation

You will receive no payment or other compensation for taking part in this study.

Costs

It will not cost you anything to take part in the study.

Conflict of Interest Statement

There is no conflict of interest.

Privacy and Confidentiality

We will do our best to keep your records private and confidential. We cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. Your personal information may be disclosed if required by law. Certain people may need to see your study records. These individuals include:

- The research team, including the Principal Investigator, her faculty advisor Lisa Lopez, , and all other research staff at the University of South Florida-Tampa.

- Certain government and university people who need to know more about the study, and individuals who provide oversight to ensure that we are doing the study in the right way.

- Any agency of the federal, state, or local government that regulates this research. This includes the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP). [

- The USF Institutional Review Board (IRB) and related staff who have oversight responsibilities for this study, including staff in USF Research Integrity and Compliance.

We may publish what we learn from this study. If we do, we will not include your name. We will not publish anything that would let people know who you are.

You can get the answers to your questions, concerns, or complaints

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this study, or experience an unanticipated problem, call Jennifer Barreto at (813) 974-2011.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study, or have complaints, concerns or issues you want to discuss with someone outside the research, call the USF IRB at (813) 974-5638 or contact by email at RSCH-IRB@usf.edu.

Consent to Take Part in this Research Study

I freely give my consent to take part in this study. I understand that by signing this form I am agreeing to take part in research. I have received a copy of this form to take with me.

_____   _____
Signature of Person Taking Part in Study   Date

_____
Printed Name of Person Taking Part in Study

Statement of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

I have carefully explained to the person taking part in the study what he or she can expect from their participation. I confirm that this research subject speaks the language that was used to explain this research and is receiving an informed consent form in their primary language. This research subject has provided legally effective informed consent.

_____   _____
Signature of Person obtaining Informed Consent   Date

_____
Printed Name of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

180

Appendix F: Code Book

A Priori Codes Direct Interpretation (single time) Categorical Aggregation (multiple times)	Descriptive Codes (break down)	Definition
1. Ethnicity	Identity Authentic	Self-identified country of origin, group. (i.e., Mexico, America, PR)
2. Language Practices	Cognate Disconnected Bilingual books	Participants view on language or how something is said.
3. Culture		Traditions, rituals, celebrations, customs, religion, music, food, art, and social group of students
4. Family	Pet Home	Biological Parents, siblings, grandparents, cousins, aunts, etc.
5. Languages	English Spanish Monolingual Bilingual Deficit Benefit	L1 or L2 (Spanish or English); Language spoken or discussing language
6. Friend	Peer	Mutual affection; the word itself
7. Technology	TV	Use of technology like elmo, computers; printer smartboard; speakers; Laptop, Ipads; etc
8. Expectations	Champs	Teacher gives expectations in class; what is wanted to be successful
9. Rules	In class Centers Free time	What needs to be followed to keep a class orderly
10. Sports		An activity or skill with an individual or team
11. Community		Living in the same place, local
12. Goals		What the student is to accomplish
13. Strategies		Help assist learners
14. Text		Words without images.
15. Collaboration		Students working together
16. Non-linguistic		No words needed to complete
17. Color		Use of color in the classroom or in DS projects.
18. In charge		You are in control of
19. Happiness		Feeling or showing positive

20. Encouragement (Start during observations)		Teacher or student says positive words to others.
21. AC		Air conditioner in school.
22. Choice		Students are told they have a choice relating to their actions/behavior.
23. Gender		Referring to male or female
24. Frustration	Frustrated	Teacher or student gets upset about something that is happening, typically in the classroom.
25. ELL	Pulled out for testing	Student labeled, English language learner, English is not first language.
26. Help		Asking for assistance
27. Motivate		Finding ways to help student stay on task and be interested in what they are doing.
28. Tech issues		Problem with technology at school; could be internet connection; computer; laptop; elmo; etc.
29. Media Specialist		Person who works in the school library and is in charge of the morning show
30. Adobe Sparks		Program that is free to use; create the Digital Story with this program
31. Free Time	Vary activities	First part of the morning/day when students get to play games 7:30-7:55 am
32. Socialize		Work together in unstructured time
33. Writing Prompt	Topic of writing prompt: Service dogs Coral Reefs Whether or not animals should be kept in a zoo	Dictated by district; students have to write on a specific topic to prepare for standardized testing later on in the year. Test scores go toward school grade.
34. Following morning routine	Mark present Turn in HW	What students do first thing in the morning before free time
35. Support		Teacher or student helping student
36. Repeat		Saying word or sentence more than one time
37. Class demographics		Ethnicity/Race/gender of students in class
38. Move desks		Desks get rearranged to form new collaborative groups
39. Examples		Showing students samples of what is to be done
40. Challenge		Students have a hard time with writing/activity
41. Blank faces		Students not sure what to think
42. Curriculum	Scripted Curriculum Word of day (WOD): Lecture Vocabulary LDC (Literacy Development Curriculum)	Given by the district what the teacher should teach
43. Emotions	Sad Happy	Feeling's people have

	Courage	
44. Centers	Non-linguistic Center Literacy Centers	Time during ELA when students would have different academic activities, they would need to complete
45. Personality	Shy/Quiet	Characteristics of the student
46. Scaffold	Showed Method	Offer supports to help get the task completed
47. Testing		Assessment; often standardized for state
48. Relate	Video games Pop culture-Cartoon	Teacher connects what students are learning to real-world example that students can connect with
49. Engaged		Students active and interested in the class conversation
50. Whole group		All of the class
51. Below level		Not scoring on grade level in standardized tests
52. School		Physical building where students go to learn
53. Teacher	Help	Instructor of the class (i.e., Reading, Writing, Math, Science, Social Studies)
54. Same pictures		Students taking same pictures around the school
55. Reminder		Tell students again
56. Photos		Images taken on an Ipad
57. Respect		Behavior or feelings of someone you admire
58. Learning	Rug	Gain or acquire knowledge or skill
59. Body language		Physical behavior; nonverbal communication to express meanings
60. Afraid		Feeling fear or anxiety
61. Mistake		Students trying and getting an answer wrong
62. Behavior	Nice	Action of a student
63. Structure		Organized, predictable schedule
64. Self-confidence	Confidence Correcting	A feeling of trust, student's view of their ability
65. Bully		Student in school that is mean to another classmate
66. Dictionary		Book with definitions of words
67. Moral		Ethnical dilemmas; right or wrong action or choices
68. Explain		Describes what is being discussed
69. Observation		Teacher gets observed by Principal; district; VP; goes toward teacher evaluation and pay raise
70. Proverb		Short saying for moral purpose or truth
71. Instruction	Knock signal Number paragraphs	Teacher tells students what she wants them to do
72. Authentic audience	Powerful	Presenting story to class
73. Experts		When student shares knowledge on topic and is seen by others as a resource
74. Identity- (Start during Interviews)	Concrete – exact examples	Pertains to who they are; self thought

	Abstract- sophisticated more complex thoughts Striving to become	
75. Environment	School Library After school Boys and Girls club	Context in where the student mentions a specific environment; space; location
76. Unsure	Spelling Ask question Confused	Student does not know how to complete something
77. Subject	Math/Science Reading/Writing Social Studies	Topic taught in school
RQ 2 Codes Continued		
78. Curious		Student asking question to learn something; eager
79. Purposeful		Placed with intention
80. Stand up for themself		Corrects others when wrong
81. Write vs Say		Student wants to write answer/response vs saying it
82. Awe		Surprised; shocked; impressed
83. Remember		Not forget
84. Function		Purpose of somewhere, something
85. Memorize		Remember for a purpose
86. Figure out life		Understand life's meaning
87. Inspire		Ability to feel or do something to help with motivation RE
88. Respond		Answers question
89. Read straight off		Student reads right off; does not use own words to explain meaning
90. Forgot		Did not remember
91. Agree		Yeah; concur
92. Nervous		Anxious
93. Chance		Possibility of something happening
94. Story		Answers question with a story from real life
95. Bother		Mess with
96. Co-construction		Student works with researcher to construct ideas
97. Digital story	Modes: Image, text, music, narration	design of the animated story
98. Reflection		Think of work at the end of construction of DS
99. Become		Who they want to be help
100. Funny		Make a joke
101. Power		Ability to do something; direct influence
102. Assimilation		Adopting the language and culture of the dominant social group

Appendix G: Interview Questions

Questions to ask are based on Angay-Crowder, Choi, and Yi (2013) on designing and conducting the digital storytelling class.

Building a Foundation for Digital Storytelling: Weeks 1 and 2

- What makes me who I am?
- What are aspects of your identity such as race, gender, ability, and religion?
- Who am I striving to become?
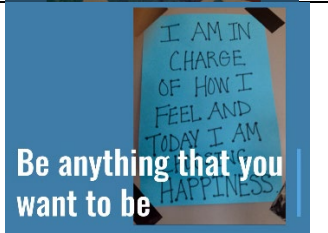- Where are you from?
- What is a digital storytelling?
- How is it created?
- Why do you need to consider purpose and audience in digital storytelling?
- May you introduce yourself (School activities, what is your preferred language, use of technology, etc.)?
- What identity topic would you like to explore (language, home country, personal interests)?

Writing Narratives for Digital Storytelling: Weeks 3 and 4

- What message do you want to convey to your audience?
- Please share reasons for selecting your topic and the potential audience for your story.
- Please outline your story.
- Go over better word choices, encourage to incorporate code-switching in their narrative (e.g. using their heritage or first language).

Orchestrating Text, Image, and Sound: Weeks 5 and 6

- What are differences between print-based (e.g., a traditional five-paragraph essay) and digital multimodal practices (e.g., digital storytelling)?
- What personal experience have you had with images or music? How do they help with conveying a message?
- What are good transitions between scenes?
- Why are you using this particular image and tone of voice here?
- What effect does this image or sound have on your overall meaning?
- Have you discussed your topic with an adult or locals in your community?

Reflecting, Sharing, and Celebrating: Weeks 7 and 8

- What was it like to make the project?
- What did you learn from doing it?

- Whom did you have in mind as audience for your work?
- What and how would you have done differently?
- How do you view yourself after this process?
- What makes me who I am?
- What are aspects of your identity such as race, gender, ability, and religion?
- Who am I striving to become?
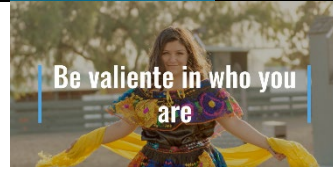- Where are you from?

Photos: SHOWeD Questions

- What do you see here?
- What is really happening here?
- How does this relate to our lives?
- Why does this situation, concern, or is of importance?
- How could this image educate others watching your digital story?
- What can we do about it? Are you going to put it in your digital story?

Appendix H: Field Notes Template

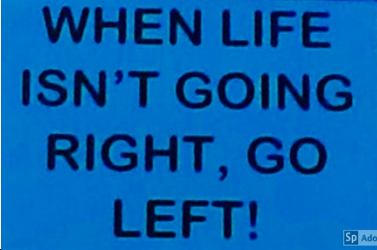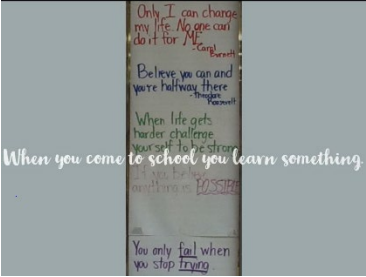| Date/Time/Activity	Field Notes (FN): describe events which are experienced in interviews or by observation. They contain as little interpretation as possible, and are best recorded in the field or as soon as possible after the event. A priori: language practices, culture, ethnicity, family, and technology use.	Methodological Notes (MN): involve evaluations of, and decisions for improving methods of data collection. All data collection decisions and your reflections on your methods should be recorded here. This provides the specifics needed to write a "natural history" of your study.	Reflective Memo/ Personal Notes (PN): capture your feelings and personal reactions to specific features of your experiences in the field.

Appendix I: Angela's Digital Story

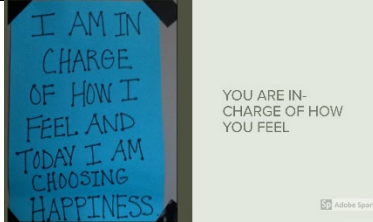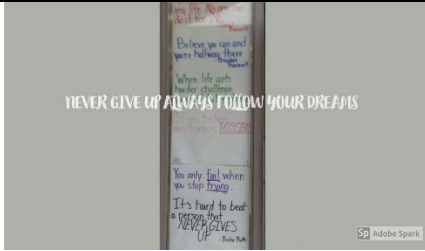| #	Text	Mode	Image/Example	RQ	Code
1	Encourage/Traditions Stock photo: Not taken at the school *Unique	Image/text	Encourage/Traditions	1 & 2	Ethnicity Culture – Mexico City
2	Be encouraged My cover for my laptop	Image/text	Be encouraged	2	Colors: bright Encouragement
3	Be anything that you want to be	Image/text	I AM IN CHARGE OF HOW I FEEL AND TODAY I AM HAPPINESS — Be anything that you want to be	1 & 2	School: in charge: feelings Happiness Become: be anything
4	Be proud of your traditions *Unique	Image/text	3 horses running (Image redacted)	1 & 2	Traditions Family
5	Hand working Strawberries* *Unique; only one to include herself in picture	Image/text/her	She is sitting front and center: Morning show (Image redacted)	1 & 2	Culture: hard working School: Morning show Identity: Has herself in the image
6	Do the right thing	Image/text	La Fresa Elementary* Guidelines for success: Responsible, motivated, safe, problem solvers & respectful (Image redacted)	1 & 2	English Ethnicity: Does not include culture Rules
7	Help me with my work	Image/text/her/ELA teacher	ELA teacher and her front and center, in front of classroom: Smiling (Image redacted)	1 & 2	Help me Work – academic focused English

					Doesn't mention culture or identity
8	Be you do not change for someone	Image/Text		1 & 2	Identity Authentic
9	Help me learn	Image/text/classroom	Math teacher front and center (Image redacted)	1 & 2	School Learn Help
10	Hard working Faculty and Staff	Image/text/Main office	All school personal for year 2018-2019 (Image redacted)	2	Hard working School: support
11	Do the right thing	Text over text		1 & 2	Do Moral: Right thing Assimilation
12	Be Valiente in who you are Stock photo *Unique	Text/image/translanguaging			Ethnicity Culture Language: translanguaging: Spanish
13	I love who I am! Thank you for watching *Unique	Text/Music		1 & 2	Ethnicity: Pride Culture Love Thanking
	Music – Spanish "El burrito Sabanero" [The little donkey, Song during Christmas time)	Music		RQ 2	*Unique Culture: Celebration Language: Spanish Up beat
		Pacing 10 sec for each picture	Wants everyone to have time to read and see image		

Appendix J: Elisa's Digital Story

#	Text	Mode	Image/Example	RQ	Code
1	MY LIFE: When you go to school you learn new things *Unique	Music/Text/image* Stock photo Tahoe Beetschen – "untitled image"		1 & 2	Family: pet Ownership
2	MY HEART AND MY PASSION	Music/text separate from image		1 & 2	DS: Emotional connection
3	reading teacher (Changing up font)	Text over photo	ELA teacher (by herself) ctr/ in classroom/ in front of guidelines/ CHAMPS/ White board with literacy center groups (Image retracted)	1 & 2	Teacher
4	LEARNING NEW THINGS (first picture took) *Unique	Text off to the right side with photo on the left Taken in the media center		2	Learning School- abstract
5	math teacher	Text over photo	Math teacher in classroom; ctr, at desks (Image retracted)	2	School: Math teacher
6	STAY ENERGETIC *School theme is sports	Text over photo		1 & 2	Sports Energy Family
7	None *Unique	Image only	Coloring picture that says never give up/ Ever Ever/ finish line with a hare (Image retracted)	2	School: never give up
8	The rules in school	Text with photo	La Fresa* Guidelines for success Responsible, motivated, safe, problem solvers, & respectful (Image retracted)	1 & 2	Rules Colors

9	Never Bully	Text over photo/music		1 & 2	School Character Behavior
10	None	Photo that has text/music		1 & 2	Life Right
11	My school *Unique	Text over photo/ with music	Welcome sign of La Fresa Elementary Says: Welcome Students, parents, staff (Image redacted)	1 & 2	Ownership Welcome School: Students first
12	We you come to school you learn something Last image	Text over image (poster) Is located outside media center	You never fail until you stop trying. ~Albert Einstein	1 & 2	Quotes: White people School: Learn Assimilation Illusion of choice • Carol Barnett • Theodore Roosevelt • Albert Einstein
13	No closing statement	Pacing is 10 sec. between photos Song called: Right beside you:happy	Only culture is dog, everything else is school English/ rules/ right		

Appendix K: Abby's Digital Story

#	Text	Mode	Image/Example	RQ	Code
1	Never give up Abby & Angela	Music/ text over image Picture: cover of my laptop	NEVER GIVE UP	2	School: never give up
2	SCHOOL TEACHERS *Abby & Angela	Text over photo	FACULTY & STAFF 2018-2019 (Image retracted)	2	School: staff
3	LEARNING HOW TO TELL THE NEWS *Unique	Text over photo	Morning show podium with school name in center and city. (Image retracted)	1 & 2	Morning show: learning: news
4	YOU ARE IN-CHARGE OF HOW YOU FEEL *Abby & Angela have	Photo and text split in screen Elisa & Angela had this image	I AM IN CHARGE OF HOW I FEEL AND TODAY I AM CHOOSING HAPPINESS / YOU ARE IN-CHARGE OF HOW YOU FEEL	1 & 2	Choosing: In charge Feel Happiness
5	FOLLOW THE GUIDELINES *All 3 had	Text over photo	La Fresa Guidelines* Responsible, motivated, safe, problem solvers, & respectful (Image retracted)		
6	NEVER GIVE UP ALWAYS FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS *Abby & Elisa	Text over photo	NEVER GIVE UP ALWAYS FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS	1 & 2	School: Follow "your" dreams: Quote by white people

7	FOLLOW YOUR HEART *All 3	Text over center of heart		1 & 2	Heart: passion
8	STAY FOCUS *Elisa & Abby	Text over photo *Sports school theme		2	School: Sports: Focus
9	MORNING CREW *Unique	Text over image		1 & 2	School: morning: friends English
10	NO BULLYING *Abby * Elisa	Text over image		2	School: bully Moral: Right/wrong
11	KEEP TRYING *All 3	Text over image		2	Assimilate Keep trying Moral: Right
12	RESPECT OTHERS *Unique	Split screen: poster and then text		2	School: Respect Hearts Color

13	Math Teacher *All 3	Split screen photo of teacher on left then text on right	(Image retracted)	2	School: teacher: math (Exit math is in the middle)
14	Reading teacher *All 3	ELA teacher photo with text over it	(Image retracted)	2	School: Reading: teacher
15	Always remember who you are! (cursive) *Unique	Text over blank color	*Always remember who you are!*	1 & 2	Identity: not included in this story Who are you? Nothing distinct about this story.