

# La lucha: to dialogue

The Struggle: to dialogue



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Image 1: A Year 10 Spanish Student Workbook (Participant data, 2007)

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## ABSTRACT (ION)

In this PhD, like a 'mojada' ('*wetback*' – a migrant 'illegally' crossing borders), I set-off on risky crossings into alien and patrolled terrains in Spanish language(s) education and academia (Anzaldúa, 1984, p.31).<sup>1</sup> My 'negotiated' and disrupted entries at checkpoints along the journey of reflexivity on collaborations in a university, in schools, and Spanish classrooms created visceral and intellectual chaos, with costs. Unresolved epistemological and ontological tensions are demonstrated throughout my mestiza (*hybrid*) (Anzaldúa, 1987, p.101) 'testimonio' (*testimony*) (Reyes & Rodríguez, 2012, p.526) of the 'messy' knowledges, politics, and alliances (McGloin, 2016) that emerged with participants (Freire, 1996; Conquergood, 1998). This thesis performs (Denzin, 2003) 'intersecting' practices and relations (Collins, 2015, p.50) in participants' wor(l)ds (in the word world) (Freire & Macedo 1987, p.29) in which pedagogical and scientific baggage (ideologies and interests) are

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<sup>1</sup> This sentence may unsettle readers. In 'western' logic, deductive thinking (known in the 'Pyramid Principle') shapes academic writing (Minto, 2009). The structure of a sentence in English may begin with a subject, followed by a verb and a predicate. This sentence is different. In fact, this thesis is different. It does not only subscribe to 'western' logic; other ways of making meaning are possible (Kumaravadivelu, 2015). An alternative form of reading is required to understand my political and scholarly moves. They are political in the sense that subjective, corporeal, and experiential ways of knowing, being and doing are privileged. They are scholarly because in the commitment to 'subaltern' knowledges, practices, politics, and voices other ways are created to broaden 'western' approaches to pedagogy and research, however diverse (Solomiansky, 2008, p.65). The reading of this complex thesis demands different 'habits of reception' (Marcus & Saka, 2006, p.102) and engagement in which 'exactness' is somewhat abandoned (Kristeva, 2002, pp.4-6) for a messy reflexivity on research and life (Marcus, 1994; Denzin, 2003; Haseman, 2006). The participant-writer resists, sometimes unsuccessfully, 'modernist' ideologies in research which enact 'prescriptive' (Freire, 1996, p.29), detached and experimental 'assembly-line' positionings (hooks, 1994, p.13). These undermine mestiza consciousness, body, and movement (Anzaldúa, 1984, p.99). The writer seeks a decolonising standpoint in which 'always emergent' (Marcus & Saka, 2006, p.102) sensibilities are deployed (Freire, 1996, p.33).

Also, my use of the term 'wetback' may unsettle. However, I admire people who take risks in serving 'social justice' (against racism, classism, and other forms of oppression, including their own). I don't 'ride on the back' of marginalised people, and as in Anzaldúa's work (1984), I draw on the 'wetback' metaphor respectfully to illuminate the struggles, voices, and practices of participants on the margin (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; hooks, 1984; Geertz, 1973). My writing deliberately uses adjectival formations and images in place of objects, and subjects to highlight the body, 'círculos' (*circles*) of (un)certainty, and movement (Freire, 2002, p.26). This way, writing can enable intimate connections with readers that more 'strongly' engage them (Marcus, 1994, p.573). It may not feel liberating for some. The writing is a performance (Denzin 2003; Mackinlay, 2016; Pennycook, 2005), for social critique and action, for some (Anzaldúa, 2015). It has a transformative function, like this footnote.

'spoken back to' (Tuhivai Smith, 2012, p.40), abandoned and transformed in an act of 'calling back' (Anzaldúa, 2015, pp.1-2).<sup>2</sup>

It is ultimately my praxis, or 'mystory' (Ulmer, 2004), built on subjective, aesthetic, (Marcus, 1994, p.384) and 'imaginal' (Anzaldúa 2000, p.19) experiences, which served (and can still serve) collective interests (Rorty, 2010, p.27) within limits in this project (Arnott, 1998, p.73). Rather than narrowly pursuing disciplinary 'goals' (Kristeva, 2002, p.10), the textuality of writing and 'collaborative' practices in this study and thesis respectfully 'move' readers to (a) experience being a 'marginal' other (relinquish some power) in order to (b) experience and understand the "racial grammar" of this PhD (Donnor & Ladson-Billings, 2017, p.201). The study is written for and in parts by 'marginalised' participants (not an 'othering' agenda) (Jones & Calafell, 2012, p.958). It employs 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973, p.312) and 'messy text' (Marcus, 1994, p. 389) to provide intimate 'ethnographic' (Conquergood, 1986, p.179) excavations 'mediated' (Marcus, 2007, p.1143) in symbolic and material ways in:

1. An enactment of a critical pedagogical approach to Spanish
2. The struggles to engage in a Freirean inspired 'dialogue'
3. An alternative messy post-positivist form of research practice where pluralistic voices and products contribute to knowledge and practice
4. The creation of subaltern political knowledge; of hybrid discourses, experiences, and practices: firstly, a positivist, third-person, detached, left-column account; and secondly, a post-positivist, first-person, and creative mestiza right-column testimony.

Two 'stories' stand at the heart of this thesis: the struggle to engage in 'cognitive' theories of learning and motivation (Dweck, 1986) and the struggle to enact a 'Freirean' dialogue and messy subaltern 'praxis' with participants. Freire's (1996, p. 62) description of praxis, to which I still subscribe a decade after this PhD began, and even when my practice in this thesis and beyond it fails to realise its 'transformative' intent in the everyday, inspires my *lucha* (*fight*):

Education as the practice of freedom – as opposed to education as the practice of domination – denies that man [sic] is abstract, isolated, independent, and unattached to the world; it also denies that the world

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<sup>2</sup> In this thesis, the term 'participants' refers to people undertaking an active or less obvious role in this 'case study' and the thesis.

exists as a reality apart from people. Authentic reflection considers ... people in their relations with the world.

Despite risks taken in this PhD, I believe *la esperanza es lo ultimo que se pierde* (*hope is the last thing that is lost*), and so I have 'arrived' momentarily to a different entry point, to mestiza activist ways (Pérez, 2005, p.1). The thesis fights for 'academic freedom' to speak back to and up to racialised, institutional, and political practices that other this working-class-mestiza (Jones & Calafell, 2012; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). It seeks freedom to push the borders of positivist narratives and their 'relationships to power' for the participation of 'marginalised' others in the structures and practices of education that, unchallenged, may silence them too (Anzaldúa, 1987; hooks, 1984; Lorde, 1979; Tuhiwai Smith, 2013, p.20). The thesis is a call to action to give 'a fair go' (*a fair chance*) to Spanish students, and Spanish teachers, and their early career researcher allies.





## **DECLARATION**

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed: Katerin Berniz

Date: 18 June 2018

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis was written on Kurna land upon which Flinders University of South Australia is built. I acknowledge the Kurna people as the custodians of this never ceded land.

This thesis marks new beginnings in a lifelong political struggle to dialogue for this australiana uruguaya (*Uruguayan-Australian woman*) of working-class-migrant heritage born in a colonised Australia. De todo corazón (*from the bottom of my heart*), I thank God and my family: mis viejos (*my parents*), sister, nephew, and extended prole (*family, as in 'la prole'*), for their unconditional love in whatever we've encountered on the way.

Doy gracias (*I give thanks*) to all the participants in this study. Thank you to my supervisors; past (Mike and Marietta) and present (Ben and Grant), and to the institutions of formal learning and the APA funded scholarship which enabled this PhD (in public education). I owe my critical and reflexive learning to you all, especially to the Spanish students, teacher participants and to my 'first' study's supervisors. Without you, I may not have learnt that dialogue is not only difficult but also always unfinished.

I have tremendous respect for my supervisors, Ben Wadham and Grant Banfield. Gracias for being open to hearing my voice, my 'messy' ideas, and my struggle. Muchisimas gracias (*many thanks*) for your provocations offered with an enabling spirit that didn't silence me. Thank you for defending this candidature to the end.

And to my partner and ally in activism, Andrew Wayne Miller, your love, and commitment to me, and to Scotti (i.e. giving all 1:00 am bottles for over a year so I could sleep) and your resolve, when I felt exhausted and demoralised, have been priceless. Your story inspired me to trespass with care.

And to our hijita (*lil baby-girl*) [full name omitted post submission in 2018],  
for you, and with you,  
I will never give up la lucha to dialogue!!

**Image 2: Mother & Daughter's First  
'Aboriginal Deaths in Custody'  
Protest, 2016.**



## EL ESPIRITÚ DE LA TESIS<sup>3</sup>

The spirit is the ethos of the thesis. It is not an introduction. It is the heart beating within the 'text'. It cannot be 'mechanistically' defined or contained.

Katerin Berniz, personal observation, 2017

¡Qué madres iba a saber yo (*how was I to know*) what I was getting myself into when I applied to undertake this PhD<sup>4</sup>! No one in my immediate family attended university and there are no PhDs in my extended family. In 2005, I enrolled in this PhD, having just returned home to Adelaide, from living in México for four years. In Mexico I taught English (English-as-a-Foreign-Language) to Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. I moved there after graduating in Australia with a Bachelor of Education (Honours) in 2000. I volunteered six months in a remote university and I taught in diverse sites. México became my second home.

The PhD became part of my life-plan in 2004. While living in México, I applied for a scholarship to study and live near my family in Adelaide. Having a PhD was an essential criterion for full-time academic work in local universities. My life-long dream has been to be an accessible, passionate, and knowledgeable teacher, and make enough money to support myself and help my parents. However, during my experience of initiating a critical pedagogy with my students in Huauchinango in 2001, my perspectives on education changed.

'Dialogical' possibilities afforded to my students and myself at the Universidad de la Sierra (*University of the Sierra*), in Puebla, inspired my imaginings for a project. During the writing of the proposal in SA, these developed into a 'case study' with the guidance of supervisors and the PhD's requirements. The research-method-led study was cumbersome and positioned participants in divisive ways. Resistance and meaning-making practices demanded 'organic' and iterative inquiries in practice (Haseman, 2006). A different practice with participants emerged. And today, what I *do* in this thesis has greater meanings. Ethical practice and artefacts matter equally to me now. Today, I am a little person's world: a mum and a home. That changes many things.

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<sup>3</sup> The title, *The Spirit of the Thesis*, embodies a symbolic and political strategy. Its words are not italicised to overturn a convention in English writing where 'foreign' language is italicised (Torres, 2007, p.83). Spanish is my first language; new identity markers and code-switching enable me and my voice (Garcia, 2011, p.417).

<sup>4</sup> *Madre* is Spanish for 'mother'. 'Madres' (plural), in Mexico, is a swear slang expression conveying various emotions (i.e. disbelief). In Latin American literature, the mother is a metaphor for home. In Mexican literature, it is a 'patriarchal' device embodying virgin-like or whore-like (*La chingada madre*) symbols: (i.e. women idealised, used, abandoned, or suffering survivors (*La sufrida*) (Herrera, 2008) (not heroines). The expression 'que madres' in Australia is 'I had no bloody idea'. In Uruguay, it is '¡Qué carajos iba a saber yo' (*what the hell was I to know*). I've stuck with Mexican usage to demonstrate the multiple and difficult things that home/mother can 'mean'.

While my first home is Adelaide, the city where I was born, where my Uruguayan and Australian family lives, my roots and my being have shifted in my personal and professional life over the time of this study. In my journey of crossing borderlands, it has been the ‘messy’ and abrupt shifts through personal, social, geographic, and academic borders and the struggle for ‘dialogue’ with my own and others’ political, institutional, and ethical baggage, that my PhD struggle is situated. Knowing here implicates an ‘epistemological relationship’ (Friere & Macedo, 1995, p.379) with others, and in this text, intersectional reflections, experiences, and questions, inspire diverse meanings and actions to ‘do’ things not via ‘colour-blind’ or neutral research practice (Collins, 2015, p.48; Saldívar Hull, 2000, p.36).

Throughout this research journey, the borders and landscapes traversed changed. The currency of PhDs changed. Parts of the journey (i.e. this thesis) end, and yet on these pages, a story and conversations begin. The experienced (im)possibilities, and the intersectional reflexivity gained, create the spirit of struggle of the thesis. In this sense, my thesis is **mi lucha** (*my struggle*), a plural multimodal form. The text performs **mi lucha to-dialogue** with participants (with others and myself) in a ~~collaborative~~ project and the PhD field and apparatus (Althusser, 1971; Bourdieu, 1985; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1991).<sup>5</sup> Here, to luchar (*to struggle*), is not only to fight for dialogue, in theory and practice. Detailing the struggles to dialogue in my writing, magnify the complexity, contradictions, and limits of dialogue, through the performative representation and analysis of Freirean ‘dialogue’ in research, pedagogy, and practice (Candy, 2006; Conquergood, 1998; Haseman, 2006) in broader race/class struggles. Contradictions are key to such learning and dialogue (hooks, 1994, p.56).

In Freire’s theory, dialogue is “the encounter in which the united reflection and action of the dialoguers are addressed to the world which is to be transformed and humanized” (1996, pp. 69-70). My ~~lucha to-dialogue~~ with participants is inspired by this ‘hope’, in both theory and practice, in this PhD, and within its diverse studies in a school and university habitus (Bourdieu, 1985b). It humanises research and enables hearing marginalised voices, including my own.

Freire’s concepts, and labour in *Pedagogía del Oprimido* (*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*) (Freire, 2002), which I read for the first time in Spanish in Mexico in 2001, inspire me. What Freire stands for, his activism, inspire me in my everyday ‘casualised’ work in university teaching in multi-literacies, Indigenous education, and languages, and in my supervision of emerging teachers on practicum<sup>6</sup>. Teachers’ and students’ learning and empowerment, have been long-term interests of mine (Berniz,

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<sup>5</sup> As suggested by both Spivak (in the preface) and Derrida in *Of Grammatology* (1997), a term is put under erasure (translated from *sous rature*) to highlight that while the term is somewhat inadequate it is necessary to communicate ideas. The word is crossed out to represent that it is under erasure, it is present and absent. Although there are numerous terms which could be put under erasure, this thesis is drawing attention to dialogue and collaboration.

<sup>6</sup> It’s bizarre that Freire was not required reading in my teaching degree (in 2000).

2000; Berniz, 2007; Berniz & Miller, 2018). Freire's work demanded I question the interests my practices serve in these fields.

In broad terms, Freire's activism inspires me to be vigilant of and act against 'banking systems' (Freire, 1996, 2005). Banking systems, I argue, (un)intentionally shut down the possibilities to 'dialogue' with others in the practices of pedagogy and research in PhDs. According to Freire (1996, p. 53), in 'banking education' systems:

Knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing. Projecting an absolute ignorance onto others, a characteristic of the ideology of oppression, negates education and knowledge as processes of inquiry.

These powerful and essentialising words are like an 'impulse' magnifying awareness of power and the urgency of advocacy against 'banking systems'. To 'transform' these systems practitioners in education cannot rely on passion or theory. As Freire (2002, p.23) argues, 'verbalismo' (verbalism), passionate or theorised, can paralyse dialogue and praxis (Freire, 1970, p.23; Freire, 1996, p.33). Praxis in institutions of formal learning can shed light on how to regain mobility, and act with purpose with diverse participants.

Garth Boomer (1989), addressing South Australian educators, acknowledged the very real power-relations in educational institutions in which participants have agency but are also restricted. bell hooks (1994) recognises that challenging circumstances can limit voices and actions due to fear of reprisals. While Freire recognises limits (Freire, 2002), he would likely insist doing more than pursue 'strategic gains' (Miller, 2017) to eject oppressors (Freire, 1996).

Transformation in education cannot be executed without deep knowledge and respect for (what, who or how) the conditions and interests that participants are up against and committed to in context. What people face changes. Hidden forces shape moment-to-moment dialogue and challenges emerge in interactions. Diverse people transform pedagogical practices from multiple contested standpoints. They can also (miss)understand 'banking' systems and relations which aid domination while seeking to transgress in diverse ways (hooks, 1994, 2013).

Freire's work shapes my advocacy and opposition to 'banking education' through a critical, reflexive, decolonising praxis (Freire, 2005, p.5). At the core of Freire's pedagogy is a hybridised student-teacher and teacher-student positioning in deeply personal relations with themselves and the world (Freire, 2002). This practice involves negotiated pedagogies que buscan liberar (*that seek to liberate*) participants and has been confused in the 'western world' with a method based on a static view of participants and oppression (Macedo & Freire, 1995). Freire's advocacy, may be located within liberatory, humanistic, Marxist, gendered, utopian, and middle-class Brazilian discourses (Ellsworth, 1989; hooks, 1993; Lather, 1991; Ohliger, 1995). No doubt, the textual work has temporality (all work does). But to me, Freire's pedagogy is not a method but a spirit, and a

'transcendental' practice with others (Freire & Macedo, 1995; Freire, 2002; 2005). Freire's practice thus embodies passion, hope and a spirit of "...optimism to the task of education" (Freire with Escobar, Fernández, & Guevara Niebla, 1994, p.29).

Freire's practice, gender-exclusive language aside (which he denounces in *Pedagogy of Hope*) (Freire, 1994), moved me in this study in conflicting ways. It moved me to investigate "an unjust order" (Freire, 1996, p.26) shaped in power asymmetries in languages teaching and educational research, and to see oppression in the participants' pedagogy, texts, learning, interests, and relationships. Further questioning led me to understand, admit and confront oppression in my researcher-participant relationships, and my research texts, learning, and practices. Freire's (2002, p.35) words reminded me that "... en un primer momento de este descubrimiento, los oprimidos, en vez de buscar la liberación en la lucha y a través de ella, tienden a ser opresores también o subopresores." (2002, p.35) (*in the first instance of a discovery, the oppressed, instead of seeking freedom in the struggle and through it, tend to also be oppressors or sub-oppressors*). Reflexivity compelled me to investigate and name macro and micro 'banking systems' and practices shaping my body, heritage, gender, and class positioning, and labours in this study. Disruptive questions from the 'gut' enabled insights (Anzaldúa, 2015, p.170).

At the time of my 'final' analyses, I was moved to deeper excavations of the academic field, and to reflect further on my life in and beyond the habitus of the PhD (Althusser, 1971, p.172). The emergent and ongoing reflexivity, a form of 'praxis', challenged my writing and action in my PhD and life wor(l)d (in the word, that is the world), leading me repeatedly, in spontaneous and rigorous ways, to rethink my 'dialogical' standpoint, and to recognise that understandings of theory, research and practice are not straightforward or singular but multiple and messy (Freire, 1996). This experience demanded that I locate my own 'oppressor(s)' outside and within the messy intersections of my multiple selves, shifting along this journey. This was a 'praxis' on my wor(l)d, as I learnt to 'see' (Kameniar, 2005), feel, and move differently along the journey.

This thesis speaks back to my journey of reflexive learning, to my journey of 'praxis', not as a destination, but a process implicating whom is on the journey of inquiry (Brogden, 2010), moving through the borderlands of pedagogy and research, and the role they play in my life (and vice versa) (Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983; Ladson-Billings, 2000). To be reflexive here is to reflect and critique "oneself and others" (not as separate 'objects' of inquiry) as reflexive subjects building knowledge and practice in service of the communities they serve (Vasquez, Tate & Harste, 2013, p.19).

This thesis, as that of others (Miller 2010; Moriarty, 2012; Vass, 2013; Stanley, 2015) challenges 'objective' third person accounts expected in western research writing in PhDs. It weaves the personal and the academic which is political and messy. My spirit forces me to resist sterile, and lifeless accounts. As a first-in-family university student, my life-journey matters (Luzecy, et al.,

2015)<sup>7</sup>. Thus, my subjective and academic voices and my private and public educational journey are imperative threads in this text. It is here then that writing must be, as Chamber (1994, p.11) requests:

A constant journeying across the threshold between event and narration, between authority and dispersal, between repression and representation, between the powerless and power, between the anonymous pre-text and accredited textual inscription.

As an Australian-born Spanish-speaking Uruguayan woman of migrant working-class background, my early struggles within 'white' 'working-class' and 'middle-class' zones in educational institutions are personal. My struggles in my 'academic' journey begin early in my life. My childhood schooling experiences in Adelaide shaped and restricted, my university entry and my shifting knowledge and positions in education in this project. Insight into my learner journey provides reader access to my shifting early-career-researcher practice and some clarity on the 'visions' which construct this thesis (Haraway, 1991) from my *mestiza* standpoint (Anzaldúa, 1987), and its conflicting lenses adopted in unconventionally 'messy' ways.

After all, it was amid messy debates with my original PhD supervisors about the academic direction of the thesis that my standpoint was radically challenged. The questioning forced me to shift and defend myself. The contest of ideas and ways of being tested the 'privileged' boundaries in circulation while serving to strengthen my *mestiza* 'voice' behind-the-scenes. My passion for the 'mess' of life and fieldwork, versus my earlier more prescriptive preoccupation with survey results on student motivation and Spanish teacher/student 'views' of Spanish lessons, enabled my intuition and heart-inspired insights, to lead those of my mind (conceptual), mouth (language) and hands (writing and performance). Paradigmatic (belief system) struggles with supervisors and others, the participants of this study, created methodological, political, and relational bridges and breaks. Some participants parted ways, others stayed. New supervisors supported risks in less safe territories allowing me to articulate my *mestiza* 'praxis' in text form.

My practice in this PhD is situated in the backstory to my readings of theory (with some scepticism), practice (as more than 'intellectual' labours), participant-relations (private and public) and texts (always constructed and thus created). This is critical to understanding my production of meaning, and my 'situated knowledge' (Haraway, 1991, p.187) and how these shape my oppositional practice (McGloin, 2016, p.841). As Haraway (1991, p.187) argues, "meanings and bodies get made, not in order to deny meaning and bodies, but in order to live in meanings and bodies". My journey is always 'emergent' in my 'mestiza-working-class' body (Ranft, 2013). It is my 'eye' that moves within the landscape while navigating, struggling, and challenging the spaces,

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<sup>7</sup> In Australia, the term 'first-in-family' describes individuals who are first in their families to attend or complete tertiary education. Research in Australia (Phillips et al., 2013; Luceckyj et al., 2015) and elsewhere (Reay, Crozier & Clayton, 2010; Stephens et al., 2012;) report links between an absence of higher education and multi-dimensional 'disadvantages'.



subjects, and relations in contested 'white' education spaces. My writing relies on my 'I' for some authority (Chambers, 1995, p.10) in my 'writerly', 'teacherly' and 'researcherly' voices (Pennycook, 2005, p.298). However, to acknowledge all subjugated and dominant knowledges and standpoints as socially situated and constructed requires showing how and explicating why, rather than just telling my case to 'see' and value contributions. Mess helps construct rich, thick, nuanced, and situated explanations that encompass multiple ways of knowing beyond the 'individualising' standpoints, to exploring intersecting symbolic and material bodies and relations.

My hybrid corporeal and contradictory 'subjectivity' is the dynamic lens through which I read and act in the wor(l)d (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005). I am a woman. I am brown. I am 'cash' poor. I am 'able' bodied. I am heterosexual, and I eat because I have a partner who is employed full-time. Today, I am the underclass in academia, part of the 85,000 tertiary laborers (McCulloch, 2017). I earn \$35,000 (in 2016 and 2017) (Australian Tax Office Return). My critical awareness of my body's teetering, its positioning, in race, class, and gender lines, among other intersecting positionings in this study, enable and limit my mobility in a predominantly 'white' tertiary institution in which I study and work (hooks, 2000a; 2000b). The university fashions a renewed neoliberal and corporate agenda today and increasingly stresses measurable performance indicators, and fund-attracting teaching and research outputs (Brabazon & Dagli, 2010; Miller, 2017). The inequities staff face in Flinders University's restructure is public knowledge (Berniz, 2017; Miller, 2017; Sutton, 2017). In this space, I am insider, outsider, and subversive activist on the margin.

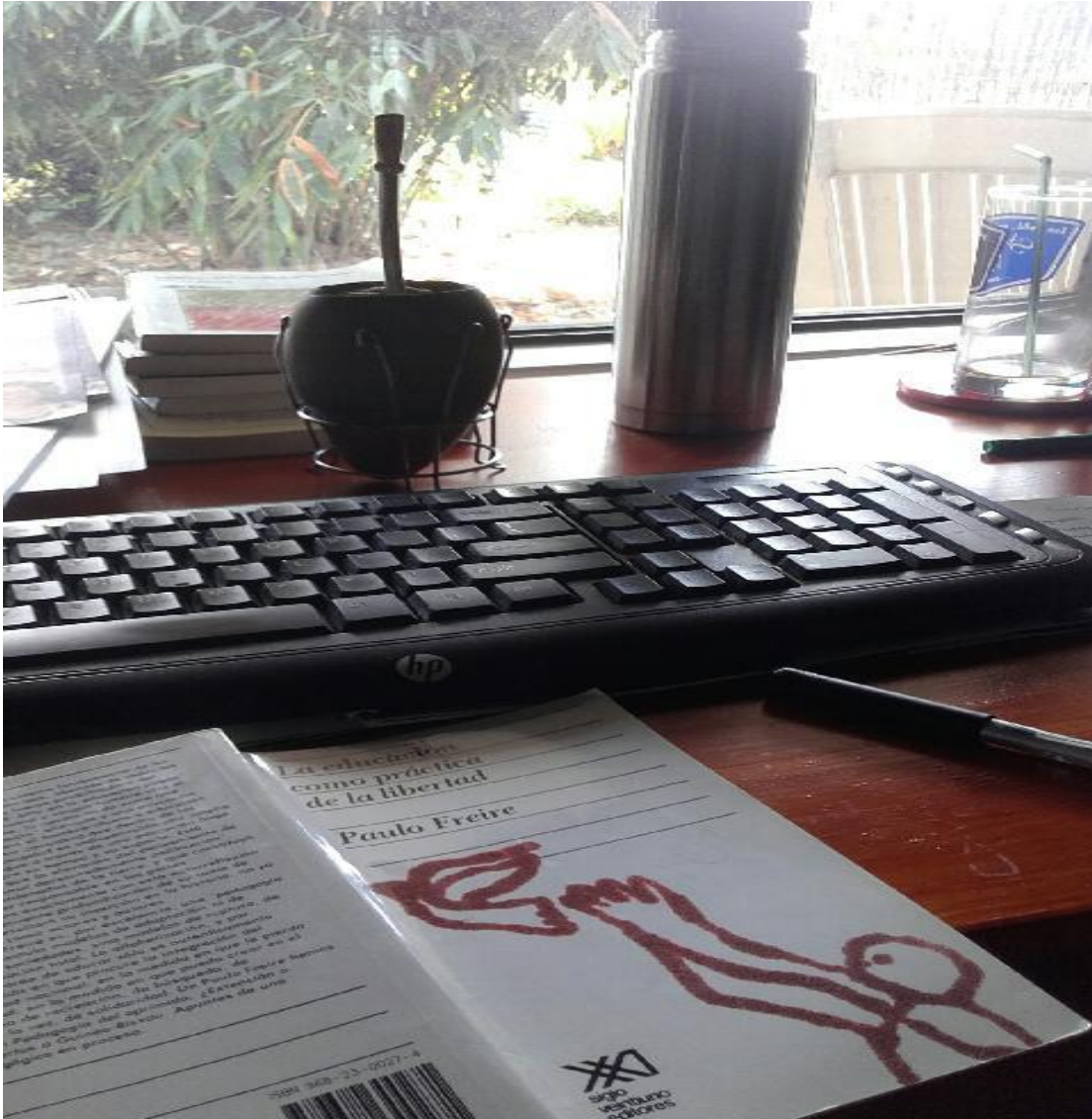
I work on the margin (Anzaldúa, 1987) at my university, a university I once loved deeply (and still do in some ways today), as a casualised academic with no income when each semester ends (4.5 months a year). From my minoritised perspective (the term 'minority' is a distortion), the university space and oftentimes its labours are elitist and mechanistic to me, focussed as some are on theory generation for an exclusive audience, more than on participatory negotiations of research design with participants (Freire & Macedo, 1995). As Banfield (2016, p.x) states, there are historical and material reasons for this, as higher education, is imbued with "bourgeois forms" ... "themselves emergent from the logic of capital". In this contested space, in my complicit positioning, I bring a way to expand knowledge, learning and practice, to create 'outsider knowledge' (Collins, 1986, p.14) with(in) practice-led inquiry, in a way that 'reveals' the complex history of this practice for the benefit of those it involves, in the moment, and the longer-term.

Historically, universities have been engaged in the production of knowledge, a "reproduction of privilege" and the "research culture" of dominant culture (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012, p.133). Unlike some 'white-middle-class' research preoccupied with tight theoretical frameworks, technical rigor in method (see Phillips & Pugh, 2010), and evidence-centric-thinking, what Anzaldúa calls a 'Western mode' (1987, p. 101), and bell hooks (2000a) refers to as dualistic western thinking, one I sought to emulate, my thesis today is a creative and theoretically rich 'artefact' and performance (Denzin, 2003; Haseman, 2006; Pennycook, 2005). It centres peoples' bodies, struggles, and demands first,

starting with my own (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2015). This situated knowledge was intuitively employed in the moment-to-moment experience in ~~collaborations~~ with participants who subverted this study. Paradigmatic breaks and struggles lead the political resistance agenda of this thesis, written by me, in my pursuit of a reflexive accountability (not truth).

While the PhD, as a 'racial task' (Wingfield & Alston, 2014, p.275) is not examined, my mestiza journey and shifting positioning in collaborations and the thesis is. And as an underrepresented Latina in academia in the Western world (Castano-Rodriguez, 2015; Nora & Crisp, 2009) my voice works hard and must sometimes shout (or 'holler' in Saldivar Hull's (1999) terms) to be heard, even when there is a diversification, as well as an increased prescription in academic standards and research 'metric' doctoral research culture (Candy, 2006; Brabazon & Dagli, 2010; Engels-Scharzpaul & Peters, 2013). What I am doing contributes to the advocacy and praxis of Latina feminists: to self-define and self-evaluate as 'necessities' to counter oppressions, as in the work of women like Patricia Hill Collins (1986), Gloria Anzaldúa (1987, 2009), and Sonia Saldivar Hull (1999), to name a few. I use the term 'Latina', as Sonia Saldivar Hull explains (2000, p.45), to highlight political solidarity.

Praxis, reflection and action in ~~dialogue~~ with participants, across four interrelated 'borderlands', is what this study and thesis stand for. This praxis involves unsettling knowledge and comfort zones to enable reflexivity on the 'messiness' of educational life and labour. The 'mess' embodies participants' contested theories, practices, and learning to expand the possibilities of ethnographic research, as Denzin (2003), Denzin and Lincoln (1995, 2002, 2005) and others advocate (Clifford, 1988; Marcus, 1994; Pajares, 1992; Bochner & Ellis, 2000; Loveless, 2012; Dowling, Fitzgerald & Flintoff, 2014). To be ethnographic is to study social activity, show understanding of life, be reflexive, present a credible story, move the reader, invite dialogue, and inspire action (Richardson, 2000). The personal and collective selves are not isolated, but intersect, in autoethnographic times, spaces, 'depth of commitments' and risks (Conquergood, 1998, p.180). It is personal cultural writing that explores individual and social phenomena, and the relationships between the two. As Conquergood (1998), Richardson (2000) and Denzin (2003) state, I hope these criteria are used to judge my work: to evaluate how this spirit bleeds into the impulses, theories, practices, narratives, and tensions of my testimony, performed in 'collaboration' with participants and in this ethnographic text. But I am also conscious that, as Sonia Saldívar Hull (2000, p.56) says, "...before 'the' subaltern woman can be heard, there must be an audience prepared (in every sense of the word) to hear her." I put more than just words on these pages, to be heard, as well as felt, and I'm always open to critique and dissent that may enable socially just purpose and action.



**Image 3: La rutina diaria para escribir es tomar mate y no olvidar ni el sabor de la experiencia de mi cultura uruguaya ni las palabras y voz enunciadas por Freire, en español, en textos comprados en México (originariamente publicadas por Freire en portugués en 1969)**

***The daily routine for writing has been to drink [Yerba] Mate [a Uruguayan Tea] and not forget the flavour of the experience of my Uruguayan culture or the words and 'voice' enunciated by Freire in Spanish in my books purchased in Mexico (originally published by Freire in Portuguese in 1969) (Freire, 2005).***

## EL PRETEXTO (*THE PRE-TEXT/IMPULSE*) (FOR WRITING)

The pre-text enables insight into the flesh-n-bone of the thesis. It is not an introduction. It is the textual relations moving this vibrant 'text'.

Katerin Berniz, personal observation, 2017

This is a 'pre-text' in multiple senses. First, it is a pretext in the sense of subterfuge (a manoeuvre), impulse (intuitive not romanticised) and evasion (an exile) of conventional approaches to thesis design, writing, 'reading' and participation (Holman Jones, 2005; Miller, 2008). It operates as a tactical textual move that steers the reader away from the main text and from what she/they/he might expect to pursue a digressional text and reflexive journey. Second, the pre-text is a narrative turn where the narrator sets the tone of things to come. Third, it is a pretext in the sense of acting as a meta-discursive (meta-cognitive) opportunity to speak back to experience and paradigms to perform outsider knowing, being and doing.

The pretext articulates what the official text may not know about itself; that is, the behind-the-scenes motivations, and positionings that inform, consciously or unconsciously, another text's ambitions and roots (as in Derrida's deconstructive writing). As a *pretexto* (*an excuse*), it is an excuse to continue the 'dialogue' between reader and writer, between theory and practice, between the study's 'participants' (past and present), and the various texts' performances themselves (Denzin, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Its use of a 'messy' conceptual framework was inspired by the scholarship of Miller (2008; 2010, 2011; 2017), the twin column writing of Middleton (1994) and the writing strategy of Derrida (1985; 1988). This 'messy text' (Marcus, 1989) is not without structure. It is a commitment to an "ethics of dialogue and partial knowledge" (Marcus, 1994, p.567) for access to people and language 'praxis,' and their transformative activities (Chambers, 1994, p.1; McGloin, 2016, p.841).

In prescriptive terms, this thesis is a divided messy text. Five chapters are split into columns: with qualitative and quantitative 'binary' and reflexive sensibilities, and a subaltern testimony. In such sections, it is best to read the left column first. The right-column has no meaning in the absence of the left column to which it speaks back to. The fifth chapter's border collapses. One column attempts to give presence to participant voices. Four chapters dedicated to participants' theories, and practices, embedded in interviews, surveys, journals, conversations, collaborative interventions, texts, and critical analyses follow the method chapter (chapter 4). The border is contained then on, commentary continues elsewhere. This privileges pluralities within the 'case study' without dismissing 'ambiguities' (Chambers, 1994, p.11). A bricolage of images and a letter to participants end the thesis. The blend of texts demonstrates how "subjectivity" can shift, sabotage, and confuse dialogue in 'praxis' (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005, p. 962).

The thesis' sections written in two columns do diverse things. The right column details the researcher's (not singular) journey and reflexive meditations in first person. The left column presents her third-person research report. The right column is a 'messy' auto-historia (*auto-history*) (as in *La Prieta*) (Anzaldúa, et al., 2009, p.198), a testimony represented in paragraphs (without indent), story boxes, carved-out (standalone) quotes, music, poetry, and imagery. It gives 'blank' space presence to embody contemplation. The texts re-define the traditional meaning of 'participants' and the possibilities of spanning decades and spaces that relate to participant journeys in education.

The border text on the right does not always run parallel to the logic or content of the column on the left. The left column reports on the neo-positivist 'case study' (Burns, 2000) designed in 2005 and implemented with multiple participant groups between 2006 and 2008. It employs a more 'orthodox' approach to thesis writing and research, and aims for 'more' logical, and coherent argumentation (Philips & Pugh, 2010). It contains the introduction to the 'case study', the only one of this kind in the thesis. It is followed by a literature review, the research problem, and a quasi-experimental methodology. Several research-question-sets, for two distinct research stages are addressed by a preparatory stage and a 'collaborative' intervention, each is contained within separate chapters. The chapters discussing student, teacher, curriculum advisor, and high school principals' texts use 'linear' prose, descriptive statistics, tables, and diagrams to produce knowledge of practice, a 'positivist' voice. The right column asks more questions than what it will seek to answer, using the researcher's body, spirit, experience, and practice to engage in messy-critical-creative reflexivity.

In sum, this thesis is a 'messy' text – the story of mi **lucha** to engage in Freirean dialogue in practice with participants in Spanish teaching, learning and research 'contact zones' (Pratt, 1992, p.6). Chapters 1 to 8 answer the research questions set by my proposal approved by the university, school sector, and participants, between 2005 and 2008. The practice enacted triggered questioning. Two instrumental studies include a preparatory study ('stage one') investigating participants' views of students' interests in Spanish teaching/learning practices, and (in)equities enacted in schools, impacting student access and critical engagement in learning. The collaborative study ('stage two') demonstrates how a critical pedagogy enacted with participants impacts student motivation, proficiency and voice. These two studies trigger deeper reflexivity on research process and writing. The 'messy' thesis' impact is yet to come.

I borrow the term 'messy' from Marcus' (1989) 'messy text' as a metaphor for and a way of articulating, re-presenting, and demonstrating 'real-world' qualitative fieldwork: the messiness and fraught-ness of research practice and lives in action. I do this because it feels like a more 'trustworthy' representation of what happened in this project. Marcus writes about the need for ethnographers to produce creative practice that 'does' research and writing in ways that are consistent with one's claims about reality and 'objects' of study, and their complexity. He writes:

The postmodern object of study is ultimately mobile and multiply situated, so any ethnography of such an object will have a comparative dimension that is integral to it, in the form of juxtapositions of seeming incommensurables or phenomena that might conventionally have appeared to be 'worlds apart'. (Marcus, 1998, pp.186-187).

My research was not neat or easy, in contrast to many sanitised texts I read in 2005 (Fine, 1994). The 'messy text' shows the tentative, and unpredictable nature of research practice and dialogue. It embodies 'awkward' (Koundenberg, Postmes, & Gordijn, 2011, p. 512) and 'subtle' silences (Morrison, July 18, 2017). It makes nuances and subtleties work hard to capture what can be lost if spoken and communicated only by words. 'Utterances' make action and trigger effects and emotions (Haseman, 2006). Doing the PhD unsettled me and my positionings in dialogue with participants.

In practice, ~~dialogue~~ was an ongoing and shifting corporeal labour. It involved working and conversing with participants in meaningful and difficult negotiations where powers and competing interests played a role. In 'our' ~~dialogue~~, there were conflicting standpoints on teaching, learning and research. Differences visibly unsettled participants in moment-to-moment, and longer-term interactions, in subtle and physically obvious ways. Silences tested and strengthened relationships. These evolved with respect, empathy, cooperation, and trust. However, this did not occur in the absence also of mistrust, frustrations, pain, and asymmetries of power. As Lewis (as cited in Candy 2006) states, the body plays an influential role in social interactions. 'Our' ~~dialogue~~ became richer despite the insipient honesty. This inquiry into 'dialogue' in PhD practice in education is complex, and rare (Horn & Little, 2010).

Dialogue, in the Freirean activist sense, where power is subverted with participants to enable bottom-up power, faced multiple challenges from participants, and the institutions structuring schooling and university practice in this PhD. The thesis lives a clash of powerful paradigms: positivism and post-positivism, literal and metaphorical, cognitive, and emotional, corporeal, and imagined, constructionist and deconstructionist etc. Here, ways of seeing, being, feeling, knowing, and doing are exposed. The 'messodology' employed reveals injustices shaping institutional practices, knowledges, dispositions, and bureaucracies, and how participants faced, eschewed, and confronted these.<sup>8</sup> The thesis exposes how participants *do* dialogue and navigate thorny terrain while resisting, and transgressing the multiple and contested scripts of 'western' education (Richardson, 1998, p.45).

I created the neologism (a new word) 'messodology' to build a 'bric-a-brac' (a quirky combination) of standpoints, images, and practices through which I could make some sense of the complex wor(l)d in this project. I designed this 'messodology' personally moved by Paulo Freire, bell

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<sup>8</sup> I came across a blog called *Messodology.com* (Artem, 2008). Shocked, I studied its post. I found a heading, and a web address. I remembered: we are 'interpellated' and actively participate in 'Ideological State Apparatuses' in education and elsewhere (Althusser, 1970, p.137).

hooks and Gloria Anzaldúa's critically engaged activism and labour (what they do in theory and practice to destabilize oppression in its various forms), and my contested dialogue with a Year 10 Spanish teacher and students, and my multiple PhD supervisors.

The term 'messodology', as used here, was made to represent the messiness of Freirean 'praxis': of "...reflection and action upon the world..." of teaching, learning, and research practice "...in order to transform..." them (Freire, 1970, p.33) in service of their community (hooks, 1994). The 'messodology' allows threads to be woven between words, voices, images, locations, and experiences to inspire readers to make alternative readings and connect with the corporeal, verbal, emotional, metaphysical, and non-verbal symbols presented in the intersections of lives and work (Hill Collins, 2009). To 'enable' access I dissect aspects of this situated praxis by breaching the boundaries of realism and essentialism, to *do* reflexive critical inquiry for the purposes of comprehension, as in the work of Gloria Anzaldúa (2015).

This thesis and its 'messodology' are complex creative constructions. As noted in the spirit of the thesis, there are multiple threads. The thesis is a complex bricolage (an assembly) (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) of messy 'texts' and voices. These 'texts' were encountered, gathered, and created by participants with hope along the journey of collaboration and reflexive learning in this PhD (Marcus, 1994). The term 'text' as used here means "...any specific object or event constructed from the signs and codes of a social system of meaning" (Moon, 1992, p.154). 'Voice' is what the spirit expresses, in words, symbols and even data. However, data, can mean different things. There is 'data', what Swartz (as cited in Candy, 2006, p.5) calls '*sensa data*', and what I see as the indirect knowledge of the wor(l)d interpreted through the data in this case study. The data (i.e. surveys, interviews, field notes etc.) are fragments of worlds and contact which can be however symbolically 'fragmented' to enable multiple and contested insights. Data is also memory, sensation, observation, language (i.e. Spanglish), and action. In this thesis, there is the hidden data from my own and (and possibly others) practices and feelings (what is not said) (Spivak, 1988). This data values that through which collaborations and dialogue are 'accomplished' during the PhD journey (Atkinson & Delamont, 2008). The first type of data can be creatively conceptualised as the flesh, the second, the bone (they rely on one-another).

The 'messodology' in this thesis is a personal, critical, and creative form of scholarship. Here, to be '*scholarly*' is to embody (demonstrate) 'knowledge' and action in 'serious' academic study (an ethics of care toward participants) and 'reflection' (emerging sometimes spontaneously) (Freire, 1970, p.47). The researcher's body and intellectual baggage are sources of knowledge (Clifford, 1988, p.24). In other words, my messodology is an epistemology (theory of knowledge), an ontology (theory of being), a methodology (a process of knowledge inquiry), a performative practice (a representation of material and symbolic data), and a messy praxis (a way of reflexively acting on the world) (Freire, 1970). It uncovers detail of how participants' transform and are transformed in and by contested relations in public and private arenas (Pratt, 1992, p.7). 'Messy texts' may be constructed

from diverse contexts to construct or deconstruct knowledge and practice. I use them to offer a 'serious' inspection of 'oppression', a contact perspective: a production open to trial, error, critique, and improvised moves and hesitations.

In this messodology, I aim not to oversimplify or answer questions I cannot answer. I hold no rigid allegiance to canon. This doesn't mean I don't do things I critique in the work of others (Marcus, 1998). I use multiple 'master's tools' (Lorde, 1979) with purpose. Indeed, in this PhD, I have absolutely been inspired to generalise, seduced by ideal and universal hopes and certainties. I am not ashamed of this. This is my learning 'expressed' (Richardson, 2000, p.253). I am still inspired by hopes to uncover new ways to deepen the critical, passionate, and reflexive commitments I practice today. This messodological practice and its artefacts illuminate multiple versions of realities and games played in the field, precisely because it is open to venturing toward alternative journeys, as people do. The messodology allows me to zoom in on the seemingly ordinary to expose the texture in everyday labours. This shows how powerful and difficult 'mundane' struggle is, and how difficult it can be to change practice. This PhD, without the 'mess', would be a distortion.

This messodology is ultimately an empowering scholarly 'text', where to *write* means to seek to work 'enough' within the borderlands and borders of the PhD, surveilled and shaped by (real and imagined) participants, patrols, and checkpoints (Anzaldúa, 1987) while 'insisting' in the open-endedness of the project and its writing (Marcus, 1998, p.180). This is creative and political scholarship. It *creates from subjectivity* "...imagination or original ideas" (Oxford Online Dictionary, 2016)<sup>9</sup> and 'gestures of the body' (intuition, feelings, senses, and movement) (Keating, 2015) to make meaning, and act, in a socially just way, from my mestiza standpoint.

I am engaged in creating a way for alternative 'messy' access to pathways, for marginalised and working-class researchers, teachers, and students. The messodology is a multi-voiced 'assemblage' (Marcus & Saka, 2006) to re-distribute (some) power, in theory, practice, and representation, with participants. From a feminist perspective, power is: "...a resource to be (re)distributed..." (i.e. capital), a form of "...domination..." to be subverted, and a form of "empowerment" (*Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, 2016) needed in an unjust world. And while Foucault (1991), suggests power is everywhere, I argue, as does hooks' (1994; 2001) that by examining how 'control' is exercised in dialogue and texts (in 'whiteness', 'class,' and other divides) we can make 'more' life-affirming praxis (somewhere). This empowers me to use my spirit and labour to serve struggles to shift the boundaries of what is possible. Empowerment in this sense demands explorations of causes of oppression in systems, groups, and individuals (ideological practices) and in complacency within ideals, structures and practices enabling these (Lather, 1991, p.4).

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<sup>9</sup> As I have no allegiance to canon, no 'text' or 'topic' is discounted as 'too trivial', not even online dictionaries (Anzaldúa, as cited in Anzaldúa & Moraga, 2015, p.168).



An important story must be told here.

The word 'messodology' came to me in the form of a conversation with myself (please don't worry, it wasn't out loud 😊). It was during a conflicted exchange with a professor at University, one of this study's first supervisors that I engaged in self-depreciation (Freire, 1979; W.E.B Dubois, 1990), a practice I'd been taught and learnt well from a young age. It was thus, while the professor was telling me that I had to apply the survey tool at equally spaced intervals and to ask the Spanish teacher to adhere to doing so, if my study was to be considered 'valid', that a few reflections came to mind while my stomach churned. Validity, rigor in measurement and reliability in variable choice and results (a quantitative agenda) are core criterion and values within the positivist paradigms which historically crept into social sciences in education, into qualitative research, including my own (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). My conversation tells of the dilemma between agency and structure, of mismatching paradigms, and people, and how these are mediated and powerful. I felt conflicted and over-supervised. I remember thinking:

*... ¿quién soy yo? (who am I) to contest over five decades of expertise? How do I proceed if the survey's application isn't just decided by me (though the theory and research I had read for my literature review suggested researchers' processes largely occurred with clinical precision)? I'm doing this all wrong, I thought!*

I thought about the pressure I felt (**I have vivid recollections of the pulsing stress-migraines I suffered then**) and how confused I was for not knowing how to manage difficulties which emerged when the Spanish teacher (participant) regularly agreed to negotiate processes, outcomes, dates, or times, with me and students, only to change these without a dialogue (i.e. playing a Simpsons video in Spanish without context). I didn't want to remind the teacher of that (doing so could have rocked an already fragile relationship).

I saw the disappointment on my supervisor's face when I told him that methods and timing were being thrown out the window by participants.

*¡Oh Dios (oh God)! ¿Qué hago? (What should I do?) I thought, 'what a mess!' This is a mess! It's a messod... (cheesy but 'true').*

I have always had conversations in Spanglish with my selves in my head. If angry it all comes out in Spanish because es ahí que (*that's where*) I can best arm myself, be passionate, and raw. Jacques Derrida (1997) and Richard Rorty (2009) (and others) encourage the questioning of received knowledge and overturning the sediments of history to see the world anew. However, for many years in my life, and in many of my conversations with my first supervisors over six long years in this project, I kept my mouth shut about my questionings. One day one of my supervisors told me, in a

kind way, that the research I was trying to undertake was creative writing. He said it was not research, it's not the "rubbish" ... "examiners" want to read. And while now I know there are robust debates in these examinations about the slippery slopes in assessing the validity of creative works in research (Brabazon & Dagli, 2010), I didn't know this then. I wrote the failures and detours down. I kept silent.

Post case-study, in my re-readings and further research, I discovered I wasn't alone. There were other researcher's analysing the myths and sterile accounts of 'positivist' research. When I eventually got over crippling bouts of paralysis in writing, I persisted with my story, not before making sure to reference others facing similar challenges. In the master-disciple exchanges I learnt that referencing sources was a currency of 'privileged references' (Kristeva, 2002, p.9). In the mid-stage of this project the feedback acknowledged my sources but continued to question the legitimacy of my still emerging standpoint. The feedback was obsessed with examiners. Had my supervisors perhaps already chosen them? Would examiners be critical of my 'go with the participants' flow' way? At first, I believed I was not cut out for research, until I realised I could no longer be 'subservient' on my journey (Saldívar Hull, 2000, p.30).

When that supervisory relationship and that part of this journey ended, many things started to happen. My PhD changed, and a new journey began. I had to eject 'oppressive' relations, and the familiar patriarchal and hierarchical teachings that restricted my mobility. I tell you this because, as Guba and Lincoln (1994, p. 116) propose, I believe that "...no inquirer ought to go about the business of inquiry without being clear about just what paradigm informs or guides..." all practice. My beliefs and experiences inform and build my paradigms and stories. To paraphrase Freire (1996, p.31), 'limit situations' are not only restrictive but aid learning.

My hybrid identity and learning has had a big say in how I've participated in this project. As other 'Latinas', I was raised to respect elders, especially my teachers, no matter what (Saldívar Hull, 2000, p.34). I was raised by 'traditional' Uruguayan-Catholic parents (whatever that means) whom would regularly instruct my sister and me to accept that elders spoke first and spoke truths that weren't to be questioned. As the youngest child in my family of eight members in Australia at the time, my voice didn't count in decision-making. I couldn't choose clothes or friends. I remember visiting Spanish-speaking homes and getting into trouble when I had something to say and spoke-up uninvited. I was inquisitive and adventurous. I wasn't an aggressive kid. But, I was always told, *¡cállese cuentera* (*keep quiet tell-tales*) *bandida!* (*'naughty one/bandit'*)! From a young age I've struggled to filter. For some, I won't!

My parents were loving, strict and defensive. They were new migrants to Australia. They spoke no English on arrival in the 1970s. They applied to come to Australia to live in Sydney and when they arrived they were bussed down to Adelaide, no explanations given. Because of this disempowering experience, they've always been, and still are, suspicious of 'los australianos' (*the 'Australian'*) (meaning, the Non-Indigenous), especially of authorities. My parents developing 'factory' English

rendered them powerless, even with a five-year-old learning English quickly and translating for them. Their capacity to learn English was limited.

For my parents, language learning was a challenging feat given that neither had completed secondary education. My father never finished 5<sup>th</sup> grade in primary school. He had to work to help his 18 brothers and sisters in a rural home. My mum's parents cut her out of Year 10 in a catholic boarding school. Her class of thirty female students shared a bottle of wine at a bus stop to celebrate the end of the school year. A church goer reported the girls in uniform. My grandfather defended his name. Being 'oppressed' as children did not stop my parents from exerting power themselves. They'd yell, as I was the cheekier one, *¡están hablando los mayores!* (*adults are speaking!*).

I learnt to keep quiet for a huge part of my life, in many areas of my life, even when these screams were no longer heard. Although many years have passed, and my parents inspired me to work hard and avoid factory work at all costs through education, when they took us against our wishes to Uruguay when I was 12 I made crazy decisions to end the verbal domestic violence. With both my parents' consent, I married when I was just 17. I'd barely gotten over the magic of celebrating *mis quince años* (*my fifteenth birthday*)<sup>10</sup>. As a married teen/woman, I returned to Australia. I divorced soon after to end more control. It was in leaving an abusive young marriage that I abandoned my Australian home to escape and volunteer-teach in Mexico. There I realised that patriarchal hierarchies marginalised me everywhere, but that I played a role in enabling the violence and my silencing, in my personal, family, and professional lives.

My Australian-Latina border lens and research practice has been challenging and enabling along this PhD journey. It has allowed me to privilege personal, collaborative, and dialogical explorations to transgress top-down prescribed boundaries and interests. I believe my past, personal and professional experiences, and background, inspired by my lifelong need to speak up for myself and others, mark this story. Gidron et al. (2011) suggest such story 'telling' can transform toxic experiences. In story-telling, in autoethnographic inquiry, I have found a place where my outsider voices, in theory and practice, are sources of knowledge and power (Bochner & Ellis, 2000; Denzin, 2005; Hill Collins, 1986). Although I can't put my finger on one instance triggering my interconnected stories, I know, deeply, how years of silencing take their toll on our spirit and body. This text is enabling change and healing me (Saldivar-Hull, 2000).

The learning that materialised from my struggles with 'banking' (Freire, 1996) systems of education and research in this study is re-presented in this messy thesis (and the messy powers in

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<sup>10</sup> Many Uruguayan girls (and boys) dream about their 15<sup>th</sup> birthday, a tradition in the Americas. During my childhood in Australia, my mum inspired my dreams about dancing the waltz with my father and sipping champagne at my fiesta. For us, the day symbolises a 'passage into society', for others, 'sexual maturity and thus readiness to marry' (Cantú, 2010, p.112). A 'conservative' white dress is worn by girls and the 'untouched one' is celebrated (Deiter, 2002, p.34). I'd live out these symbolisms, with bruising consequences.

play). I feel more inspired than ever by this and its promise. As Denzin and Lincoln (2005a, p.26) point out:

We are in a new age where messy, uncertain, multi-voiced texts, cultural criticism, and new experimental works will become more common, as will more reflexive forms of fieldwork, analysis, and intertextual representation.

And I am excited to be a part of this collective project, to see how the mess exposes my people-first, contradictory, humble, and political approach to learning and meaning making in practice. While this pre-text echoes more linear and justificatory prose, for accessibility and communication purposes, the thesis goes further against the grain (Cochran-Smith, 1991).

In the traditions of auto-ethnography (Reed-Danahey, 1997; Ellis & Bochner, 1999; Miller, 2017), narrative inquiry (Bochner, as cited in Ellis & Bochner, 1999; Chase, 2005) and post-colonial feminist works (Anzaldúa, 1987; Collins, 2015; Pratt, 1994; Lorde, 1975; hooks, 2013), I selectively co-construct and de-construct texts to create a bricolage. It is in part auto-ethnography in that it "... is a cultural performance that transcends self-referentiality ... (the 'auto' that is not singular or coherent) ... by engaging with cultural forms that are directly involved in the creation of culture" (Tedlock, as cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 152). It is also about turning the lens back on the self and subjectivity. I blend my experiences with others (Denzin, 1989) to learn from and critique my role in 'oppression' (Pratt, 1994).

As I am the 'sole' narrator of this text, I tell my story from a shifting *mestiza* standpoint. I am participant, researcher, insider/outsider, oppressor/oppressed, eye-witness, apprentice, ally, bricoleur and boundary-crosser (Reed-Danahey, 1997, p.3). Narratives are ways of expressing how 'we' experience and interpret the world through experiences, emotions, and storied selves. They are written for an audience and purpose (Chase, 2005). The resulting narrative inquiry is thus a way of 'studying' experience. Narratives matter not only because of what they say and mean, but also because of what they can inspire others to do (Miller, 2010).

The thesis is ultimately part *mystory* (Finley, 2005; Ulmer, 2004) and part *our-story* (Miller, 2017). A story is a way of narrating a group of events and characters put together purposefully in a place and time (Moon, 1992). Narrative writing is reader-centric to allow a 'shared' reading of the wor(l)d to guide entry to the text and its meanings. As Denzin and Lincoln (2000) point out in describing the seventh moment in qualitative research 'our' readings and stories about the wor(l)d are often fragmented. Using 'mystory' as a conceptual tool captures the situated personal version of events, a 'my', and of possible links to history and culture. Finley (2005) summarises this well in stating that mystories are 'performances'. They are "personal cultural texts..." that "contextualize" experience and tensions within institutional sites and an 'epoch' (Finley, 2010, p.690). Mystoriography (Ulmer, 2004; Miller, 2010) allows personal anecdotes, and poetics to populate the

text, complimenting stories in material and symbolic ways to 'strongly' engage readers (Marcus, 1994) through an alternative way of writing (Ulmer, 1985).

This mystery is thus about the story of contradictory and transformative participant collaborations, and the struggles for meaning making in dialogue and in practice. While this text, as Denzin and Lincoln (2005) would argue, contributes to work in the 'eighth' moment, I hope it speaks to the reader, and becomes a mechanism for further change.<sup>11</sup> This is, however, a work in progress: a contribution by way of example of critical personal reflexivity, accessibility and realistic detail into the researcher-participant journey (Bochner, as cited in Ellis & Bochner, 1999). As Ellis and Bochner (2000, p.747) clearly note of *new* scholarly works:

If you couldn't eliminate the influence of the observer on the observed, then no theories or findings could ever be completely free of human values. The investigator would always be implicated in the product. So why not observe the observer, focus on turning the observation back on ourselves? And why not write more directly, from the source of your own experience? Narratively. Poetically. Evocatively (emphasis in the original).

But it is also important, as Freire (1970, p. 29) advocates, to say out loud, that for some, "Freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift." that is, in struggle with *others* and with ourselves. Freedom here is about 'marginalised' participants gaining some agency in the project that studies them, and from the possibility of the case study and other participants (i.e. reader and examiner) studying the researcher's labour and capacity to research in transgressive ways (hooks, 1994). Transgressions emerge in struggle and solidarity with others. Why hide the struggles and tensions and competing dynamics framing practice and agency? Why clear-up the slippage in research products? Why disguise the intellectual and manual labours of PhDs? Gill et al. (2008, pp.250-251) suggest that in doctoral thesis writing:

We have moved from an academic culture privileging the objective, statistically 'tight', depersonalised subject of 'the researcher', to a convention in which there is a rejection of this position and a stance that insists on the subjective element being a part of any research enterprise, regardless of the methodology adopted.

And I believe, as do many qualitative researchers, that it is important to do more than write about, how researcher analyses and labours are not neutral (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013; Punch & Oancea, 2014). It is important to teach, through our pedagogy and research, in critically and politically engaged ways. As Charmaz (2005, p.510) reminds us, "...we do not come to research uninitiated". My politic lies in the methodology of texts that follow. I believe, as Miller (2008, p. 104) declares, the reader's 'job' is to:

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<sup>11</sup> Like most authors, I hope my contributions have positive and productive impact. I hope this statement is not perceived to be arrogant.

...decide whether I am a trustworthy *observer*, a reliable witness of my own [and others] life and my own research journey; whether my position in the text sways, convinces, or touches you; whether my ideologies and subjectivities adhere with or challenge your own; and whether my particular history ... my background, upbringing, gender, race, privilege, voice, ideology, education, age, class, and so on – has anything relevant and meaningful to say to *you*...

When writing this thesis, a troubling issue for me was that the case-study participants did not read this text. While I agree with Angrossino (2005, p.731) that there are no truths and there will always be “conflicting versions of what happened”, I have done my best to privilege participant ‘voices’. From a socially just standpoint, I wish this thesis were participatory (Rorty, 2009), not for greater objectivity, but to enact power distribution more strongly.

Each chapter hereon embodies multiple understandings, fears, and disunities. Like a *mojada* (a ‘*wetback*’ woman), I feared ‘deportation’. Like the oppressed, in *Pedagogia del Oprimido*, with whom I identify (as did hooks 1994), I have an ongoing fight to eject my oppressors. Oppression is complex, fluid, and messy. The ‘messy’ text’, an explanatory device, ‘casts light on’ this sophisticated praxis (Althusser, 1971, p.133). As Marcus (1998, p. 187) states, messy texts are: “... manifestly the most complex and interesting form of experimentation with ethnographic writing now being produced.” Bochner (as cited in Ellis & Bochner, 1998, p. 744) adds:

... the mode of storytelling ... fractures the boundaries that normally separate social science from literature; the accessibility and readability of the text repositions the reader as a co-participant in dialogue and thus rejects the orthodox view of the reader as a passive receiver of knowledge.

So, ¡aquí están mis papeles! (*Here are my documents*). I hope these are well received. To accompany this entry, I would love you to hear the song *Caminante no hay camino* (Serrat, 2009) (*Wanderer there is no path*) (lyrics and links in Appendix A). It sings of journeys; of things existing; imagined; fleeting and erased; of fates, loss, and challenges. It explains that the learning is in the *camino* (*journey*), not the destination; in the possibilities, not the finalities; of a deliberative movement that seeks no ‘short cut’ path, but a way of being and acting in the wor(l)d with passion ‘of experience’ and ‘of remembrance’ (hooks, 1994, p.90) from the *Spirit, through the flesh, to the bone*.

# 1. HYBRIDITY ENTRIES AND DEPARTURES

This text is now split into two columns to represent in an accessible way the borders and struggles between multiple wor(l)ds (paradigms) of this mestiza's PhD journey. One column represents a collaborative 'case study' account, an experimental study undertaken from 2006 to 2008, and the other contains a reflexive border text, a transgressive 'messy text'. Together, they embody my messodology: the paradigmatic struggles to dialogue with participants, on both sides of the border, in stratified, situated, and 'messy' ways.

At times, the central border, as Anzaldúa (1987, p.25) declares of the Mexican-US border, "es una herida abierta" (*is an open wound*). In that space, there is bleeding between texts where my Australian-Uruguayan selves 'grate against' those of 'white western' ways of knowing, being and doing. The split is an imagining; it's imprecise and shifts. In Anzaldúa's (1987, p.25) work, "borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them..." In this text, the border marks sameness, differences, contradictions, uncertainties, (in)justice and (im)possibilities. The 'messodology' tells the story of crossing borders. It seeks to be inclusive, but at times it can't help to exert power from the anger of being silenced for so long. However, this use does not seek to paralyse 'praxis'. Reflexivity and humility are required to move carefully and cross borders safely.

Katerin Berniz, personal observation, 2017

**Image 4: A growing mestiza Australian daughter of an Australian-German Father, and an Australian-Uruguayan Mother, at a multicultural SA unions protest in Adelaide, SA, 2017.**



## Introduction and aims

This study investigates whether a critical pedagogical approach to Spanish taught in a metropolitan South Australian (SA) public school impacts on students' motivations, voices, and verbal proficiency<sup>12</sup>. It aims to focus on (1) 'dialogue' between teacher, student and researcher (participants), (2) inquiry into students' motivations, verbal proficiency, decisions, and voices, (3) reflecting on (dis)connections between contexts, structures and meaning-making processes with participants, and (4) collaborative reconstruction of language and culture (Smyth, 2001). This approach entails critically engaged teaching, learning and research from a Freirean perspective. Freire (1979) advocates dialogue and action on links between knowledge, lives and learning.

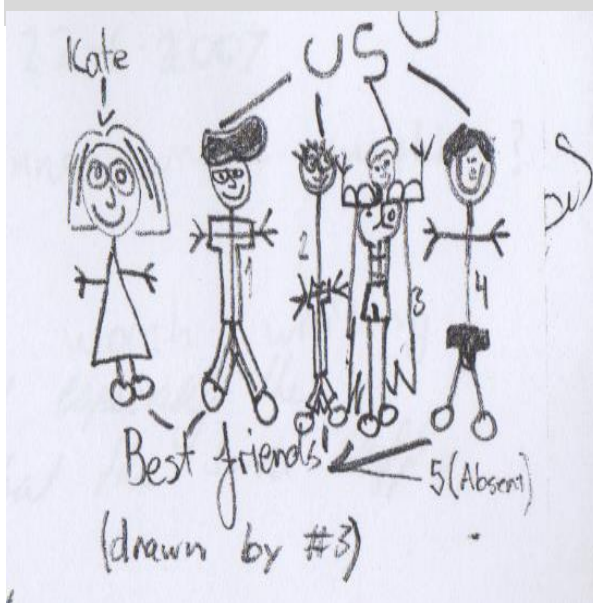
It is hypothesized that this approach will enable student learning, empowerment, and dialogue (Spanish conversation and voice) through ongoing negotiations with them. This focus is absent from 'traditional' language classrooms. This is the first study of its kind in a Spanish classroom in SA (in 2005, and today).

In 2005, at the time of the design of this study, Year 9 is a key year for Spanish students. It is when they decide to continue or conclude their language study, as instituted by their school. While languages are compulsory in most

## 'Wetback' departures

*Dear Diary, (or who ever is reading)*

*Kate has just explained what she is going to be doing with the class. Were not supposed to mention our names, but it would be appreciated if Kate remembered us when she becomes famous ...*



**Image 5: Students' Collective Journal [verbatim text of Year 10 Spanish students' first collective journal entry 1] (Participant data, April 2006)**

**And so, I do remember you** (with more than just this image).

Soy yo quién escribe hoy (*I am the one who writes today*). This is my auto-historia-teoría (*self-history-theory*) (Anzaldúa, 1987) and I am determined to start this 'mystory' with the participants of this study at the heart and forefront of this thesis (Ulmer, 1989, 1994, 2004). This act of 'writing' represents my

<sup>12</sup> In this thesis, unless otherwise stated, the word 'student(s)' refers to Spanish students.



high schools in SA in Year 8 or Year 9, there is some variation. The five schools participating in this study provide face-to-face access to Spanish from Years 8 to 12 (distance learning excluded).

### **Diverse participants: two studies**

The investigation of Spanish students' learning, motivations, proficiency, and voices aims to understand and analyse their experiences and reflections in Spanish classrooms and their broader contexts. The study is divided into two stages. The first involves a preparatory study based on student surveys, and Spanish teacher, high school principal, and state language curriculum advisor interviews. The second involves a year-long collaborative study involving a Year 10 Spanish teacher and students. The studies enable understanding students' learning in the Spanish curriculum in 'real' schools, in short and longer-term projects.

#### **The preparatory study (stage one)**

The preparatory study undertaken in 2006 focused on Year 9 Spanish students' survey perspectives. The survey asked students to reflect on their motivations to study Spanish, to provide feedback on teaching and learning undertaken in Spanish lessons, and to write about what informs their decision-making when choosing to cease or continue their studies in Spanish.

There were five Year 9 Spanish classes surveyed; one per participating school. This is a significant cross-section of the population of Year 9 Spanish students in public schools with

respectful positioning in 'collaborations' with participants in the Spanish classroom community where I was a guest, and it 'signals', on the page, a resistance to a form of 'western metaphysics', specifically, of 'technicist' and 'instrumentalist' conceptualisations of writing (Ulmer, 1985, p.7).

It is a 'conscious' decision (Reyes & Rodríguez, 2012, p.526) to begin, not with 'others' theories, but with the student participants' theories and their authority in the text, alongside my own (Middleton, 1995, p.93). I draw on my theory; my testimonio (testimony) of my corporeal experience in transit in difficult collaborations with participants in this study, to intentionally 'tomar la palabra' (take the floor) (Rodríguez, 2013, p.1149).

Quantitative and qualitative researchers suggest research-writers avoid context stripping which is why you rarely find participant data, like this student journal, at the beginning of qualitative research (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Given, 2008; Silverman, 2010). My use of this 'data' disrupts this approach, as I place it above my words in this chapter and prior to detailed 'conceptual' framing of lenses through which data is given 'meaning' (Guba & Lincoln, 2003). The 'typical' research practice decides to begin with 'technical' methods, as in the social sciences. This indicates a view of data, epistemology, and ontology: a reading of the wor(l)d (Freire & Macedo, 1987) where "...otras "lecturas del mundo" diferentes de la suya y hasta antagonistas en ciertas ocasiones" (*other*

Year 8 to 12 programs in 2006. Random sampling was not used: participants volunteered.

The preparatory study also involved investigating the perspectives of: Spanish teachers teaching in Year 9, high school principals responsible for overseeing curriculum in their school, and curriculum advisors responsible for Languages education initiatives in public sector schools. Semi-structured interviews were used to access the participants' views on Spanish programs, initiatives and challenges perceived to impact students' learning and participation in Spanish.

It was anticipated that understanding diverse stakeholder perspectives in the preparatory study would provide first-hand insights into historical, social, institutional, and personal factors impacting the Spanish curriculum in this context. It was also anticipated that this understanding would support the researcher's preparation for participant collaborations in stage two. It is believed that the beliefs, theories, and practices valued by those directly involved in the design, implementation, supervision, and evaluation of Spanish curriculum, are paramount. Participant views are core to the contemporary situation of Spanish and the role it plays in participants' lives and learning.

#### **The collaborative study (stage two)**

The collaborative study undertaken in 2007 enacted a critical approach to Spanish teaching and learning with participants in a Year 10

*“readings of the world” different from our own and antagonistic on certain occasions) circulate in and around us (Freire, 2002, p.107).*

This way of 'reading' can be taken for granted and even conflated with 'neutrality' and with 'academic' scholarship (Flores & Rosa, 2015). In PhD research, this practice can mask how theory and research are made in privileged capitals (Yosso, 2005) and in cultural assessments of 'appropriate' scholarship (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p.152) and 'appropriate representation' (Bhabha, 2003, p.31). I concur with Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2005; 2015) and Nakata (2007) when they describe this 'western' approach to research as a broad and yet distinct form of scholarship with an organising structure upholding 'colonial' values, culture and positionings. I'll use my 'emerging power' (Collins, 1992, p.221) to illuminate how I am 'undermined' by these (Smith, 2015, p.473).

To put it bluntly, during my PhD induction, reading research was scary and unsettling. To me it blatantly deployed:

*...a set of ideas, practices and privileges that were embedded in imperial expansionism and colonization and institutionalized in academic disciplines, schools, curricula, universities and power.*

I felt moments of 'displacement', 'distortion' and 'dislocation' (Bhabha, 2003, p.32), amid moments of wonder, mimesis (i.e. mimicry) and passion, in theory and practice. Therefore, the PhD that unreflexively adopts a physical

classroom in a school with a high ranking on the scale of disadvantage (in 2005, 2012) (DECD, 2005, 2012). Preparation for this commenced in 2006 seeking Year 9 teacher and student participant input. This approach failed to result in volunteers for the collaborative study. A Year 10 class later volunteered. Teacher workloads were given as the main reason to not volunteer for the second study. The recruitment process delayed stage two by eight months.

The collaborative study approved by the University and the Department of Education in 2006 was divided into: pre-collaborative, collaborative, and post-collaborative interventions. In agreement with the Spanish teacher in August 2006, the pre-collaborative phase would commence in Term 1 2007. The teacher requested extensions which impacted meeting students and seeking their consent. This process led to a four-month delay to the study's fieldwork.

### **The collaborative study's phases**

The aim of the pre-collaborative intervention was to allow the researcher to learn from participants; to understand how the Year 10 students and teacher enacted Spanish teaching and learning, language, and culture, in their classroom. The research methodology employed allowed the researcher to observe and take field notes while audio recording and transcribing lessons. This aided the researcher's capacity to experience participant 'dialogue' and practice in action. The enactment of day-to-day routines

sciences approach to research in social sciences (Wadham, personal communication, 2017), pursues narrow 'truths' and 'centres' (Latter, 1991, p.xx), privileges 'top-down' theory over people's everyday practices, experiences, and voices, and claims 'singular' authority over knowledge, in modernist and postmodernist projects (Owen, 2011), is a 'limiting' and suspicious form of research (hooks, 1994; Nakata, 2007; Russell-Mundine, 2012; Smith, 2013). To me, it diminishes dialogue, marginalises, and enacts 'racial', class and other hierarchies (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p.155). As Audre Lorde stated (1979, p.94), "It means that only the most narrow parameters of change are possible and allowable."

While I see the dilemma in stereotyping standpoints, as do others (Smith, 2012), it was in my journey of trying to 'articulate my position' vis-à-vis a centre and a margin (Nakata, 2007, p.23), in my 'lived-experience' of developing a PhD proposal with the guidance of scholars in a western institution of formal learning in 2005 (despite good intentions), that differentials and othering practices constantly made my voice and ways of knowing less legitimate (Nakata, 2007; Reyes & Rodríguez, 2012). Like Nakata (2007, p.28) I had to ask what is my education for, if I cannot "...explain and defend..." my standpoint outside of the "...content, logic and systems of thought of others." I then decided to make visible the 'raciolinguistic ideologies' of bodies engaged in my research and trying to shape what's classed as scholarship (Flores

and interactions in lessons, with minimal researcher interaction, did not erase the presence of the researcher. The researcher collected all work samples and studied the language and culture valued in lessons undertaken over three terms of the academic year.

#### *A pre-collaborative phase*

During the pre-collaborative intervention, students and the teacher participated in lessons as they saw fit. They were asked to complete a survey, to write, and reflect on their learning in Spanish in a journal, and to engage in an informal conversation in Spanish with the researcher. The researcher also interviewed the teacher to understand the teacher's beliefs about Spanish teaching, curriculum, and learning, and of student-teacher relations. These diverse sources formed the baseline-data for this study.

#### *A collaborative intervention*

The collaborative intervention was characterized by ongoing and contested participant negotiations of curriculum, pedagogy, learning and research. The researcher undertook an active role as co-collaborator while employing the research tools and the 'observer-participant' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) role used in phase 1 to aid the development of rich descriptions of participants' dialogue and practices. Student perspectives and feedback, in three surveys and multiple journals, and in conversations, informed the teacher and researcher's planning of the critical approach. The teacher negated student involvement in

& Rosa, 2015, p.150). As Bhabha (2003, p.35) suggests, these are 'grounds of intervention'.

My idea of an 'orthodox' PhD (an ideology) does not deny that there is diversity in standpoints in positivism, in post-positivism and in postmodernist perspectives. I still believe there are racial normativity practices and 'allegiances' to 'monoglossic language ideologies', in circulation, in 'western' works, even if it is difficult to point to them 'empirically' (Flores & Rosa, 2015, p.152). To me, what scholars describe as 'dry' writing, an almost 'pedantic' voice of detachment (Galliford, 2012, p.403), systematic 'classification' and 'labelling', (Dodson, 2003, p.27) and what feels like blind allegiance to 'external' experts to the research process (Nakata, 2007; Russell-Mundine, 2012) is what I wish not to reproduce. It is thus a PhD 'genre' and 'practice' that I disrupt (Saldívar Hull, 2000, p.161). I want to "do science otherwise" (Lather, 1991, p.101).

Today I ask, as others have (Guba & Lincoln, 1998), that you suspend your judgement of the relevance of this bricoleur's act till the end of my story (Guba & Lincoln, 1998; Miller, 2008). I have a political agenda, not to ridicule 'other' ways of thinking but to do 'experimental', in the 'exploratory' alternative and unsettling sense of meaning-making processes, where prescriptive thinking isn't the 'ideal' (Marcus, 2007, p.1129).

The student journal (Image 5), opening this border text, can stand alone for now. This is a praxis-oriented text (Lather, 1986). And I am inviting you, as Moriarty suggests (2013, p. 69), "...to think with rather than about..." this

planning and was not provided a reduced workload to undertake research (and declined to do so). Differential participation limited participant ‘dialogue’ in this study.

During the collaborative-intervention the researcher studied closely various aspects of teaching and learning in the Spanish classroom, including:

- The Spanish teacher’s beliefs, practices, and lesson plans
- The students’ beliefs, reflections, and activity in lessons (and journal, survey and conversation data)
- The students and teacher interactions and dialogue
- How students and teacher reflect on their learning and on students’ motivations and feedback.

#### *A post-collaborative intervention*

The post-collaborative intervention undertaken in 2008 involved a student focus group and a one-on-one interview with the Spanish teacher. Its aim was to access participants’ critical reflections on what collaborations had enabled the previous year.

The focus of post-study meetings with participants was to co-evaluate the critical pedagogical approach produced and its impact. The teacher and student participants were met separately to allow uninhibited discussion. The researcher probed participants’ reflections on the highlights, challenges, tensions, and failures of collaborations, and on her practices over the

image. It’s protected by informed consent. The greater authority is saved, and ‘we’ know:

An image is a bridge between evoked emotion and conscious knowledge; words are the cables that hold up the bridge. Images are more direct, more immediate than words, and closer to the unconscious. Picture language precedes thinking in words; the metaphorical mind precedes analytical consciousness (Anzaldúa, 1987, p.91).

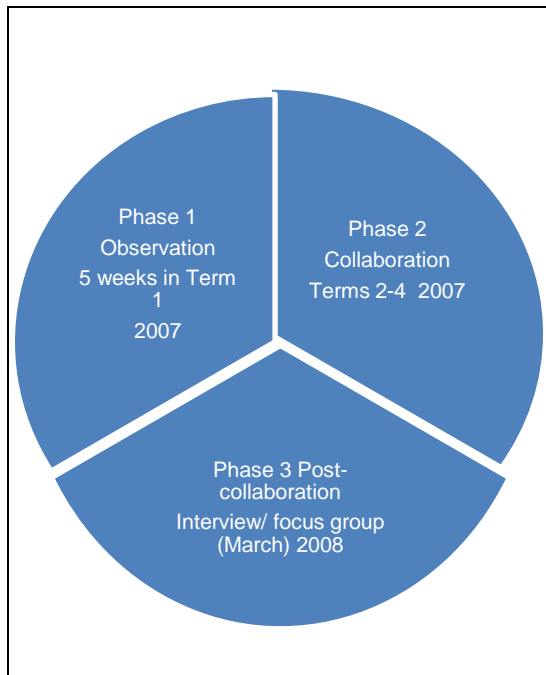
Beginning this journey with participants’ voices is significant to me. The stick-figures are a bridge. They connect two worlds, times, spaces, actions, people, and reflexivity. They link co-collaborators to ‘our’ audiences.

The cartoonists sought to connect with me, when I was observing them in silence: internally smiling at their cheekiness. They reminded me of me, when I was a Spanish student in SA ‘Ethnic Schools’ language maintenance programs in the 1980s. In these students’ classroom, in 2007, I struggled to stay behind the glass. I fell for them. Their image triggers me and sees a world beyond me.

My use of the students’ drawing and writing (Image 5) is not ‘false charity’ (Freire, 1996, p.27), but, an act of solidarity with the students who drew it, whom I worked with and for (Freire, 1979). My use is creative and critical. I create new meaning through it while redistributing authority and enabling access, pluralism, and transgressions for some (hooks, 1994) (i.e. against ageism). If I had opened this text with a scholar’s quote or statistics, another textual strategy, few would blink provided it fit with my theoretical

study's phases as outlined in figure 1, as follows:

**Figure 1: Case study phases**



### **Research tools and data sources**

In this study, students in Year 9, in the preparatory study, and students in Year 10, in the collaborative study, completed a survey on their Spanish language learning experiences; on their motivations to learn Spanish and what drives them to participate with (dis)interest in lessons. The survey also encouraged feedback on teaching, and self-reports on the extent of motivation. Reflections on how Spanish teaching and student participation could be improved and what informs decisions to study Spanish were a key focus among others.

The Year 10 student survey received modifications on two of the three occasions in which it was applied during the collaborative-

framework and argument (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The sonority of the text's words would be protected (Freire, 1996). These experts don't need my applause.

I 'see' how the students' drawing, their imaginaries and their consciousness of the micro and macro 'texture' of power-relations in the beginning of 'our' collaborative journey, and thus their reading of this study's beginnings better starts this dialogue (Spivak, 1988, p.277). In this way, the students are subjects before objects, on the page (both in 'reality') (Wadham, personal communication, November 16, 2017). In their move, I am friend, not 'entirely' detached or expert, but definitely someone passing through (going somewhere 'cool'). They make me subject/object. The image and words speak affectionately and happily, for 'themselves', and for me. That's personally inspiring to me, so early in this project.

Freire inspires me to seek a dialogue that estudia 'seriamente' (*seriously studies*) (my emphasis) the construction of caring, humble, and socially just texts (Freire, 2005, p.46). He has inspired opposition in others, and in me, as in the work of 'allies' (i.e. Aronowitz, 1993; hooks, 1993; Giroux, 1994) and critics (Ohliger, 1995; Ellsworth, 1989). Notwithstanding, the resulting critique is itself a dialogue triggering 'better' ways to privilege students' voices in education and other fields (Freire, 1970; 1984; 1988; 1997; 2007). Freire's work resonates with Latcrit theorists, with black, 'coloured', Latina and white feminists, with queer theorists, and a range of sociological, Marxist and arts-based

intervention. Minor changes made responded to participant interests and emerging needs. This facilitated a deeper responsiveness between participants. Both versions of the survey provided qualitative and quantitative data on students' motivations, and voices.

The collaborative case study allowed a comprehensive understanding of diverse perspectives and practices. It gathered data via: Spanish lesson observations, audio and transcriptions; on student, teacher, and researcher journal entries; recorded and transcribed student conversations in Spanish; planning notes from teacher and researcher meetings and the surveys discussed. This data helped gain deep and complex insights into the students, as well as the teachers' beliefs, practices, motivations, proficiency, voices, and learning, as they participated in assessing, suggesting changes, and transforming practice in an ongoing manner. Furthermore, the researcher undertook observation, field-note taking, and collected participant work samples. This aided triangulation. Figure two shows the study's multiple stages.

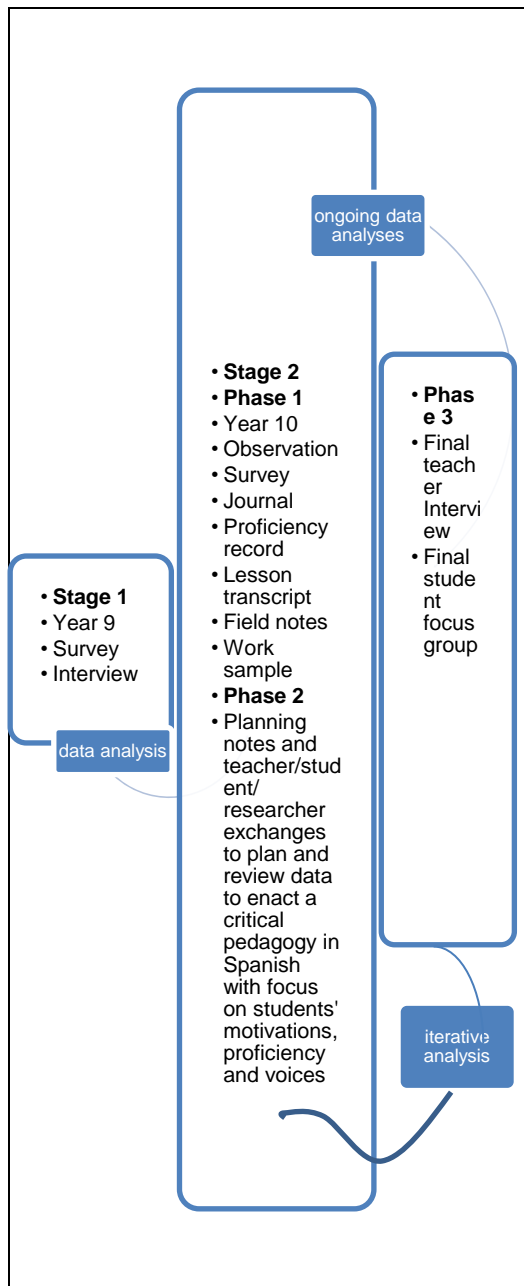
practitioners challenging 'oppression' from various locations (see hooks, 1994; Huber, 2010; Richardson, 1985; Simpson & McMillan, 2008).

My struggle for students' engagement in pedagogy and research does not ignore institutional, social, and asymmetrical powers that frame teacher and students' work or the asymmetrical work of researchers in school and academia. Denying the way in which power shapes all labour and relations is 'manipulative' (Freire, 1994).

Critical scholars (McLaren 1994; Walsh 1991; Shor, 1992; hooks, 1994; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Moriarty, 2013) have written extensively on the tensions and politics of labours in education. Freire's call, to me, is to reflect on the journey of socialisation and inculcation, with its inclusive, exclusive, and enabling aspects (Freire & Macedo, 1987). Freire's work is not free of 'blind-spots' (hooks, 1994, p.49). He too recognises these (Escobar, Fernández, Guebara-Niebla & Freire, 1994, p.46) and reminds me that 'everyday' is 'an opportunity to learn' (Freire & Faundez, 1989, p.21). In this text and in my practice, learning is not viewed as a deficit.

It is the journey of reflexivity upon this dialogue, its enactment in practice and what it says about learning (of stratified knowledge and ways of being), about my learning (and even perhaps your own), that tells me something about my past and present. As Banfield (personal communication, 2017) suggests, this labour 'places reflexivity back into its social context', and thus into the hands and bodies of people.

**Figure 2: A multidimensional study**



In summary, the two studies in this project create ‘grassroots’ knowledge and practice from participants’ in local Spanish classrooms. The studies enable access to multiple participants’ theories and practices. This was a gap in Spanish as a Foreign Language education research in Australia in 2005 and today.

Chicana, Latina, and Black feminists (i.e. hooks, Anzaldúa, Delgado Bernal, Ladson-Billings, Lorde, Moraga, Collins, Perez) can see Freire’s work in a reflexive light while repelling his early gender exclusive language and utopian (or essentialist) impulses. Their plural approaches pick, contemplate, and discard dimensions of his work while valuing his action and ideals. Some feminists can’t see behind the work’s phallogentrism (Weiler, 1991; Grosz, 1993). Should this deter me?

I see my praxis in this project as a moving ‘counterhegemonic’ act. It enacts participatory and shifting approaches to meaning making in recognition that “...historical transitions alter the way people write, because they alter people’s experiences and the way people imagine, feel and think about the world they live in” (Pratt, 2008, p.4). In parts, this text emits a ‘unifying’ impulse, as in the chant of a union: *¡el pueblo, unido, jamás será vencido!* (*the people, united, will never be defeated!*). This does not assume consensus (it’s not chest beating). Sometimes political aspirations bring people of diverse interests together (Pratt, 2008, p.4), even in ‘loose’ ‘coalition-like’ interests (Conquergood, 1998, p.179) that ‘invigorate’ them (Conquergood, 1988, p.202).

It is an inescapable truth of human labour, that positivists, post-positivists, and even critical realists become unified, on some level, through association and participation in a practice that is knowledge-seeking, a site of human progress (Owen, 2011). This work then, like all such research, makes knowledge, meaning and practice with the resources at



## Student motivation, proficiency and empowerment

In this study, aspects of students' motivations refers to students' cognitive and affective mediators; how learners "construe the situation, interpret events in the situation and process information about the situation" (Dweck, 1986). Students' interests, attributions, goals, values, and efficacy have been shown to impact on students' learning and performance (see literature review). Through developing positive goals, attributions and expectations of learning in a domain, there can be an increased level of efficacy, knowledge and performance (Alexander, Jetton, & Kulikowich, 1995). In language classrooms, student performance is largely defined by their proficiency (Gregersen et al. 2001).

Student proficiency is here understood as the learner's knowledgeable and skilful use of the language/culture in context and for meaningful intercultural purpose. This is supported by critical and whole-language, language, and literacy perspectives which understand language is 'power' (Norton & Toohey, 2004; Pennycook, 2005). Empowerment is here understood as a process whereby an individual gains control over her/his/their life and options, through developing understandings of diverse knowledge forms; about themselves, social domains and how knowledge of power, skills and linguacultural options in circulation shape and change personal, social and professional circumstances (Cummins, & Corson, 1997;

hand. This, of course, occurs over time, in place, in an environment, and with others. I cannot afford ontological shyness (Banfield, 2016). I've been silent too long. I want to roar.

My work embodies *una conciencia de mujer mestiza* (a woman's *mestiza consciousness*) (Anzaldúa, 1987). I am a restless being becoming. The perception of being in two worlds compels many women to read the social world and its social relations flexibly; to see the plurality, the polyphony, the contradiction, and the ambiguity of (con)texts, even of oppression (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2015), while still seeing the ways in which it can be, as Bhaskar suggests (of the sciences), stratified and structured (Banfield, 2017, p.3). In my research as performance (Haseman, 2003), I explore how oppression materialises in my practice, in my-selves, and in my acts (active or passive). This involves reflexivity on my hybrid 'outsider' knowledge (Hill Collins, 1986, p. S14), inspired in the tradition of Anzaldúa's work in *Borderlands / La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987).

Anzaldúa's (1987, p. 99) poem *Una lucha de fronteras / A Struggle of Borders* highlights how it is possible for women of hybrid race (fluid bodies, psyches, and cultures) to migrate, dance and travel between tentative spaces (Perez, 2005). Her words declare (and I translate, paraphrase, and italicise) the *mestiza* as a *soul between two worlds, three, four, her head pounds with contradiction. She is nor-teada (bordered at the 'north')* (a geographical, metaphysical, corporeal, and conceptual border) *by all the voices that speak to her simultaneously:*

Jones, 2006). This perspective of empowered students, does not support a singular notion of student voice but one in which students have voice (can speak their voice) and agency (can enact their voice), through their understandings of themselves as social beings always participating in a contested social world, in 'language' and practice (Cochran-Smith, 2001; Giroux, 1992; hooks 1994). It is hypothesized that a deliberate focus on student motivations, voices, and proficiency will improve learning, of critical understandings of Spanish, and student consciousness of the need for greater critical literacies in developing proficiency to engage the 'real' world.

In 2005, the SACSA (South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability) framework's 'Essential Learnings' (Department of Education, 2002) aligned with this study's curricular focus at Standard 3 and 4 levels (DETE, 2002). However, participants did not draw on the framework in theory or practice.

This investigation sheds light on aspects of Spanish students' learning, motivations, voices, and proficiency, and of tensions noted by students and other participants, in Spanish teaching and learning in schools. It identifies factors that impact this curriculum. It shows multiple participants, in diverse roles, claim this curriculum is neglected.

There is theory and research advocating for critical teaching in education with a view to empowering students in radical and pragmatic ways (Cummins, 1994; 2000; Diversi &

Because I, a mestiza, continually walk out of one culture and into another, because I am in all cultures at the same time....

And I am a mestiza. I have a voice and it is my body, travelling through a vulnerable and privileged middle-and-under-class borderland in academia. I am a healthy 'educated' woman. I should be homeless. I cannot survive independently on my salary in a 'western' democracy, in a 'first-world' university. There, I am not entitled to be sick, take leave or enjoy semester breaks. There, I am not paid enough for my substantive feedback needed to assist students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) ('ESL' is 'more' of a deficit term, and this term could apply to anyone) (Scarino, O'Neill, & Crichton, 2017, p.3). Regardless, and in spite of over a decade of continuous outstanding student evaluations of my teaching, and commendations for my other roles, I am on a margin and at the same time, unwavering in my activism for 'dialogical' praxis in the university. It can't pay me for that service! There's no currency for that!

My mestiza practice embodies an intersectionality, with pride, in trials and tribulations (Marcus, 1994). Here, intersectionality refers to a consciousness of how "...race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, ability and age..." can intersect and work as "...reciprocally constructive phenomena that in turn shape complex social inequalities" (Collins, 2015, p.2). I live, learn, and suffer dilemmas within a contradictory wor(l)d. I participate in practices I wish to discredit and transgress, stopping short of

Mecham, 2005; Freire, 1970; Pennycook, 1998). At the time of developing this study (in 2005), there is limited evidence of 'empirical' investigation of Freirean inspired pedagogies and its potential impact on foreign language secondary students' learning, motivations, voices and proficiencies. Studies located engage diverse Freirean tenets, in Second Language (L2), English as a Second (ESL) or Additional (EAL) Language, and in Spanish as a Foreign Language (SPFL) contexts. These noted varied aims and contexts (i.e. NGO) (Bartlett, 2005; Clark & Hernandez, 1999; Zoreda, 1997). Motivational theories and studies made minimal reference to SPFL and critical pedagogy (Byram & Feng, 2004; DETE, 2002). This review illustrated gaps.

### **Significance of the Study**

The research informing the design of this study in 2005, and thus the early literature review that informed it, identified several issues in research. This project bridges a gap in knowledge regarding valued practices in Spanish language teaching and learning in Australia, at the time of the study and today.

There has been generic research to examine attitudinal, linguistic, cognitive, and motivational aspects of Spanish students in Australia (Clyne, Fernandez & Grey, 2004; Lopez, 2000; Sanchez Castro, 2013; Steed & Delicado Cantero, 2014; Wyra, Lawson & Hungi, 2007). At the time of designing this study, none examined the contemporary

radical change, so as to not exclude myself. So, there really is no outside this 'wor(l)d', and "...in the act of understanding, a struggle occurs that results in mutual change and enrichment" (Bakhtin, as cited in Owen, 2011, p.141). In Anzaldúa's words:

...the borderlands are physically present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where under, lower, middle and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy.

(Anzaldúa, 1987, preface, p.19).

It is this border text's move to make me, my being, my bilingualism, my research practices, and their episteme and ontology, an object of reflexive study (a thing to contemplate and question) (Ulmer, 1985). I do this to privilege participants, 'us', in some way, where they've previously been ignored, as discussed, and even in my own gaze. I do this to counter the oppressive practices that certain paradigms (ideologies) and their 'racialised' ways enact in the everyday texts of education (Wadham, Pudsey & Boyd, 2007, p.196). These suggest that lives, agents, and even the act of reflexivity, are static, when they are heterogenous and 'relational' (Archer, 2000, p.17); they also omit how 'race', a form of Whiteness, and privilege, expand inequities for some participants in education (Picower & Mayorga, 2015).

The use of my first language, Spanish, and Spanglish, make my culture and my lengua (*tongue*), visible (Anzaldúa, 2009). My use of my own and others' 'poetry', makes my imagination, my senses, and my taste for

perspectives of students, on Spanish teaching and curriculum, in public schooling, and neither study integrated a focus on Spanish students' motivations, voices, and verbal proficiency. This study addresses these gaps and provides a detailed review of the contexts and stakeholder perspectives which inform the Spanish curriculum in theory and practice in five public schools in SA in 2006/2007. This study is important also because it provides in-depth and detailed examination of teaching and learning practices in Spanish in one school site.

The literature reviewed showed that despite ample international research in both motivation and critical pedagogy (CP), few studies focus on aspects of students' motivations in the context of foreign language learning (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002; Landelle, 2004; Stewart-Strobelt & Chen, 2003; Vandergrift, 2005). Studies drawing on critical pedagogy in languages were mostly based in Anglo-American contexts (Pennycook in Norton & Toohey, 2004; Kubota in Norton & Toohey, 2004; Noone & Cartwright, 1996; Ryan, 2005). The studies were largely concerned with describing theories which inform teacher practice and identifying taken-for-granted notions. They rarely provide concrete examples of dialogical pedagogical change with participant input, or a student interest focus.

Paulo Freire (1970) and Ira Shor's (1992) earliest works informing this study's approach, provide pragmatic approaches to describing theories and principles valued in the process of

'inquiry' and life 'meaning' visible (Janesick, 2016, p.31). I can be a 'subject' and an 'object' to myself (Archer, 2003). As Anzaldúa suggests (2009, p. 31):

**What validates us as human beings validates us as writers.**

My research proposal's introductory chapter (inspiring the left column) marks aspects of my 'wetback' journey through the borderlands and checkpoints of this PhD. Its literature review and 'methods' are my baggage. The term 'wetback' is used to undermine people daring to cross borders. I honour marginalised labour, struggle and risky crossing (Giroux, 1992).

A 'wetback' can be an adult or child who leaves a home and often a family and everything they know in their homeland to cross a border they have been told will bring opportunity to their lives (Moraga, 2015). The Mexican 'wetback', in Anzaldúa's work, walks in fear: through arid unpopulated lands, in freezing temperatures, and under the sweltering heat of the day, to escape la patrulla (*border patrol*) Anzaldúa, 1987, p.26). In Australia, refugees are stopped by maritime patrols (McAdam, December 3, 2014). In 'our' everyday lives, as teachers, researchers, and civilians, surveillance is ubiquitous. Who patrols who, and what, may differ. This PhD is patrolled.

The metaphor of the wetback (Anzaldúa, 1978) crossing and carrying whatever 'baggage' she/he/they needs, guided by a coyote (a 'mentor' who regularly does the journey, knows the terrain) embodies for me the uneasy and transformative experience of asymmetrical relations with authoritative

engaging in a critical pedagogy. However, these narratives often excluded problematic issues and the tone of interactions with participants, leaving readers with few tangible examples to explore. Strategies advocated may be incompatible with curriculum and classroom culture.

Analyses of ‘broader’ literature (Lingard, 1981; Giroux, 1983; Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985; Giroux & McLaren, 1994; Apple & Beane, 1999; Luke in Norton & Toohey, 2004) in the critical pedagogy field, has raised criticism for its dense jargon, ideological focus, and pessimistic patriarchal views about education (Giroux, 1997; Lather, 1998; Ellsworth, 1989). These sources provided critical educational theory, rather than accessible strategies for advancing theory and practice within critical pedagogies with participants (Gore, 1993). The narratives elude concrete descriptions though one is reminded that there is no vaccine. Resisting what may be deemed as ‘formulaic’ descriptions of approaches in use defeats the purpose that many may learn from critical pedagogies in practice in institutions of learning.

This study’s literature review largely failed to articulate, contextualize, and describe, the critical approaches advocated (the what, the who, the why and the how) and possibilities for change. The research and literature at the time also largely neglected students’ responses to critical pedagogies practiced, on an individual and group basis (Bella, 1998). The literature informing the design of this study lacked:

participants in this project. There were taxing and enabling blocks (Keating, 2015). I speak back to my journey of struggle, thinking lovingly about my uncles who entered the US illegally and my parents forced and cut migration and education. These experiences make some things hard to stomach. Anzaldúa’s words agonise of the horror that...

Those who make it past the checking points of the Border Patrol ... find themselves in the midst of 150 years of racism (Anzaldúa, 1978, p. 12).

Tragically, “... ‘race’ and ‘racism’ are alive in Australia” (Wadham, Pudsey & Boyd, 2007, p.171). In fact, as I submit this thesis, the Australian Government has rejected *The Uluru Statement of the Heart* (Referendum Council, 2017), the contemporary voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples seeking constitutional sovereignty. I have had to digest other racisms in my wor(l)d too (no comparison meant). Racism is so destructive. It operates within institutions and cultures, and within people (Derman-Sparks & Philips, as cited in Picower & Mayorga, 2015). Like in Nellie Wong’s (2015, p.5) poem, *When I was growing up*:

... people told me  
I was dark and I believed my own darkness  
... in my soul, my own narrow vision...

The ‘wetback crossing’ metaphor speaks to me, though not to all and it angers some as I risk ‘commodifying’ the wetback and thus becoming an opportunist ‘coyote’ (Martinez, 2005). And I persist, as the wetback story powerfully speaks to my family’s alienation

- a case example, which is more than critique of ‘normative’ approaches to pedagogy (Pennycook, as cited in Davies & Elder, 2004)
- an examination of strategies used to negotiate problematic issues in critical Spanish teaching and learning
- Participants’ voices; officials, teachers, and students, at present absent in research, especially in research method definition (in Australia and overseas).

This research adds to the international and national research on the practices and beliefs which frame contemporary teaching of Spanish-as-a-Foreign-Language in SA. It provides an in-depth study of Spanish pedagogy in one site. It describes and explains an enactment of a critical approach with participants. It reports data on students’ beliefs and experiences, on diverse key participant views of ‘critical’ teaching and learning practices; and on effects on student interest, empowerment and proficiency, of ‘existing’ and ‘changing’ teaching.

#### **Specific research aims and purpose**

This investigation aims to:

- Investigate officials, and teachers’ perceptions of the Spanish curriculum to understand beliefs, structures, and factors impacting it and students’ / teachers’ work
- Understand what practices are used in Spanish in Years 9/10 and learn from

and lingua-culture struggles in navigating hostile borders. It speaks to dispiriting manual, intellectual and emotional labours that my family and I have lived. The ‘wetback’s’ promised land is always shifting, on the horizon, and always being re-visioned in struggle, for me (Anzaldúa, 1998; Mutua & Swadener, 2004). Being, in words and practices, is explained through plurality, contestation and ‘dialogism’ (polyphonic) (Bakhtin, as cited in Owen, 2011, p.144). I can’t help but despair to cross, but I do have limits.

My ‘priority as a working-class woman’ is having a mouth to feed on a diminishing income (Anzaldúa, 1987, p.39). This PhD has taken from me for over a decade, and I have sustained my “...restless interrogation...” casting ‘light’, questions and darkness simultaneously on this journey (Chambers, 1994, p.3). This endurance has given me more than defensive movement and loss in exile. As Chambers states (1994, p.2):

For migrancy and exile, as Edward Said points out, involves a ‘discontinuous state of being’, a form of picking a quarrel with where you come from. It has thereby been transformed ‘into a potent, even enriching, motif of modern culture’.

For those who leave the known in search of new beginnings, border patrols instigate fear (Clyne & Kipp, 1999; Simpson & Whiteside, 2015). Taking exile involves anxiety about life, things and meanings (Said, 2000). Like my father Julio; my mother Obdulia; my sister Patricia; my grandmother Angelina; my grandfather Luis; and my auntie Estella; a

participants' ideas for critical alternatives

- Examine students' language-related motivations and identify what factors they say influence their participation and decisions in this area
- Hear the impact on students' motivations, voices, and verbal proficiency from students themselves of use of a critical approach to Spanish.

It is the aim of this study to use collaborative approaches with participants to impact students' motivations, voices, and their intercultural proficiency, in positive and empowering ways.

#### **The Research Problem (2005)**

*Will a critical approach to teaching Spanish impact positively on aspects of students' motivations, voices, and language proficiency?*

The examination of the context of Spanish teaching in Australia identified many problematic national, state, and local school and community factors that impact negatively the teaching and learning of Spanish in public schools (see literature review). In agreement with this claim, Byram (2006) stated that Spanish, and European languages are neglected in Australian education. He argued that concentration on Asian languages influences this neglect and contravenes international value awarded to Spanish; the third most spoken language globally, as others note (Clyne, 2005;

duality haunts me. I am torn and nostalgic (and very blessed).

When I'm in Adelaide, I wish I were in Mexico or Uruguay where I have lived. I am split between worlds. When I hear the Olimareños song, *Tâ llorando* (is crying) (which I hope you Google), a Uruguayan icon prohibited in the 70s when my parents left their homeland, a song described as the 'paramount symbol of exile' (Trigo, 1993, p.723), I feel anguish for Uruguay and for them. As the lyrics say, many "vagan sin consuelo por el mundo" (*wonder without consolation around the world*). When you press play, the first verse you'll hear says:

Este cielo no es el cielo de mi tierra.  
Esta luna no brilla como aquella  
(*This sky is not the sky of my land. This moon doesn't shine like that one*)  
(Los Olimareños, 1970).

Those lyrics grip my throat every time. I am lost in the afro-Uruguayan tamboril (*small drum*) and flute, even as I walk in the majestic waters at Maslin Beach, in SA, admiring the clear blue sky and yellow cliffs, anchored by my headphones.

Even though I never fled Uruguay to avoid the military coup in 1973, my family's 'interpellated' exiles are mine (Althusser, 1971, p.162). In me also resides a privilege (of survival, hope and contemplation), a journey (of spaces, identities, and experiences), and hardships (economic, cultural, and political). They dance passionately in me, like a Uruguayan tango, a woman resisting submission.

When I walk La Ciudad Vieja (The Ancient City) in Montevideo, I sing Men at Work's /

Byran 2006; Erichsen, 2016; Smolicz, 1984). Diverse factors impact students' access, perceptions of, and participation in Spanish in schools. This study reports on what participants say about access and how a critical pedagogical approach to learning could begin to address neglect.

Observations of Spanish classrooms in this study indicated that a critical pedagogy approach was not in use. In stage two of this study, participants negotiated, co-designed, implemented, and evaluated, a critical pedagogical alternative in a school. It was proposed to participants that a critical approach to Spanish, as outlined, could positively influence its teaching and learning. Research in social cognitive theory was considered in showing that motivations; goals, interests, attributions, and self-efficacy are important influences on learning (see literature review). To expand this focus, in this study, students' language related motivations and perceptions of interests in Spanish, were investigated, in learning and in perceptions of interesting Spanish lessons. The co-negotiated pedagogy addressed aspects of students' interests and feedback, and their teachers'. This process demanded understanding of the curriculum and practices valued in schools and thus, investigation into the:

- Historical background to languages education

*come from the land down-under* (please also Google). I can smell the panaderias (bakeries) and suffer the shifting earth and alliances that can crumble or rise (McGloin, 2016).

My re-readings of my work have revealed confronting contradictions. This is the 'unintended' reproduction of a pedagogy (Freire, 1996) and methodology of oppression (Sandoval, 2000). Even when research methods cause unforeseen harms, they are still attempting to realise the dreams of enlightenment (Christians, 2005, p.139).

This border text reveals the 'messy' learning of collaborative processes, and the challenges of 'post-positivism'. My analysis provides a 'map' of intersecting relations in which researchers, students, teachers, and supervisors can fail (Marcus, 1994, p.391). The failings are exposed as a call to action desde abajo (*from below*). Thus, some silence is necessary, self-silencing too. Because, as Freire (2005, p.48) has stated, consciousness and collaborations are unpredictable:

A medida que comienzan a emerger en el proceso histórico, van percibiendo rápidamente que los fundamentos del "orden" que los minimizaba ya no tiene sentido. Se rebelan contra el orden, que ya es desorden, no sólo ética sino sociológicamente.

(As 'they' begin to emerge in the historical process, 'they' perceive quickly that the fundamentals of the "order" that were minimizing them no longer had meaning. They rebel against the order, that already is disorder, not



- Policies shaping language curriculum in local schools
- Beliefs and practices impacting language teaching, learning, and participation in the Spanish curriculum in DECD (Department of Education and Child Development) sites.

This investigation identified gaps in the literature on the historical background of the Spanish language in Australian education, and in local public schools. The review that follows addresses this neglected area of research (Smolicz, as cited in Scurrah, 1992).

only ['ethically'] but sociologically) (my translation, for meaning).

In my writing I wish to speak to you knowing you can't speak back yet. My text on the left can no longer speak. I silence it, to learn. The blank column may be uncomfortable to see, even for me, but as Anzaldúa says in the fourth verse of her poem titled 'I Want to Be Shocked Shitless' (1974, as cited in Keating, 2009, p. 23):

I don't want to be told  
what to write  
I can excavate my own content  
I want to be pushed into  
digging deep wells  
in unheard lands

I too want to have agency in my writing. Anzaldúa inspires (1990) me to use my theory (knowledge) to ungag myself. Moraga's first verse in her poem takes me elsewhere. *I lack imagination you say* (as cited in Anzaldúa, 2009, p.27) sums up my anxiety about writing within the culture wars (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) when she says:

I lack imagination you say  
No. I lack language.  
The language to clarify  
My resistance to the literate.  
Words are a war to me.  
They threaten my family.

In the right border texts, I am writing on an edge, considerably far from my 'participant observer' self, where I stood, in 2005-2006. Anzaldúa talks about the borderlands where journeys and clashes form, where separation and insecurity aches, and struggle is constant on the margin. She's clearly talking about

doubt, and harm. Facing cliffs, my faith and love saves me. And yet I can 'see' myself, in 2009, in particular, as Anzaldúa:

... getting too close to the mouth of the abyss. ... teetering on the edge, trying to balance while she makes up her mind whether to jump in or to find a safer way down. That's why she makes herself sick – to postpone having to jump blindfolded into the abyss of her own being and there in the depths confront her face, the face underneath the mask (Anzaldúa, 1987, p.96).

The students' cartoon (Image 5) told me this PhD is a borderland: a place where things are imagined; where there is an 'us' and them; where there are beings named, and voices who speak with hope but are nameless. The students see a 'character' of surveillance (a reader) and perform for me. I didn't recognise their ((un)intended) consciousness in 2006 but there came a point where I could no longer resist their will to engage me (in reflexivity). I had to surrender and understand that I was amid "...reflexive subjects capable of their own paraethnographic functions" (Marcus, 2007, p.1133).

What is more 'certain' in all of this is that what I know about my past transformed who I am today. But, "[o]ur sense of identity can never be resolved" ... it's "...on the move" (Chambers, 1994, p.24). Thus, there is 'language' but its meaning is multiple and differential (not referential) (Arnott, 1998, p.111), open to interpretation and action (Miller, 2008). Language is "a means of cultural construction in which ourselves and sense are constituted" (Chamber, 1994, p.22). And the body? It is a landscape with history

and carvings; it's alive (Chamber, 1994, p.23). So how is any story possible if there is "no privileged representation, no single language in which 'truth' can be asserted" (Chambers, 1994, p.26)? Caminante no hay camino! (*Wanderer, there is no path!*). There is always a story (stories), an act of creation (re-production), a performance (and audience), a narrator and witnesses (actors and spectators). As Calkins (1991, as cited in Miller, 2008, p.47) notes:

Being human means we can remember and tell stories and pretend and write and hope and share, and in this way add growth rings of meaning to our lives... (Living Between the Lines, 1991, p.185).

So, I'll start my story somewhere back there, at the beginning of this study, remembering those it was for.

**And why not** (Miller, 2008, p.17)?



**Image 6: My local beach, Maslin Beach, in South Australia (taken by me in 2014)**

## 2. PHD BAGGAGE AND TOOLS FOR SURVIVAL

### Literature Review

#### A historical background to languages in Australian education

The history of languages in Australian education prior to the year of this study points to a curriculum grounded in debate. The development of programs and policies was slow (Clyne, 2005). Valverde (1994) and many have (Liddicoat, Lo Bianco, & Crozet, 1999; Clyne, 2005; MCEETYA 2005) critiqued the piecemeal approaches used. While these have featured in language policy and programs since (Group of Eight, 2007; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2010; Lo Bianco, 2010; Cruickshank, 2013; Möllering, 2014), so does the ‘reality’ that Western nations, like Australia, wrestle with diversity and multilingualism (Lo Bianco, 1990; Clyne, 2005, 2006, 2009; Dunworth & Zhang, 2014). A monolingual mindset is a longstanding barrier to Australia’s language diversity in education (Clyne, 2005; Curnow, Liddicoat & Scarino, 2007; Scarino, 2014). In the 1970s, however, a ‘greater’ diversity of mindsets shaped debates (Clyne, 2007).

Despite historic challenges to Australia’s languages education, including legal bans to bilingualism in the 1950s (Clyne, 1997), in 2005 Australia was cited as a ‘model’ on multicultural and multilingual matters (Clyne, 2005). This is odd given that Australia repeatedly misses its policy (Clyne, 1997, 2006;

**La lucha cultural** (*the cultural struggle*): seeking passage through the checkpoint, on condition, on paper...

My abhorrence of neoliberalism helps to explain my legitimate anger when I speak of the injustices to which the ragpickers among humanity are condemned. It also explains my total lack of interest in any pretension of impartiality (Freire, 1998, p.22).

Throw away abstraction and the academic learning, the rules, the map and compass. Feel your way without blinders. To touch more people, the personal realities and the social must be evoked – not through rhetoric but through blood and pus and sweat (Anzaldúa, 1981, p.173)

This border text embodies my emotions and interests. They may feel temporary, but I return to these throughout the thesis. A sentiment is a ‘bridge’: between my theory, spirit and body. This grounding in the ‘flesh’ rejects ‘effacing’ me from this research product (Spivak, 2003, p.28) while ‘engaging’ the reader in dialogue about ‘moral’, ‘aesthetic’, ‘emotional’ and ‘intellectual’ ways of knowing and being (Bochner & Ellis, 1996, p.4).

Literature reviews traditionally identify gaps in knowledge by attending to a body of knowledge (a discipline). In doing so they mobilize ideas, discourses, practices, and people in particular directions. They become symbolic and material framing devices: language, discourses, and practices for thinking, reading (interpreting), writing, being, and doing within a research field, framework,

Liddicoat 2007) and student enrolment targets (Asia Education Foundation [AEF] 2012, 2014; MCEETYA, 2005; Blakkarly, 2014; Lo Bianco & Slaughter, 2009; Fennely & Calixto, 2016; Wesley, 2011). Australian scholars, past and present, are concerned about the direction of languages (Clyne, 2005; Group of Eight, 2007; Lo Bianco & Slaughter, 2009; Lo Bianco, 1987, 2014; Dunworth & Zhang, 2014; Black, Wright and Cruickshank, 2016; Wright, Cruickshank, & Black, 2017).

A leading languages scholar and policy pioneer, Joe Lo Bianco (as cited in Blakkarly, 2014), stated that language learning in Australia suffers from ongoing policy failures and ‘quick-fix’ programs. He critiques systematic prescription of students’ language selections. Lo Bianco recommends that curriculum content be taught through languages early (Blakkarly, 2014). He fears that without substantive approaches to learning in schools and without prioritising time and funding, current national targets for 40% of Year 12 students to be learning languages by 2024 will fail (Lo Bianco, 2012). Other scholars agree.

Michael Clyne, an international scholar and activist dedicated to pluricentricity and ‘language rights’ (Hajek, 2012) found Australia’s approach to languages education to be perplexing given its periods of embracing and undermining the principle that ‘languages’ are central to education, policy and practice (Clyne, 2007). Clyne’s long-term research into ‘multiculturalism’ and multilingualism revealed

and context (Gee, 1996). They can discipline and inspire unruly-ness or new ways of writing and speaking histories and experience (Richardson, 2000, p.253). They can also ‘compel’ an ‘emotive’ response (Bochner & Ellis, 1997, p.4). I can attest to that!

Literature reviews can be understood as institutional social practices (Moje, 2000) and ways of reading the word and the world (a ‘wor(l)d’) (Freire, 1970). In doing so, *literature* (i.e. Published / edited / re-written texts) marks out, possible tracks into a landscape, as well as the traveller navigating those tracks. This is then, a wetback view of research reviews (Bochner & Ellis, 1996; Richardson, 2000).

In my 2006 ‘case study’, I had to face two (at least) less than optimum options. Option one was to undertake the study in the field with participants according to strict research guidelines I’d developed in navigating and negotiating academia in the university context *in struggle* and under the advice of my ‘original’ (first) supervisors. Had I attempted to go ahead with this, I wholeheartedly believe the study would have ended in about week 2, due to emergent, difficult and ‘productive’ tensions between myself and the Spanish teacher (Brock, 2011, p.124). Option two, was to look for “strategic gains” (Boomer, 1988, p.17) and possibilities to work with rather than for and most certainly not against the participants (Freire, 1988).

My ‘reading’ in this study meant departing from the decontextualized university script which failed to recognise the in-situ norms and complexities that made it virtually impossible for participants in the secondary school

how little Australia valued its language resources of multicultural and Indigenous heritage (Clyne, 1991, 2006). Lo Bianco (1987) declared this neglect was of ‘national significance’, a decade before Clyne urged Australia to realise its ‘language potential’ (Clyne, 2005).

Today, more people speak more than one language at home (18.2%), than learn a language at Australian schools (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2016). 300 languages are spoken in homes (ABS, 2012). English-only homes have decreased (ABS 2006, 2011).

In business and higher education, Australia is lagging due to its reliance on English for communication, diplomacy, and trade (Group of Eight, 2007). Despite this, language provision is differential. Diversity of languages offered in schools and universities is declining (Pauwels, 2007), and the depth of learning is divided along sector and class lines (Wright, Black & Cruickshank, 2016).

Australian government and education providers have ignored Clyne’s (1997, p.68) warning, that: “the greatest danger of LOTE programs is offering a little to everyone”. International data, including reports from the Eurydice Network, show the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and countries within Europe are consistently ahead of Australia in languages provision and student participation in schools (Clyne, 2006; Eurydice, 2008, 2012; Eurostat, 2015, 2016; Lindsey, 2012). The

classroom, and myself, to act in the ‘systematic’ manners prescribed by the university discourses, in my research proposal. In the spirit of collaboration, dialogue, and possibility, I went for option two, a possibility where ‘dialogue’ is a “relationship between” multiple “Subjects” (Freire, 2007, p.45). I chose to salvage the possibilities to dialogue with participants, something worthwhile for all stakeholders (in the project in the classroom). For me, this was the ethical, dialogical, and pragmatic way forward.

Decisions like this are political. No text is free of ideological imperatives (Althusser, 1971) and my text is no exception, no less embedded. However, my text is also ‘distinct’, it cannot be ‘unguarded’ conversation, as Spivak notes of the difference between ‘conversation’ and “authoritative theoretical production” (Spivak, 1988, p.272).

In my writing, as in my collaborations with participants, I’m open to making meaning ‘strategically’ from a critical praxis (Demas & Saavedra, 2004). As in Anzaldúa’s (1984) work, this drive is a decolonizing sensibility, inspired by an openness to a deconstruction of hybrid identities that are not stable nor clearly ‘split’ (Anzaldúa, 2000, p.21). This hybridity, Anzaldúa explains, is a “...racial, ideological, cultural and biological crosspollinization...” [a presence] “...in the making...”. It is also personal, and I’m happy to request that ‘its meaning and worth be measured’ by how much of myself I can unpack on these pages, as Anzaldúa suggests of her work (2009, p.1). While my use of hybridity here does not assume identity is fixed, as Robert Young

report, *Our Languages, a National Resource in 'Terminal Decline'* (Feneley & Calixto, December 6, 2016), examined Australia's situation in languages in a five-year-long study. It found that while many young children begin education as bilinguals, the system, including its tertiary entrance scaling of subjects, ensures their 'monolingualism' when they exit it (Feneley & Calixto, December 6, 2016). Wright, Black and Cruickshank (2016), co-authors in that study, highlight micro-complexities impacting languages participation and selection (i.e. family perceptions and socioeconomic status). Other studies found that parents play key roles in community and schools 'language' perceptions and attitudes (Solved at McConchie Pty. Ltd, Australian Council of State School Organisations & Australian Parents' Council, 2007). The system is complex.

The study *Attitudes Towards the Study of Languages in Australian Schools: The National Statement and Plan – making a difference or another decade of indifference?* reported that parents, teachers, students, principals, officials, and staff, in schools and universities, find various shortcomings in national language provision and delivery (Solved at McConchie Pty. Ltd, Australian Council of State School Organisations & Australian Parents' Council, 2007). They critique the shortage of qualified teachers and the commitment of authorities. A recent study outlined substantial system failures (AEF, 2014). Past research highlights 'apathy'

(1995, p.4) explains, "...identity is self-consciously articulated through setting one term [a notional singularity] against the other...". He suggests this occurs around an "...axis of desire and aversion: a structure of attraction, where people and cultures intermix and merge, transforming themselves as a result, and a structure of repulsion, where the different elements remain distinct and are set against each other dialogically" (Young, 1994, p.19). In theory, and in life, 'hybridity' is contested. It may upload racist, cultural or biological assumptions; 'contrafusion' (against blending) 'disjunction', 'fusion' and 'assimilation', as lived out in current and past historical 'cultural debates' (i.e. Darwinism) (Young, 1994, p.18 & p.4). Nevertheless, it is possible to see hybridity as a site of personal meaning-making, of restlessness, questioning and dilemma faced in relationship to 'others'. In this way, the theories and practices of black and Latina feminists, and critical scholars, are challenged as well as enriched by reflexivity marked by a 'double consciousness' (Du Bois, 1990; Smith, 1999; Jankie, 2004; hooks, 2013). Hybridity, in this sense, is a "...confluence of identities – race, class, gender, sexuality—systemic of women of colour oppression and liberation (Moraga, 2015, p.xix).

I believe that peeling back the layers of what makes us who we are when we do what we do enables 'deeper' access to the possibilities for dialogue, knowledge construction and practice.

Reflexive examination of the 'material' artefacts of intellectual, emotional, and physical



and that Australian culture and society, according to parents, provide a ‘negative environment’ for language learning (Solved at McConchie Pty. Ltd, Australian Council of State School Organisations & Australian Parents’ Council, 2007). The environment is complex.

Government language policies and programs have historically been problematic and little progress has been made to engage students, families, and the community in ‘dialogue’ about the importance of plurilinguistic and intercultural literacies to lives, learning, and wellbeing (Liddicoat et al 2003; Liddicoat & Kohler, 2012; Diaz, 2013). ‘Neoliberal’ trends toward school (Angus, 2015) government and education sector ‘choice’ (Black, Wright & Cruickshank, 2016) contrast the wider spread of support for languages in the 1980s. That period highlighted “...the reforming zeal and social conscience of politicians.” (Clyne, 2007, p.4). However, long-term inconsistencies between the hopes and actions of authorities and their coordination, planning, monitoring, and leadership of multiple languages in schools have been reported (AEC 2014; Australian Language & Literacy Council & National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET), 1996; Liddicoat et al., 2007; Solved at McConchie Pty. Ltd., 2007).

Plurilingualism is a feature of a multicultural and globalising society (Grommes & Hu, 2014), even if it is not visible to ‘mainstream’ Australian society or prominent in its

labours, an exploration of the language, discourses and practices enacted in ‘texts’ and experience, can move me away from decontextualized abstract ‘sensibilities’ and utopian dream spaces, to work within intimate social spaces in my everyday labours (McGloin, 2016, p.842). No truth is guaranteed, but this may give access to others through a ‘concrete’ process of describing how ‘discrimination’ and ‘inaccessibility’ is masked in higher education (See Solorzano & Yosso, 2002, p.164).

It is also ‘necessary’ to understand that such ‘decontextualised’ spaces and practices, are often taken to be the ‘norm’, the so called ‘neutral’ perspective, a dominant white middle-class worldview and standpoint (Blanch, 2013; Moreton-Robinson, 2005).

So why not look deeply at what frames and thus drives a researcher’s struggles in her PhD journey and practice (Ellis & Bochner, 2000)? Why not put the term ~~literature review~~ under erasure (*sous rature*) (Derrida, 1976) in the Derridean sense, so that it is both present and absent (a manifestation and a meta-text), to signal a departure from a so called ‘normalcy’ in thesis writing (Kaomea, 2004), a privileging of written text and pre-set pathways? As Spivak says in the preface of Derrida’s *Of Grammatology*, writing under erasure (*sous rature*) is:

...to write a word, cross it out, and then print both word and deletion. (since the word is inaccurate, it is crossed out. Since it is necessary, it remains legible.) (Spivak, 1997, xiv as cited in Derrida 1967).

educational discourse (Lo Bianco, 2007; Fielding, 2016). Intercultural understanding, on the other hand, implies dynamic movement and engagement across multiple languages and cultures (Liddicoat et al. 2003). In Australia, at the time of the study and at the time of its completion, intercultural language learning is promoted in national policy and statements (MCEETYA, 2005; Council for the Australian Federation, 2007) and in the curriculum (Australian School Curriculum and Reporting Authority [ACARA], 2013; 2014; 2016). ACARA (2011, p.22) aims for students to: ‘develop an intercultural capability’; value a diversity of cultures, languages, and beliefs and hold reciprocal respect: as 21<sup>st</sup> century living demands. This has been a focus in national projects receiving government funds in diverse sectors (Lo Bianco, Liddicoat & Crozet, 1999; Liddicoat et al. 2003; Research Centre for Languages and Cultures Education [RCLCE] 2008; Scarino 2010; Black, Wright & Cruickshank, 2016). However, as Diaz (2013) argues, this does not mean that interculturality as a value, underpins educational assumptions or practices.

For decades, multiple and political agenda have swayed the pendulum of languages in community and in education. It has swung back and forth toward contrasting interests, from human rights to language and culture in community and in education; economic, travel, diplomacy, and trade aims; back to basics (Maths, English etc.) visions; prescribed

I find Spivak’s words powerful. I too believe language (and thus writing) alone, is never quite enough, and is always “inaccurate yet necessary” (Spivak, 1997, p.xiv). Spivak highlights how ‘being’ and other terms should be put under erasure at some point in research. This, reveals the ‘catachrestic’ dimension of language for Spivak: the inadequacy of the process of ‘naming’ supposed ‘familiar’ things and as Derrida states, the ‘violence’ that can be imposed by narrow prescription and categorisation “...within a system of differences, within a writing retaining the traces of difference...” (Spivak, 1997, p.xiv; Derrida, 1997, p.109). I must also be mindful, as Benita Parry (2003, p.36) is, of Chandra Talpade Mohanty’s words “...discourses of representation should not be confused with material realities.” The variability in lives and material realities is limitless.

A critically cautious writing can be applied to everyday research. I will use this erasure and censure to articulate ~~collaboration~~ and ~~dialogue~~ in this project and journey. I am making the change of heart, mind and body ‘more’ visible to my audience. I do not want to void what has inspired transformation, or ‘contortion’, as this would deny the intricacies of my social wor(l)d (Spivak, 1997, p.xiv).

Cleaning up the errors, omitting the deletions, hiding the random and spontaneous twists in one’s learning (reflexivity) in relations, is misleading. In making the erasure public, I restore the humanizing dimension of research practice in my PhD context. It is an oppositional practice (hooks, 1984). If as Foucault (1982) says, academia is a place in which an ‘object’

selection of languages in the curriculum; English-first strategies due to an ‘overcrowded’ curriculum, and attitudinal change to languages in schooling and policy (Dawkins, 1991; Clyne, 2005, 2007; Liddicoat et al. 2008; Lo Bianco, 1987, 1990; MCEETYA 1998; RCLCE, 2007). The nature and form of agenda has varied by state and territory (AEC, 2014); however, attitudes are somewhat stable (Curnow, Liddicoat & Scarino, 2007). The context of this study acknowledges ‘dominant’ trends in Australia’s language education history. Resistance to plurilingualism persists. Indeed, a dominant agenda in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century saw English language instituted as Australia’s national language (Lo Bianco, 1987). Government interventions around World War II suppressed ‘other’ language use, including Indigenous languages pre-dating colonisation, with English for all enforcements (Lo Bianco, 1987). A time of multilingual advocacy followed which enabled further linguistic diversity in education in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This enabled the development of Australia’s first language policy and greater national support of language programs in schooling: making Australia a leader in languages (Lo Bianco, 1987; Clyne, 1997). In 1994, the government regulated new directions. A *National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools* (NALSAS) ‘21<sup>st</sup> century’ imperative (Council of Australian Governments, 1994) gave ‘unprecedented’ support and funding to four Asian languages. This ‘mandate’ (Slaughter,

of study is made, regardless of whether it is actual or imagined, I can imagine an alternative that privileges (dis)connections, and mess; richness over mechanics.

This ~~literature review~~ in the right and left-columns, to come forth, map experiences, theories and people that have enabled and inspired me to step off the traditional PhD research track (not on anyone). I create a detour into the ‘messy’ possibilities to blend (hooks, 1984) potentially disparate literatures that allow me to pick and choose from diverse paradigms (Miller, 2008, p.104) to make new meaning and activity possible, while building a new *teoría (y práctica) mestiza (a hybrid theory) (and practice)* (Anzaldúa, 1990; Yosso & Solorzano, 2002). Having said that, this is not fiction. This is a critical, creative, and reflexive scholarly performance that ‘fuses’ the researcher’s situated knowledge and praxis with objects and subjects’ lives and practices (Knowles & Cole, 2008).

This alternative *teoría (theory)* is embedded within multiple *teorías (theories)* to represent my unstructured PhD learning journey (Ward, 2013) and my *testimonio (testimony)* of the controversial collaborative agreements and practices experienced with participants of ‘multiple’ worldviews. This is where Anzaldúa has become a significant inspiration in my *lucha (struggle)* to know and be reflexive in practice.

When Anzaldúa declares a new vision for the place of theory, a ‘third’ way to decolonise (‘deconstruct’) and produce knowledge, I began pondering about my messy way. Anzaldúa writes (*we need theories...*):

2007), had a long-term strategy driven by economic interests; an Asia literate population (COAG, 1994) (with cultural and educational significance) ((MCEETYA, 1998).

If Australia is at a crossroad now, it can take inspiration from international practice where language is compulsory or the ‘norm’ (Feneley & Calixto, 2016). It can draw from current research and practice in Victoria and New South Wales where language initiatives acknowledge past recommendations and failures (AEC 2014; Liddicoat et al 2007; Wright, Black & Cruickshank, 2016). While twenty years of a national ‘Asian language’ strategy has been successful (Erebus Consulting Partners, 2002; Slaughter, 2009), it has transformed the rationale for language learning in schools and re-engineered a ‘strategic mindset’ around languages in education for some.

During the NALSAS period, the status of and access to some European and Latin American languages incrementally decreased (Clyne, 1997, 2005; Black, Wright & Cruickshank, 2016). Since the end of the first round of funding in 2002, engagement with language learning in diverse languages, including NALSAS languages, declined (Slaughter, 2007; 2009). The NALSAS Taskforce released reports (1995-1998; 2008) outlining the strategy’s success, not its risks.

It is important to understand that national strategies and ‘long-term arrangements’ (NALSAS Taskforce, 2000) impact all languages in schools. A commitment to

*Necesitamos teorías* that will rewrite history using race, class, gender and ethnicity as categories of analysis, theories that cross borders, that blur boundaries – new kinds of theories with new theorizing methods. We need theories that will point out ways to manoeuvre between our particular experiences and the necessity of forming our own categories and theoretical models for the patterns we uncover... [w]e need to de-academize theory and to connect the community to the academy. ‘High’ theory does not translate well when one’s intention is to communicate to the masses of people made up of different audiences. We need to give up the notion that there is a ‘correct’ way to write theory (Anzaldúa, 1990, pp. xxv-xxvi).

I would respectfully add here that we need a *new practice* to mobilize a Freirean and hooks inspired praxis in PhDs; where “action and reflection... [and passion] ...upon the world in order to transform it” and transgress prescribed boundaries is intentionally decolonizing and socially just (against oppressions of race, gender, sex, ability, religion, age, identity and class) (Freire, 1996, p. 33).

With such a direction and the dedication to engage in ‘dialogue’ with people (participants) of diverse perspectives and backgrounds, our intellectual, intuitive, and manual labours would demand embodying some form of methodology and ethical research criteria to open-up access to the ‘collaborative’ process (to its fraughtness and possibilities) to genuine negotiation, debate, and future imagining. We need more than revolutionaries in the abstract – or on paper. Though paper can be revolutionary in the way in which it too helps people bust out of oppressive borderlands. As stated, activism

languages that relies on changing government agenda, encourages differential treatment, and ongoing questions ‘reacting’ to trade, security, or economic trends. This approach is inadequate and reductionist.

*The Evaluation of the National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools Strategy* report (reviewing the period of 1999-2002) recommended prolonged exclusive funding of Asian languages (Erebus, 2002). It stated that the NALSAS strategy delivered; (1) increased student enrolment in four Asian languages, (2) national interest in Asian languages and Studies of Asia in schools, (3) significant expansion in the number of schools offering the four languages and *Studies of Asia*, (4) increased numbers of senior students (revoking the popularity of French (1993-2002; 1995-1998)), (5) ‘impressive growth’ in school membership for the *Access Asia Program*, and (6) systemic nationwide promotion of an ‘Asian Century’ enabling the recruitment and retraining of teachers (Erebus, 2002). What is not reported is how the strategy distorts the socio-cultural, intellectual, and educational purpose of learning languages. The importance of access to a diverse curriculum for life-long-learning, intercultural understanding, and inclusivity is lost (AEC, 2014).

Past setbacks in languages education in Australia persist. As Clyne (2009) argued, the Australian education system is failing to address the needs and ecology of its ‘culturally diverse society’. More than ever, neoliberal forces

and verbalism is insufficient (Freire, 1970).

Real and enduring action is needed.

We also need to understand and question who we are when we do what we do as it is possible for us to not be who we “think” (Derrida, as cited in Demas & Saavedra, 2004) we are and to not do what we believe we are doing. I can personally attest to this. This doesn’t undermine the ongoing desire for the opposite and picking ourselves up when we fall to pieces, again.

Kincheloe (2005) would likely suggest this ‘text’ is a bricolage as it brings together insights into the world of research, from the researcher’s standpoint, social location, personal trajectory, and history, in an assemblage of pieces of stories and fragments. Such research is not only read or written in linear, objective, and replicable ways. And I love a concept I can visualise, and I also think it is outstanding to enact approaches that enable ‘critical inquiry’ and exploration into alternative ways of knowing and being emergent in learning. This is critical to deepening contributions as ‘learning’ is always ‘researcher’ unique. It thus enables explorations sometimes bludgeoned out ‘students’ in time spent in formal educational institutions with their developmental ‘banking’ assumptions (Freire, 1970, 1998). Bricolages may disrupt hegemonic systematic research by debunking an ideal ‘white gaze’ via diversity in example (Demas & Saavedra, 2004; Chow, 2014).

My messy way of assembling what I see (in a physiological and philosophical sense) is problematic: there are limits to what I can ‘see’

involve top-down restrictions, incentives and differential treatments, directing community appreciation of languages (Ball, 2006; Wright, Black & Cruickshank, 2016). The right to enjoy, learn, and succeed in languages has been systematically undermined. The message not getting through is that:

*Language represents the deepest manifestation of a culture, and people's values systems, including those taken over from the group of which they are part, play a substantial role in the way they use not only their first language(s) but also subsequently acquired ones.*

(Clyne, 1994, p.1).

A brief review of national policies reveals major conflicts in play (See Appendix B). While there are gaps in the history presented, due to inconsistent data collection (Clyne, 2005; Cruickshank 2013; Liddicoat et al., 2007; Lo Bianco, 2009, 2010; Scarino et al., 2003), it is obvious that past challenges remain (Valverde 1994; Australian Council for State School Organisations, Australian Parents Council & Solved at McConchie Pty Ltd, 2007). In Australia, since the invasion of 1788, a 'hierarchy' of languages was instituted. The English language marginalised Indigenous languages, those of migrants and people with 'additional needs' (Lo Bianco, 1990; Leitner & Malcolm, 2007). Since then, there's been an oscillating 'tolerance' of languages in education. Segregationist strategies in place undermine language diversity and the 'right' to

(Kameniar, 2005, p.3). I must be conscious of rules I seek to break, and I must understand which 'masters' tools' (Lorde, 1993) to use to 'enable' meaningful connections and access (and perhaps to institutionalise). A bricoleur does not enact an 'anything goes' practice, but it dares to "act where there are no charters" (Lorde, 1979, p.95). A bricoleur tells a meaningful story through multiple perspectives, methodologies, and theories (Denzin & Lincoln, 1999). The bricoleur is an artesano (*artisan*) who crafts with certain tools and aesthetics (Levi-Strauss, as cited in Rogers, 2012). The researcher as bricoleur draws at times from diverse unconventional sources, in novel ways to re-present the wor(l)d (Denzin, 2003). Most importantly, Berry (2006) highlights how one can engage with spontaneity and randomness to counter the 'more' tame examples of bricolage that are unable to unlearn certain 'academic' language genres/discourses (McGloin, 2016, p.842).

To me, 'structured' research frameworks risk distorting the complexities of social research and how it connects to history, politics, and debates, and to a myriad of complex voices (i.e. dominant, spectator, outsider and marginal hybrid voices), intersections and power. Reading alternative approaches to research inspired me to create an artefact of substance, a ~~literature review~~, and passionate praxis (Berry, 2006). This is why this review is not contained within one chapter. The labours, experiences, theories, and people who frame this study spill into and across all chapters. Shifts and positioning continually push and pull and bump up against

access and learn languages we may be passionate about or interested in, in our education (Liddicoat, Lo Bianco, & Crozet, 1999; AEC, 2014).

### **A historical background to languages in South Australia**

Understanding the context of Spanish in SA schools, and thus student participation and outcomes, demands a review of key background and policies informing curriculum implementation. Unfortunately, accurate records of this history were not kept (Wykes & King, 1968, pp.60-61). As stated, policy and program implementation were slow, however, SA received national recognition for its language-in-education policy; *Voices for the Future*, valuing LOTE (Languages Other Than English) (this ‘deficit’ term is used as per the literature) in schooling (Clyne, 2005).

#### **Language Programs in SA**

In 1961, fewer than 45 per cent of students in secondary schools studied a ‘foreign’ language in SA<sup>13</sup>. By 1965 this had changed and expanded (ibid). Flinders University offered French and Spanish in 1966 (ibid, p. 63). However, in 1968, universities removed the language requirement around Australia: this mobilised teachers and influenced program implementation (Lo Bianco & Wickert, 2001). What emerged in the 70s and the 80s were policies and programs characterized by mixed

institutionalised boundaries and my boundaries (and that of others) from the cover title, to the final reference: in spirit, flesh, and bone.

#### **La prescripción sofoca el diálogo, pero te permite pasar la caseta**

*(prescription suffocates dialogue, but it can get you through the checkpoint)*

Writing this current chapter has been tricky for me. Not only have I struggled to feel confident about what to write about and how to write it accessibly, but I have struggled to not fear my audience and what they may do with what they learn from this text, or what it says about me and others. This concern with representation has been noted by scholars in different fields (see for instance Finley, 2003; Mutua & Swadener, 2004; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Kovach, 2009; Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011).

In PhDs and across various sites in the education field we are told to enact “the dictum” of no harm (symbolic or not) to participants, but I’m afraid that this framing renders social research and writing problematic from the outset (Freire, 1998). It anticipates harmony, certainty, and consensus, and may encourage deceitful conduct, when PhD learning may emerge by accident (Ward, 2013), and may involve contested negotiations, if doubt, mess, debate, emergent questioning, error and, thus, uncertainties are allowed in. Anticipating, or better still imposing, ‘climate’ (Freire, 1996, p.60) of ‘harmony’ by institutionalisation, is a political, convenient, and artificially ‘safe’ approach to research (Aronowitz, 1998). It tames tongues and bodies, in the process, and

<sup>13</sup> Latin, German, Greek, Italian and Malay were offered (Wykes & King, 1968, p.60).

beliefs about pluralism and languages as a resource (Lo Bianco & Wickert, 2001).

It wasn't until 1995 that all students in primary schools were receiving some form of language education. At high school language programs varied by school. They still varied in 2005 (at the time of this study). Some schools made it compulsory in Years 8 and 9 while others offered incentives to take up Asian languages (Spanish teacher, personal communication, 2006). In-school decisions matter.

In the 'schooling' environment in SA, as at a national level, some languages receive more official support than others. Commonwealth policies (Dawkins & Department of Education and Training (DEET) NPL, 1987; ALLP, 1991) pressures on State program implementation cannot be ignored. These have required states and territories to prioritize eight out of fourteen languages (due to cash incentives). States prioritized and marginalised certain languages to follow suit (Clyne, 1997, p.100).

In SA, language education is supported in policies evolving from state reports including:

- *Linking People Through Languages: Languages Other Than English in Our Schools* document (Education, Department of SA, 1991)
- *Curriculum Guarantee Languages Policy: Educating for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (as cited in Dijite, 1994 pp.38-39)

reproduces oppressive elements and myths in use. Disguised 'consensus' and 'codes of practice' in bureaucracy and relations of power harmed me into almost being a 'being for an 'other' (Freire, 1996, p.31). This discourages disruption and encourages inter-dependence.

It is my experience that 'official' PhD discourse is enacted in ways to protect against 'university' litigation and participant harm but in so doing it 'over' censors and makes invisible unintentional 'harms' done, if done at all, and to any degree (Haggerty, 2004; Zeegers & Barron, 2015). Reading this, I had to ask: isn't research about inquiry and discovery? If it is, then, isn't the good, the bad, the 'in-process', the ugly, and the unknown possible in PhDs?

Reflecting on education in the United States Stanley Aronowitz (1998, p.3) explains that to do "no harm" is "...no small achievement in a system that routinely inflicts incredible damage on kids, and not only on working class kids from racial, sexual, or gendered strata." In my childhood experience, I recall similar contradictions played out in my Australian education. Also, I feel participants, including researchers, can't be discounted as having power to inflict harm; physically, (non)verbally, directly, and passive-aggressively?

A 'culture of silence' what Freire (1996, p.160) describes as an 'antidialogical cultural action' that is an oppressive or colonizing force to which the oppressed may unconsciously submit to in an initial stage when they adhere to the ideologies and practices that deny them a voice, is institutionalised, in research practice, if 'critical inquiry', problem posing, creative thinking and feelings are killed by the



- *The Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-first Century* (DETYA, 1999)
- *DECS Languages Policy 2000-2007* (DECS, 1998) and *Languages Policy 2005-2010* (DECS Draft, 2005) (Department of Education and Children's Services, 2005).

Resulting projects were created. Only Asian languages have ever received such widespread support in SA (in terms of funding, recruitment, promotion, and intergovernmental support).

In 1994, under the Commonwealth's *Priority Languages Initiatives Scheme* (Dijite, 1994, p.39), Vietnamese replaced Spanish on the list of languages of wider teaching. State and Federal government in 2005 continued advocacy and nomination of languages as one of eight key learning areas (DECS & SACSA, 2001; 2006). Primary students were expected to learn a language, while at high school provision of languages varied. State provision followed suit.

In 2005, in high schools, languages decline, as requirements to study a language were reduced (Clyne, 2005). Different languages became competitors. Understanding the impact of such moves on Spanish communities in schooling, is aided by the contextual review of the 'brief' (as documented) history of the Spanish language, programs and initiatives in SA, shaping its status in schools and elsewhere.

research process. This concept speaks directly to me and my PhD induction which isolated me and forced me to try to value my thoughts and suppress my emotions. This culture – set off alarm bells for me when I was diplomatically silenced in PhD meetings, and even at my own proposal presentation. While my silencing has not been a 'permanent' dynamic, 'silence' in this study has been very important. It speaks of "conspiracies" to influence and position (Du bois, 1990, p. 132) as well as opportunities for active 'listening' and contemplation to learn (Freire, 1998, p.104).

When Freire wrote the words: "...during the initial stage of the struggle, the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors, or 'sub-oppressors'" (p.27), *hasta relacioné esto (I related this)* to how my own parents could turn on my sister and me out of exhaustion from their own exploitation in factories and raced bureaucracies shaping their 'opportunity' and disadvantage (Picower & Mayorga, 2015). A toddler forced to play in silence to enable shift worker sleep could be a form of torture, in absolute silence.

At another time in my reflections on Freire's words I realised that in most of my recollections, in silence, I was a victim and the oppressor was 'outside' me. My re-reading of Freire's ideas and my expanding consciousness of contradictions in my PhD practice inspired my reflexivity about the politics of PhDs and my complicit conformity in power relations shaping my researcher role, shaping me.

### **A historical context for Spanish language education (1950-2005)**

Spanish language was introduced in Australian education in the 1950s (Valverde, 1994, pp. 17-35<sup>14</sup>). Its documentation is limited, and reports question the accuracy of available data (Valverde, 1994; Clyne, 2005). This challenges this review.

Spanish was first introduced in Victorian adult education and had little presence in schools (Clyne, 2005, p.163). Until 1961 no primary or secondary programs are recorded (Valverde, 1994 pp.8-12). Programs in the 70s differed by state and sector. Government and ‘ethnic’ schools led implementation in the 1980s (ibid)<sup>15</sup>.

Spanish was introduced in Western Australian secondary schools in 1965 (Valverde, 1994, p.17). By 1969, NSW, Victoria and SA had expanded enrolments (ibid). Primary schools offered programs in 1975 in Victoria. Despite increased migration of Spanish Speaking Background Students (SBSS), language maintenance programs were not offered (Valverde, 1994 pp.23-24).

During the ’70s, there were more SBSS students in primary education (Valverde, 1994). Between 1970 and 1975, universities started offering Spanish studies which promoted in-school participation (Valverde, 1994). In the 80s, the first Spanish language support officer

There were labours in this PhD research that institutionalised a ‘culture of silence’. The technical focus on instrumental knowledge construction (a research, theory, method-led practice) and representation advocated detached observation of participants, and a single ‘expert’ authority in charge of ‘study’. Observation is far from an ‘innocent’ activity, it is a researcher-directed activity, and thus, hierarchical practice, especially when participants are not ‘equally’ informed parties of the research endeavour as a co-designed and co-evaluated praxis is made ‘official’ (Delamont, 2004; Denzin & Lincoln, 2002; Denzin 2003; Jenkins, 2013).

A ‘culture of silence’ advocates for research and writing practices, sin (without)-noise, sin-tensions, sin-negotiation, sin problemas (*problems*), and most importantly, without contradictions in participants’ voices as authors, a silence which can deafen. This culture advocates reading research that trusts sterile and clinical accounts, viewing them as credible. It distributes privilege, and begs the question: where is the contribution? In this field of relations, oppressor/oppressed positionings, and shifting uses of power can be camouflaged in such a culture. It is as if no power is exercised by anything or anyone EVER.

The hugely invisible (though not lacking in presence) people, colours, classes, and how ‘we’ are chaotic and complex (injustices) enacts fallacies and false expectations by cleaning out the details of lives and livelihoods. I am not advocating **simple** identity politics

<sup>14</sup> This source, unless otherwise stated, is the primary source for this section of the thesis.

<sup>15</sup> ‘Ethnic schools’ is a term used in policy. The use of the term is debated.

was funded (DECS Language Official, personal communication, 2006).

Spanish received recognition by the *Curriculum Guarantee Languages Policy: Educating for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and the System-Wide Management for the Provision of Languages Other than English* (Dijite, 1994, pp. 38-39). Despite this, implementation was marginal. In fact, a reduction in programs and low student participation plague Spanish given inconsistencies (Dijite, 1994). Despite policy aiming for a 'reasonable spread' across eight languages, including Spanish, no research examines the inequities implemented (Dijite, 1994, p. 17). This investigation will shed light on this.

### **Students' participation in Spanish (in DECS) prior to 2005.**

Historically, students' participation in languages in Australia has been low. At the time of this study, languages equated to 2% of the subjects students study in year 12 (Fullarton et al., 2003) and 3% of Year 12 enrolments between 1992-2000 (Fullarton & Ainley, 2000). There's been a decline in participation in European and Asian languages since (AEC, 2014; Black, Wright & Cruickshank, 2016). Few, if any, examine the figures in Spanish.

Students' participation in Spanish at senior secondary levels around Australia is low. In 1994, there were 728 Year 12 in Spanish and in 2000 there were 626 (DEST, 2000, p.2). The proportion of students between 2000 and 2004

(Hardt & Negri, 2005) (its presence here is undeniable). I believe research without humane disarray can't serve humanity? 'We' are not predictable 'cyborgs' (yet) of fallible gods.

Interestingly, the examiners of this thesis have over time (unbeknownst to them) taken on an almost God-like status (being raised in a 'dogmatic' Catholic paradigm taught me dynamically to fear, love, mimic and adore a male trinity). In my mind's eye, the examiner (usually two) is a knowing and ever-present being with maximum power in the examination process. This has been clouding my ability to see clearly and use my performative voice and hands without restraint. This negative conceptualisation of the judge and jury of the thesis is influenced by the experiences of others, including, my PhD peers who have submitted theses, my diverse supervisors whom refer to examiners when providing feedback, and the university policies and administrative devices prescribing protocols for finding and engaging examiners, external to this project. There are many red flags.

I have regularly thought, *who am I kidding?* The examiner is an 'expert' with ultimate power to legitimize my contributions and enable my passage through the checkpoint, or not (into academia). I can only hope that my examiners are not collapsing under institutional and market pressures defining progress in terms of efficiency, measurability, and compliance, in tertiary education around the globe (Bøgelund, 2015; Ryan, 2012). I have to believe my supervisors will not choose examiners who fit in such idealised positions?

ranged from 5.8% to 5.6% (DECS Languages Survey, 2004) (figures shared with caution due to inconsistency in data collection). In that period, the same language's survey notes the proportion of Japanese students increased from 24.4% in 2000 to 25.0% in 2004. Participation in Spanish in comparison is substantially low (Clyne, Fernandez & Grey, 2004).

In 1994, in Victoria, as in other states, "the percentage of students studying languages drops dramatically from Year 7 to Year 12; 80% of students in Year 7 study a language, while at Year 12 the percentage studying a language is 2.8%" (Valverde, 1994, p.33). It is assumed that various factors influence student attitudes and decisions to study a language. A survey of year 11 Spanish students (Spanish Profile Team, 1994 as cited in Valverde, 1994), reported that social influences, perceived difficulty and background beliefs influence their decisions (Valverde, 1994, p. 28). A more recent study of university students discussing high school language experiences noted language access, careers, benefits, interest, teaching activity and classroom environment influenced them (Absalon, 2012).

It is of interest to this study to understand how local students' motivations shape their decisions. The investigation of external and internal factors, of impact on Spanish students' participation is overdue (Valverde, 1993). The section below considers some of these factors.

That reminds me, I've also heard examiners are positive and encouraging voices that really want candidates to do well and contribute to society, not just to research (Bøgelund, 2015). I've heard some offer advice that expands a candidate's learning. I've heard lots write engaging, comprehensive and constructive reports that honour a candidate's ideas. Some even seek out collaborations with graduates (Brabazon & Dagli, 2010). The mix of anecdotes highlight the liberatory and surveillance potential of examiners (a binary, a dialectic, or a hybrid). This body and abstract being is a volatile presence in my wor(l)d, but today, I can see the benefit of the provocation. The extent to which it is a voice of challenge and oppression had been a gap in my early knowledge of PhD practice. Instead, I felt that 'my' participants, in particular the Spanish students and the Year 10 Spanish teacher collaborators, were 'my' REAL examiners in the study and they tested, examined, re-designed, and supported this collaborative work, to its 'conclusion'. The influence of these examiners (all fifteen of them) may often be unacknowledged in PhD theses (Ward, 2013; Jones, 2013; Zeegers & Barron, 2015). Why?

Why do so few seem interested in the politics of student supervision in the writing up of their PhD thesis (Gunnarsson, Jonasson & Billhult, 2013)? My experience of multiple supervisors, receiving feedback like acid on my spirit, and being given a caring ear, tough love, and encouragement to speak up, tell me they are a paradigm of sorts. Students must navigate the joint journey with care. The waters

## **The Spanish language in South Australia up until 2005**

The Spanish language was implemented in SA in the 1970s (Scurrah et al., 1992, p.4). It was officially endorsed across the 1980s and 90s (SAIL, 1990, as cited in Scurrah et al., 1992 p.2). The implementation of programs was declared first an issue of equity and later, of language maintenance (Scurrah et al., 1992, p.3).

The history of Spanish in Australia dates to 1950 (Valverde, 1994). Valverde (1994, p.4) states secondary programs started in 1969. By 1975, SA's secondary programs had larger numbers than other states (ibid) While in 2005, it ranked eighth in twenty of the "most widely studied languages, by student numbers" in Government schools the overall participation in Spanish in Government Schools decreased in participation between 2001-2005 (Liddicoat et al., 2007, p.32-35).

National languages policies, as stated, have informed the context of implementation of Spanish in SA schools. The *Linking People Through Languages: Languages Other Than English in Our Schools initiatives* outlined goals for learning Spanish, along with the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools and the Multicultural Education Coordinating Committee's reports (Valverde, 1994, p.17). Spanish was declared a priority language along with "Chinese, French, German, Greek,

are not always clear, and the risks of drowning are real.

I recognise the strengths and weaknesses of this labour (Mutua & Swadener, 2014). My work is bearing witness, a testimony to my early career researcher experience (hooks, 1994).

### **And the decolonizing journey?**

The possibility for me to engage in a decolonising and mobilising border praxis inspired by the work and activism of Freire, Anzaldúa, hooks, Tuhiwai Smith, Derrida, Bourdieu, Villenas, Du bois and others is exhilarating. Excitement for learning and passion for action is critical in learning and in educational praxis (hooks, 1994) in my sometimes 'demoralising' world, when I can't speak or be heard or even protest without institutionally 'industrial' action. 'Withdrawal' as a site for zombified resistance is not an option I can respect or afford (Ryan, 2012). I'm excited because I realise how much I've been blessed with and how much I have learned, within and beyond my case study. I could never have anticipated what I would learn about my 'self' ('selves'), my 'roots' and how this frames who I am today. In a PhD...

*Your re-search can be:  
a comfortable luxury,  
as well as  
a labour in despair.  
And it can be so much more than that!  
(my thoughts, 2016)*

Situated conditions, not just situated knowledges, frame this search and the re-searcher. It is not all about constructing a

Indonesian, Italian, and Japanese” (Valverde, 1994, p.18).

For decades, the Spanish language has been identified in government reports as: ‘under-represented’ and ‘neglected’ (Lo Blanco Report, 1987; Smolicz, 1984; Scurrah et al., 1992) even though Spanish was “a priority” language (i.e. 1992-1997) (MCEETYA, 1997, p.9) and has done well in universities (Dunne & Palvyshyn, 2012). At the time of this study, in the *National Statement for Languages Education in Australian Schools* (2005), Spanish was no longer a nominated language (MCEETYA, 2005).

In 1991, a SA Language Report on Spanish (Valverde 1991, p.22) stated that there were five schools teaching Spanish where there had been 13. Department schools from 1990 to 2004 have significantly decreased Spanish programs on offer to students. The South Australian Secondary School of Languages (SASSL) has addressed the gap left (DECS Official, personal communication, 2006). This study examines stakeholder perspectives on the state in which Spanish is in.

### **The status of Spanish in schools**

There are several areas in which this study contributes to knowledge in Spanish language education in schooling. It closes several gaps in establishing the history for Spanish in SA, and of the impact of (un)officially supported decisions impacting programs in schools. It closes gaps in research into students’, teachers’,

professional distance; if that is the ability to censure one’s trial and error, and passion. After all, “if we fear mistakes, doing things wrongly, ...we will never make the academy a culturally diverse place where scholars and the curricula...” address difference (hooks, 1994, p.33). And, if there’s one aspect that students, co-teachers, and co-researchers consistently write about me, it’s about my passion, as per this study’s data (2006, 2007). My passion is one of my capitals. In fact, one of my supervisors told me recently that my passion is “to be cherished, never lost.” Y como buena mula, I won’t (*and with dogged determination, like a mule, I won’t!*)

I am a hardworking survivor and I have much to thank this precarious and unsettling learning journey for this messy ‘awakening’ of sorts (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). I can better see how I can use my educational privilege. This process has enabled my self-love, and agency. My capacity to serve is stronger. I believe it has and will continue to benefit my family and the people I work with. Thanks to this experience, I have built my *teoría y práctica mestiza* (*my mestiza theory and practice*) following my heart, intuition and history, and the conversations I have built between my utopian and mechanistic imaginings, and the chaotic and messy experiences of ~~collaboration~~. This will suffice, for now. There’s more to learn.

In this version of events, I choose to privilege my “colonized” vantage point (Smith, 1999, p.1) and hybrid identity (Anzaldúa, 1987). My task as an apprentice is far more complex now than what I had set out to achieve in 2005. At that time, I focused on methods, as

curriculum advisors', and principals' perceptions of in-school matters shaped system, social and political issues.

In Australia and SA, language policy and program aims, set over a twenty-year period (Lo Blanco, 2002; DEST, 1999; DECS, 2000; 2004), have failed to raise the profile of languages and student participation in languages in schools, in Spanish. Collecting data in schools and in Spanish classrooms may identify issues that influence student decisions and participation. The investigation of these issues in phase one of this study is important to defining a context in which learning, teaching and achievement in Spanish takes place. In phase 2, the impact of a critical Spanish pedagogy approach will be undertaken to ascertain whether it might have positive impacts on students' motivation, voices, and proficiency. If this occurs, new strategies for sophisticated engagement in Spanish could be stimulated.

A review of literature in social cognitive theory helped locate strategies in which teaching, and learning may become a personally significant process of impact on learning and participation. Engaging aspects of students' language-related motivations; interests, goals, attributions, and self-efficacy, in a critical alternative approach to Spanish, may reduce the negative effects of micro and macro influences, driving low participation in Spanish in schools today.

'traditional' researchers suggest (Phillips & Pugh, 2010). My decolonizing work today is still framed by the institution. The 'colonized' positioning is neither straightforward, universal, nor entirely explicable (Mutua & Swadener, 2004). It is for me, as for others, an inescapable concern (Juke, 2004; Soto, 2004; hooks, 2013; Chow, 2013) and a worthy and necessary venture.

You see, throughout this thesis, my use of an oratory style, typical in Latin American academic writings (Guevara, Freire, Borges) and works centring their identities in poetics and political rhetoric (i.e. Moraga, Anzaldúa, Saldivar-Hull, Soto, Villenas, Nieves), was 'critiqued', even though it was a way in which I could be 'me' on paper. At first, this 'me' did not seem to be a welcome strategy to contest the dominant discourses, theories, practices, and silences, in the Australian university context. And while this is a field of academia, thriving elsewhere (Prieto, 2013; Moraga, 2015; Carillo, 2015; Lorde, 2015; Morales, 2015; Keating, 2015; García, 2016), it is still emerging and growing in locally in multiple disciplines, including in education (Dragojlovic, 2015; Walsh & Townsin, 2015; Stanley, 2015). Here it is a new site of struggle.

My desire to refer to my personal 'messy' experiences has no doubt annoyed and worried my guides. Some might argue that this tedious detail is a part of all research, and thus 'mundane'. But if what Denzin, Lincoln, Marcus, Reed-Danahey, Ellis and Bochner have argued has any credence, then 'messy', and personal texts have a place in novel research paradigms. They shed light on the unknown

The importance of motivation in learning is well established in research at the time of this study (Winne, 1991; Maehr & Midgley, 1991; Mayer, 1998; Murphy & Alexander, 2000; Pintrich, 2003). What motivates students to learn and participate in Spanish in depth isn't well known and its investigation may hold a key to engaging students with learning Spanish over a longer term.

A study located in the area of French found that "motivation was linked to attitudes towards the L2 (Gardner, 1985)" ... "an interest in the L2 language group" ... but also... "an interest in the more practical advantages of learning a new language" ... such as, advancing opportunities for work (Vandergrift, 2005). The study's claims for catering for student motivation and mediators of learning; choice, freedom, interests, preferences, and goals, are positive and suggest that learner awareness of motivation and metacognition leads to more self-determined motivation and more effective learning strategy development. It is expected that tapping into aspects of students' motivations, and individual language proficiencies (strengths and weaknesses), may enhance student empowerment through a critical student driven approach to Spanish.

### **Learning and motivation for learning**

Research has shown that the learning process should not be viewed as only a "cold" event (Renninger, Hidi & Krapp, 1992). Learning is a process which is "hot" and "cold", individual

and the dilemmas framing the knowledges we seek to build, understand, and represent, and most importantly, transform. There is a place for the sterile and bloody in scholarship. I'd like to take my place and run wild and off the page with it (not for entertainment purposes).

My desire to make connections between iconic texts, educational practices, lyrical texts, and feelings may be considered by some to be imprecise and under-theorised. Similar critiques have been given to Freire (Anderson, 1994; Ayers, 1987) and Anzaldúa's (Capetillo-Ponce, 2006) work. Western researchers seem to have a peculiar distaste for the 'messy' blending of discourses and the absence of clear 'disciplinary boundaries'. These tales spoken often, seldom written (Du bois, 1990), tell of other resisted ways of reading, writing, representing, and being in the world of research. As Du bois (1990) once asked; Why am I a problem? Why is inter-disciplinarity an issue?

I suggest the personal and cultural text I create with these words and images better embodies my experiences and connects me to you. It makes my work accessible to those who know of survival, and for whom the journey matters. My marginalisation can serve a better purpose after all. However insignificant or privileged my journey may seem on the scale of world tragedy and injustice, this frames me, and binds us.

More questions arise now?

I can ask and answer poetically.

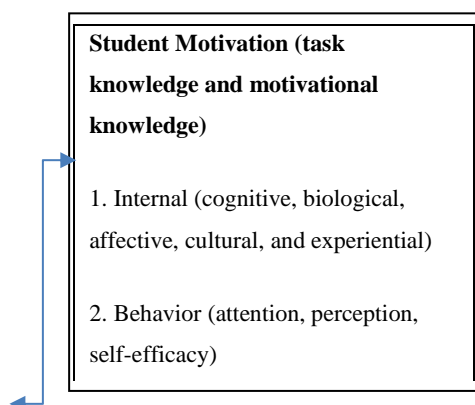


<p>and social; constructive and dynamic, and therefore, not static, nor normative (Worsham &amp; Stockton, 1986 p.9). This highlights the complexity of understanding motivation.</p> <p>There is limited research to distinguish how cognitive mediators interrelate with non-cognitive sources that impact on learning (Murphy &amp; Alexander, 2000). Some research has focussed on general domains. However, there is a call for “more domain-specific or task-specific” research in areas of student’ interest, goals or self-efficacy (ibid).</p> <p>Motivational needs theorists claim that humans’ basic physiological needs are to control, be competent and effective; factors which drive an intrinsic focus on events or occurrences to which we give purpose (Ryan &amp; Deci, 2000). Research in motivation is thus central to research in learning and pedagogy (Pintrich, 2003). Knowledge about motivation is retained by the memory; an elaborate web of emotions and responses to events which shape other motivations (Askill-Wiliams, 1999; Askill-Williams &amp; Lawson, 2000). Motivational and subject knowledges are equally important in academic contexts (Winne, 1991). Motivation impacts thinking, and behaviour, and investments of choice, effort, interest, persistence (Winne, 1991) and goals (Bandura, 1986).</p> <p>Research into learning and motivation has shown that learning is affected by ... “factors other than ability” ... and when knowledge is viewed as a malleable entity, within the control</p>	<p><b>¿Quién se privilegia?</b> <b>(who self-privileges?) (Berniz, 2015)</b></p> <p><i>El privilegio can make zombies It can create amnesia a lack of empathy a flimsy spleen self-delusion or false compassion.</i></p> <p><i>The over privileged taketh more than they giveth They receive or take privilegio They know little or nothing of struggle and survival.</i></p> <p><i>The over privileged can be naïve and vicious See no fault in themselves What do I have to do with malnourishment, they ask? They wash their hands of the tsunamis they trigger then raise funds for ‘some’ of their victims.</i></p> <p><i>This privilege creates ignorance contradiction oppression.</i></p> <p><i>The carriers of over privilege travel far-and- wide returning home with great stories portraits of exotic others a disgust</i></p>
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of the individual (Dweck & Leggett, 1988, p.256), other factors can aid learning. The internal mediators of learning, of interest to this study are; interest, attributions, goals, efficacy and (perceived) value in learning Spanish. These factors are important to supporting learners' persistence when challenged (Dweck, 1986). Also, in research of learners of English (Noells, as cited in Vandergrift, 2005), it has been stated that motivational strength may affect language achievement. In addition, in a small study in Adelaide, undertaken while this study's fieldwork was underway, researchers identified that students' interest, language relevance, and achievement in language learning, among other areas, impact students' motivations and decisions (Curnow & Kohler, 2007). These are positive developments for studying students' motivations for Spanish learning, but also, for their proficiency developments.

### **A socio-cognitive perspective on learning and motivation**

**Figure 3: Learning and Motivation**



*for 'over' population  
chaotic transport  
poverty and beggars  
They are Zygmunt Bauman's (1995)  
postmodern tourists writ large*

*The over privileged don't know hard work in  
busy alleyways  
They see street vendors and beggars  
in Mexico, India, and Indonesia  
They're uncomfortable  
and critical  
of cue jumpers  
They know nothing of survival.*

*To beg in public is undignified  
They say it's corruption  
that beggars are alcoholics  
drug addicts  
lazy thieves  
or evil parents disfiguring children to make a  
buck*

*The 'foreign' public beggar is vermin  
but the 'private' individual who quietly lines up  
at Centrelink  
to drift its bureaucratic freeways for pension  
and welfare  
is righteous,  
however, discriminated they are  
by their own system  
their own people  
Millions know little of hard work or survival  
here.*

*El privilegio puede ser útil (can be useful)  
but while it gives with one hand*

<p>Learning Environment</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p><b>Student Learning/ Performance</b></p> <p>And Self-efficacy (personal and behavioural)</p> </div> <p>[Adapted from Bandura (1997) and Askill-Williams (200)].</p> <p>The diagram above shows how the individual exists in the environment with dispositional and environmental responses; their cognitive, affective, and general social being is relational and impacts on behaviours (performance) and developments (learning). Behaviour is also said to be influenced by perceptions of task/ability; <i>self-efficacy</i> and performance; <i>outcome expectancy</i> (Winne, 1991, p. 129). These motivators influence thought and will to learn. For this reason, stimulating student self-efficacy, in learning domains, should be of major interest to educational research and theories which inform teaching practice.</p> <p><b>Self-efficacy</b></p> <p>Self-efficacy is a belief and a judgment of ability, formed enactively, vicariously, socially, and physiologically (Bandura, as cited in Schwarzer, 1992). This belief can have negative or positive implications. For this reason, an individual's self-efficacy is crucial to theories of motivation (Askill-Williams, 2000, p.13). When students feel efficacious about learning they are said to persist, invest effort, and apply</p>	<p><i>and takes with the other hunger and poverty discrimination and raced class war will persist and prevail for many.</i></p> <p><i>Unearned privilege Is one of humanities great calamities It is a site of parasites living off the flesh, country, and culture of original inhabitants of hard-working-class peoples of migrant workers only to thrive for their own with little or no regard for those whose lives they too depend on.</i></p> <p><i>Privilege could transform injustices Bring about world change Pull out hope from the rubble It could fight with the struggling</i></p> <p><i>Until 'radical' dialogue love and ethics hold greater power than self-gain (individualism) the status quo will continue to submerge the colonized masses. Few will continue to reign extending their hands their labours</i></p>
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criteria to selecting tasks or themes, influenced by intrinsic interest (Zimmerman, as cited in Bandura 1995 p. 204) which leads them to perform better (Pintrich, 2003).

Schunk (as cited in Williams, 2000, p.13) proposed that cognitive progress is linked in two ways to self-efficacy; through the individuals' confidence in approaching the task and secondly, in their persistence in sustaining effort, regardless of difficulty. It is important to note that there are more expectancy constructs; ... "expectancy for success from self-efficacy, self-worth, self-determination and expectancy value theories..." (Pintrich, 2003). It is predicted that students who believe they can and have the will to pursue tasks through interest, will possess increased confidence and efficacy (Schunk, as cited in Mayer 1998). It can then be predicted that high levels of efficacy and high levels of other motivational mediators, will be advantageous in language learning. However, students' efficacy will depend on experiences with learning, on attributions of value and on achievable outcomes. For this reason, students' values and reflections on their learning in Spanish need to be researched.

### **Attribution theory**

From an early stage, "...one learns to attribute value and beliefs..." to life experience (Lepper, as cited in Bandura 1986 p.243). Attributional patterns are learnt in a social context immersed in specific values, internalized by the individual (and these vary) (Bronfenbrenner, 1997;

*amongst themselves  
to build ivory towers.*

*The ironies are many!*

*The oppressor with unearned privilege  
often fails to understand its lack  
of humanity*

*His/her/their racism*

*His/her/their greed*

*His/her homophobia*

*His/her/their (certified) terrorism*

*His/her/their contempt of land and animals*

*They know nothing of struggle*

*They know little of survival*

*With an abundance of unearned privilege  
of knowledge and capital  
wealth and technology*

*How can 'first worlders' be so blind?*

*El privilegio makes zombies*

*It creates amnesia!*

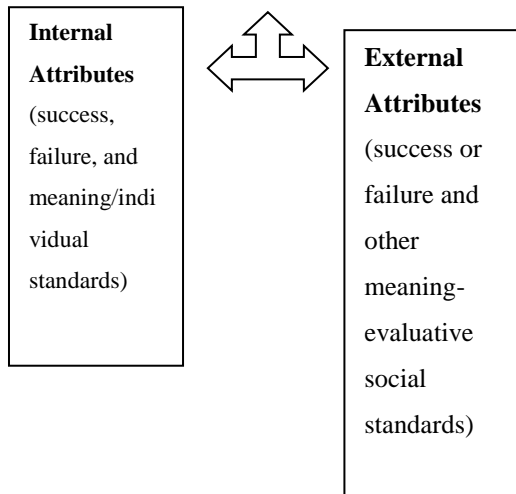
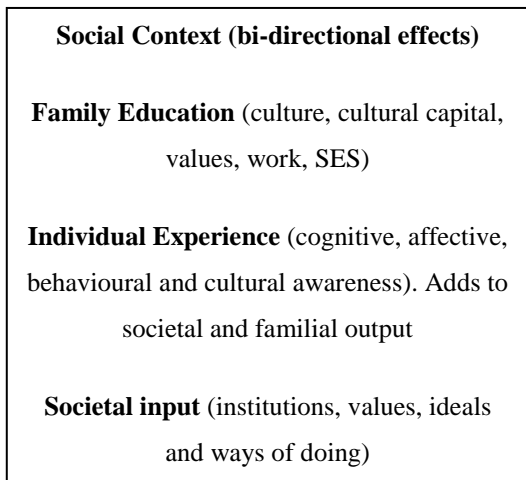
**¿Y esta quién és? (and who does she think she is?)**

As a young and brown Australian-Uruguayan girl growing up in a predominantly white Northern Suburb in Adelaide (the rustbelt) (Thomson, 2002) in the mid-70s, and for whom English is a second language, despite being born here, I endured discrimination at the hands of people whom I engaged in places of learning, playing, and living.

Vygotsky, as cited in McInerney et al., 2000, p.24) in the form of an explanation (Lawson, personal communication, 2006). The following diagram shows influences on such formations.

**Formation of Attributes**

**Figure 4: Attribute formation (adapted from Bruning et al., 1999, p.130)**



Weiner (as cited in Bruning et al., 1999, p.138) stated that people who attribute their success to attributes which are internal, stable, and controllable, develop high efficacy. In addition, Dweck and Leggett (1988) propose that how

Throughout my childhood, I remember having racist primary school teachers and being harassed by racist school bullies. But, even my own friends and their families classified me, and my family, as wogs or Aboriginals (as if these were a problem) in playful and hurtful ways. I began to thrive socially when the colour lines expanded at the school, and when bullying became diffused.

In seven years of primary schooling I had mostly white kids in my classes, as my school photos show (see final bricolage). In Year 5, for the first time in my life, I met my first Aboriginal friend with whom I bonded (we also defended each other). In Year 6 an Italian and a Greek girl-friend joined the class. I think we all struggled to fit in and ‘assimilate’, so we stuck to ourselves. Our identities were largely only given a space for amusement or pleasure. In my life, some of this still goes on, but now I don’t hide, I don’t change my clothes around the corner to fit in, I don’t look down in fear of being seen. I stand up and look ahead with a smile (armed with my dimples)! But this isn’t always the case. As a 6 or 7-year-old I got asked and told.

“Why do your parents speak funny?”  
 “Gimme that!” (grabbing, smelling, and turfing (*throwing*) the contents of my school lunch box containing mum’s home cooking).

Many of us, and our families, found a unified place of relief on Sundays, in the local church. My family connected to other families there. It was there where groups could speak to each other, in a ‘common’ language, in broken

individuals attribute value is influenced by whether they hold an entity or incremental theory of ability. Interestingly, individual students may give weight to effort over ability, learning over performance, task involvement over ego involvement or other combinations of these and still hold entity theories about areas of their learning and incremental theories over others. This has been elicited in student talk (McInerney et al., 2000, p.18) and demonstrates the complexity of attributions within cultures.

The problematic nature of learning contexts and of learning across cultures is recognised. Vygotsky and Bronfenbrenner have advocated that it is not possible to analyse learning, without the factors it modifies and that mesh with the context (McInerney, 2001). For this reason, in this study, aspects of student motivation and interest will be viewed in terms of its personal determinants and those which are born out of the situation (Deci, as cited in Askill-Williams & Lawson, 2000, p.129). These determinants are seen to be affected by individual goals.

### **Goal Theory**

Winne (1990) states that goals drive individuals and what they pursue in their thoughts and actions. These influences are not easily recognized (Winne, 1990, p.297). Different people hold different goals. Socio-cultural and environmental influences, share a role in determining this. It is said that:

and monosyllabic words and gestures. This became enough English, a site of opportunity.

My extended family learnt English, first, by immersion. It was only a few years after my family arrived in Australia that the government was promoting English language classes to the unemployed. My parents were employed and thus ineligible. They missed out.

I could list hundreds of hilarious, as well as sad and scary anecdotes about the ways in which adults and children were able to communicate with native English speakers with little vocabulary and grammar. They used exaggerated gestures and facial expressions to highlight dangers or aches. My mum once mimicked a cow's mooing sounds to request meat at the butcher full of local patrons. Our car was pulled over by the police one time. My dad had to mime and let police smell his yerba mate tea (the Uruguayan tea with the gourd shown in an earlier image). This was needed to prove it was not marijuana (even though it's impolite to smell someone's food in Uruguay). We were all scared.

Many awkward public incidents and extended communications across friendship groups at home, church, and school, taught me early that communication was possible without following rigid rules. In fact, communication and relationships could be stronger as a result of breaking rules (and making some). Communication was still meaningful, enabling actions and relations.

I learnt that language learning could be fun and allowed you to create magical worlds. Most importantly, however, I learnt also that this currency, a "cultural capital" (Bourdieu, 1984),

Task oriented students will seek to gain understanding, insight or skill, and to subsequently achieve something challenging. Conversely, an ability orientation will lead a student to attempt only those tasks which he or she believes are within his or her capabilities (Maehr & Midgley, 1991).

Due to having a task focus or ability focus goal, students come to perform, select, and respond affectively to process and outcomes in different ways (Maehr & Midgley, 1991). Beltman (2005) states that beliefs frame views of school success and outcomes and individuals' approaches to tasks are influenced by previous academic success or failure. Research has shown that classroom reinforcement of goals influences students' perceptions and beliefs regarding tasks, and views about 'best' practice (Ryan, Ghee & Midgley, 1998, p.529). The classroom environment can reinforce perceptions through feedback and goal setting (Vandergrift, 2005).

Bandura proposed that individual's expectations for efficacy determine goal setting, activity choice and willingness to invest effort and persist (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002). This inevitably impacts short and long-term interests. To illustrate this, we can say that students practicing Spanish can improve their proficiency (outcome expectation) and on the other hand, we can say that by practicing Spanish students can converse with other Spanish speakers more effectively (efficacy

could only get you so far in life. The more you struggled with language, to produce the right words, in the 'right' order, and texture, the greater target you were.

Like Memmi (1965, p. vii); "few aspects of my life were untouched" by these experiences in 'colonial' spaces.

As a kid, I remember vividly what it felt like to be intimidated and pushed around in lines, and having my jackets stolen at school from my backpack hanging in the corridor. It was a-dog-eat-dog schoolyard. Like bell hooks (1994, p.39) and Saldivar Hull (2000, p.ix) I often didn't feel safe. Teachers at school mocked me (and other new kids): commenting on my skin colour, eye shape, and supposed 'incapacity' to learn and even about my parents' language skills. I still think of what I'd say to the one in my photo, If I saw her today. She damaged my self-love as a child.

We had no SSOs (School Support Officers) back then, when I was at school. It was sink-or-swim. Some teachers saw deficits (not all). We were the rejects. They had no 'bloody' idea. This habitus and field framed me (Bourdieu, 2000). The institution pitted us against each other and against my family and culture.

My family suffered ongoing, brutal, and subtle oppression and discrimination for many years in South Australia because of their (perceived) colour, language, dress, food, and traditions. I remember our neighbours yelling out all kinds of abuse over the fence at our Latin-American music playing on Saturdays when mum did her cleaning. My dad had a dream to add a pool to our house and he worked two jobs for many years before building

expectations). These rely also on learner goals and value.

This study investigates the intrinsic values associated with goals in learning Spanish. This process aims to describe and define ways in which a task orientation in learning Spanish may be activated. A task orientation is sought, through identifying students' interest, which is one factor which leads to promoting a task orientation (Askell-Williams, 2000, p.6). It is hypothesized that when students develop high interest and a task focus goal orientation, their capacity to develop high efficacy (i.e. Spanish) may be enhanced.

### **Interest**

When we discuss behaviour and we seek to comprehend it and the motives behind actions, we can't ignore the psychological and affective concept of interest (Berlyne, 1949; Berlyne, 1960). Piaget (as cited in Hidi, 1990, p. 549) claimed that intellectual processing is enhanced by affect and the "energizing role" it plays. More recent research has explained the 'energizing' factor to be interest, a component of motivation (Hidi, 1990). Dewey (1913) stated that:

The genuine principle of interest is the principle of the recognized identity of the fact to be learned or the action proposed with the growing self, that it lies in the direction of the agents own growth, and is therefore, imperiously

one for us with a few Uruguayan friends and no council approval. Our neighbours or their kids threw banana peels, and tea bags over the fence. My dad built a taller than usual fence to increase the border.

In those days, random people would mutter stuff to us on the streets near *Parabanks*, our local shopping centre. A guy once spat on the footpath near us. A bunch of hoons yelled 'lesbians' at us while my mum and grandma, arm in arm, walked us kids to *The Pines* (a playground) speaking in Spanish.

The various random, incoherent, or isolated events never felt isolated to me (Memmi, 1965). I have collected the racist missiles in a bag, internalised the criticisms (my inferiority), and judged them and myself harshly in the process. I also learned to generalise back. I've been waiting to see what good I can do with these collectable items.

And I'll add here, the most significant part of this bricolage of my childhood. When the people you adore and look up to the most in this world are mocked, cajoled, and exploited by others (for instance, by the bosses they work 'under' in the factories where they work 12-hour shifts; to pack wool and cut out electric switches, all to give you the best they can), you grow up with internalised angers, complexes and, distorted painful images and feelings you can't explain. You also grow with tremendous respect, admiration, and love for them. bell hooks, Gloria Anzaldúa and Faye Blanche (2013) would know what I mean.

The powerful words of W.E.B Dubois (1990, p. 9) me paran los pelos de punta cuando



demanded, if the agent is to be (Dewey, 1913, p.6).

What Dewey has defined here in relation to what the learner already knows and values, has been claimed to be essential to learning and interest.

Prior to the time of this study, a shift in the cognitive/structural view of learning had begun to lead support of learning as more than a 'cognitive' exercise (Alexander, Kulikowich & Jetton, 1994, p.559). This recognized that affective factors, "interestingness" of ideas, texts, objects, and themes, hold an important influence on how individuals grasp details, understand information, store knowledge and recall information (Frymier & Shulman, 1994; Hidi, 1990; Hidi, 2001) of referential value (Renninger, Hidi & Krapp, 1992) in each social context or situation. Research has documented positive motivational and affective influences on learning and development (Hidi & Anderson, as cited in Renninger et al., 1992, p. 217; Schiefele, 1991; Askill-Williams & Lawson, 2001; Alexander & Murphy, 1998; Sansone & Thoman, 2005). These give importance to the mesh of the cognitive and affective benefits, which result from paying attention to learners' interests and preferences (Hidi, 1990; Schiefele, 1991; Renninger et al., 1992). Situational and individual interests are researched to see how learning becomes meaningful.

### **Individual and Situational Interest**

dicen (make the hair on my arms stand on end when he says):

It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity.

Colonizer words, ideas, language, and food dwells within you. When you think you've overcome the 'shame job' (Indigenous Australian English slang used to describe shame), a trigger makes you realise you haven't. The herida (*wound*) is deep and everyone picking at the scab makes it harder to heal. The PhD triggered me.

As a non-white Australian, you're constantly prodded at. I'm always asked where I'm from, even though I am an articulate speaker and lecture in postgraduate topics and write academic papers. I'm always called Kate (and I don't mind), not Katerin, when I introduce myself, as Katerin or Kate.

I have even had midwives of 'white western appearance' and passers-by question my legitimacy as a mother of a beautiful baby daughter. Just like Memmi (1965), mixed-race love and family frames me (us) now. I care too much about what she must hear and experience. I pray for the buck to stop.... No, I will make it stop with me.

Over time, the feelings of being singled out, treated like an alien, tire you. This made me hard but also stronger. I feel just as Australian as anyone else. I work hard and with love in everything I do. I've paid taxes. Why does my

Individual interest has been defined as a “feeling” (Herbart, as cited in Berlyne, 1949, p. 185), an influence involving “attention” (Titchener, as cited in Berlyne, 1949, p.185) and an “attitude” of arousal (Arnold, as cited in Berlyne, 1949, p. 185). Dewey (1913) proposed that interest relates to high personal meaning and action (Dewey, 1913, p. vii). He argued it is “psychologically impossible” to undertake action without some interest (Dewey, 1913, p.3).

Hidi (1990) distinguishes individual and situational interest. Individual interest is identified as pertaining to intrinsic motivation and situational interest, which is evoked by external to individual factors or conditions in the environment, refers to extrinsic motivation. Situational interests do not develop in isolation from an individual’s disposition or his/her interest.

Content and topical preferences for objects and domains provoke interest (Krapp, Hidi & Renninger, as cited in Renninger et al., 1992 p.5). Individual interests are said to develop over time and be somewhat stable (Hidi & Anderson, as cited in Renninger et al., 1992 p.216). They can also be specific and associated with increased knowledge and positive emotions (Krapp, Hidi & Renninger, as cited in Renninger et al., 1992, p.6), not limited to pleasure or likes. Studies have shown that ‘cognitive’ performance improves with interest (e.g. Renninger & Wozniak, 1985; Hidi & Baird, 1988).

journey have to be such a bloody (*darn*) struggle? I totally understand the mounting fury of “shackled peoples”, though mystory (Ulmer, 2004; Finley, 2003) is far more privileged.

In sum, when I read Freire’s words on the oppressor/oppressed relationship, in *Pedagogia del Oprimido*, I felt and recalled what my family and I had in our experience. Only then did I have a language to name it and explain it where previously I could only suffer it and feel it, as Freire recounts of peasants in Brazil (Freire, 2005, p.28). When I read what Freire wrote about the oppressed circumstances, that is that:

“their perception of themselves as oppressed is impaired by their submersion in the reality of oppression” (p. 27) ... and that “...dehumanization, although a concrete fact, is not a given destiny but the result of an unjust order that engenders violence in the oppressors, which in turn dehumanizes the oppressed” (p.26).

I felt rage. That rage inspired my ‘will’ to ‘do’ the PhD in a way that attempted to articulate my ‘transition’ between worlds, and attempted to resist forces ‘domesticating’ participants and me (Freire, 1996, p.33)

My framing today inspires me to question and work against the very orders keeping me submerged and in isolation. With time, and along the journey of ~~collaboration~~ and data analysis, I have learnt how ‘we’ contribute to oppressive practices, and how we may use and abuse power. With my deeper readings, I saw how I was capable of a colonising positionality, in my desire to succeed professionally, and to do well as a researcher (Picower & Mayorga, 2015). This was a worldview and positioning

<p>Situational interest is the interest evoked by the context, object or circumstances in the environment that causes an effect in the learner (Hidi, 1990). It has been identified as part of an impulsive or momentary drift of attention (James, as cited in Askill-Williams, 2001, p.9). This effect may be superficial or may develop into a stronger interest (Hidi, 2001).</p> <p>This research investigates the range of Spanish student interests based on their previous and current learning, with the purpose of designing a critical teaching approach and materials that respond to individual and situational interests so as to impact their cognitive performance and language proficiency. Both conceptualizations of interest are viewed as having an interrelated role in cognition (Krapp, as cited in Hidi, 1990, p.551). This demands research undertaken in schools and classrooms, explore teachers' and students' interests in context.</p> <p>In this study, in phase 1, aspects of Spanish students' motivational interests will be surveyed to investigate both individual and situational interests evoked by past and current experiences in Spanish. Data collected will be used to design tasks for stimulating both types of interests, based on data gathered from the larger population of Spanish students surveyed in Year 9. In phase 2, aspects of student's motivations and interests, in one Year 10 classroom, will be monitored over time by using surveys to examine individual and situational interests. There are implications for classroom practice</p>	<p>that I fiercely wished to combat, and yet, at times, I failed.</p> <p>Prior to reflecting on my positionality as a researcher, post <del>collaboration</del>, I had not grasped the layered and nuanced ways in which power circulates and works in us and produces 'things' (like what we know, savour and do/say) (Foucault, 1981, p.119). I had not understood the potential for one to swing on the pendulum, from oppressed to oppressor, by way of words and acts (Swadener &amp; Mutua, 2004). I hadn't confronted in detail how I was complicit in the historical colonization of research participants, of all colours and shapes, in universities. As hooks (1994, p.29) states:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">the traditional role of the university in the pursuit of truth and the sharing of knowledge and information, it is painfully clear that biases that uphold and maintain white supremacy, imperialism, sexism, and racism have distorted education so that it is no longer about the practice of freedom.</p> <p>My 2005 literature review informed the abstract, prescriptive, and sanitised imaginings of the collaborative 'case study' designed for a then unknown group of Year 10 Spanish students. This process demanded making objects (future positioning) of the soon to be participants (Mutua &amp; Swadener, 2004). As in the shame of traditional invasions and in colonial ethnographies, "they came, they saw, they named, they claimed...." (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, p.80) and then wrote.</p> <p>My PhD texts and case study design predetermined authorities and enacted hierarchical relationships and roles. The</p>
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based on the findings about interest, given that teachers' may not be able to focus on individual interests in large groups. Thus, teachers may require strategies to enhance learning through situational interest in practical and realistic ways. However, dressing up teaching instruction, may get attention and not keep it (Dewey, 1913; Harp & Mayer, 1998).

### **Engaging critical Spanish teaching**

The research presented here indicates that to design tasks for students' learning, one must consider individual and situational interest in context (Deci, 1992; Curnow & Kohler, 2007). Pedagogy and practices therefore play a crucial role in responding to individual characteristics in planning instruction and curriculum. Alternative approaches to teaching that value the teacher and students' individual characteristics and contributions to whole group involvement in planning teaching, learning and assessment, are hypothesized to have a positive impact on student motivation, voice and proficiency.

The Critical Pedagogy (CP) approach in this study draws on individual and situational interest. It is hypothesized that this approach will impact positively on students' learning and proficiency, through its potential for empowerment. For students to become empowered, to make informed, agentic, and meaningful judgments about their life, learning and decisions, it is expected that they (at first at least) require being explicitly taught strategies

researcher was the 'knower' and the participants' wor(l)ds were the subaltern (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). I 'discovered' that we (all participants) are more 'same' than different after all. But there was so much more to see, inside and outside the 'fetish' with 'text-based-texts', in the 'academic' sense (Jackson, as cited in Conquergood, 1989, p.188). And in one way, just like Memmi (1965, p. ix):

As I advanced in my work on the book... I discovered that all colonized people have much in common...I discovered that all the oppressed are alike in some ways. ...it became impossible to pretend that it was mine alone, or only that of colonized...

Power is complex and layered. It can be officially and unofficially deployed.

In a socially mediated world there is no outside of power. To change injustice, this must be a main focus of our dialogue and our work. In research, power is not only in the 'ideologies' we enable, or in the relations between 'performers' and 'actors', power is a productive in decisions about how to represent and do our work, representing ourselves, performing ourselves, in our writing (Conquergood, 1991, p.190; Foucault, 1979, p.27).

The idealised, thoroughly justified and instrumental imaginings needed to produce and thus pre-determine this project and its design, to cross the checkpoint and work with human subjects, endeavoured to examine various research practice 'gaps'. These gaps weren't determined in community with participants or by word of mouth, but largely in my solitary readings of documented 'mainstream' research literatures in Spanish languages education,

for reflecting on their learning; metacognition. The concept of viewing aspects of motivation and metacognitive awareness was recent at the time of this study (Vandergrift, 2005). Research located suggests a higher level of metacognitive strategy use, in French (2L) proficiency, increased motivational intensity (Vandergrift 2000), illustrating a key role played by metacognition and motivation in 2L learning.

Essential to learner empowerment is self-understanding of the learner's current situation, strengths and weaknesses and the reasons for why she/he/they may struggle (Jones, 2006), in addition to knowledge and skills required for growth; to effect changes. The alternative approach to Spanish promoted here, aims to engage students in critical inquiry, develop their awareness of learning in Spanish and develop strategies for engaging in metacognition, through use of journals and development of critical and substantive dialogue, in an environment of trust and understanding.

### **Meta-cognition**

Over a decade of research has shown that learners' metacognitive strategies, across macro skills, distinguish more effective language learners from less effective ones (Graham, 2006). Flavell (as cited in Graham, 2006) categorizes metacognitive knowledge based on individual beliefs and knowledge about the individual, the task, and the strategy. Although individuals enact knowledge about their self, they do so also in social contexts and, in the

socio-cognitive theory/practice and of critical pedagogies theory/practice. In these fields, teachers, students, and participants more broadly are not represented as experts.

To this day, I never thought to question the validity of doing research work in Spanish. I never really asked my 'self' why do students 'have' to study Spanish at all? Why is it 'our' job to motivate students to learn Spanish? These impulses still guide me.

My ~~literature review~~ thus drew un-reflexively from grand narratives. My early career researcher eyes were fixed on a horizon: on the positive impact of a critical approach to Spanish on aspects of Spanish students' motivations, voice, and proficiency. I was not ready for a 'negative' impact or for participant resistance or passive withdrawal and silences. I was not ready for negative impacts from supervisors. I was not ready for supervisors to disagree amongst themselves and with me. I was unaware of resilient counterproductive agency and sabotage. I was not conscious of self-delusional tendencies; when we say we stand for something but, upon not even deep examination, we clearly don't (Ryan, 2012). I was blind to the contradictions.

In clear contrast to my reasons for enrolling in the PhD from the outset, as per my application to the university in 2004 which discussed the opportunity to devise a critical approach to Spanish teaching and learning with participants (K. Berniz, personal communication, 2004), I allowed myself to become seduced, into committing to mechanistically testing the efficiency of ~~negotiated~~ methods and measuring their

context of task and social demands that shape evaluative beliefs about diverse strategies, their utility and use (ibid). Vandergrift (2006) has reported that learners with a more systematic approach to metacognition, were more effective in controlling aspects of the learning process and better in comprehension than learners with fewer metacognitive strategies. Wenden (as cited in Graham, 2006, p. 297) specifies that learners' strategies are strengthened by a learner's understanding of the "nature of the task, how best to approach it, and personal factors that may inhibit or facilitate the process."

Brantmeier (2005) reported that enjoyment also impacts on choice and aspects of motivation and achievement. This was also found by a local study discussed (Curnow & Kohler, 2007). It is expected therefore that students' learning and motivation is enhanced by their ability to monitor and evaluate their learning, through motivational mediators and metacognition, that may impact learners at the selection level (how goals, attributions are formed) and those that affect drive to maintain motivation during task activity (perseverance, applying effort) (Graham, 2006). In addition, Paris and Winograd (as cited in Graham, 2006) suggest that metacognition impacts on learning behaviour, especially motivation, and it also enhances agency and efficacy, through learner awareness of the strategies they use and the concrete outcomes these can achieve (ibid). It is predicted that empowerment, an aim of this

impact via a survey and many many other tools, cue sheets, recordings, texts and measures. Pursuing a 'technical' socio-cognitive take on academic rigor, reliability and validity, as encouraged, I lost my way. I succeeded in passing through multiple border patrols and check-points. My application to the university's ethics committee was granted. My proposal to work with teachers and students in the Department of Education's Schools was awarded. I was granted passage from multiple stakeholders who, while scrutinising, encouraging, and regulating my entry, approved of my practices and me (at a cost).

Re-reading my literature review on the left teaches me about the discourses on offer in education in Australia and abroad in the English-speaking world. They tell me about the world of knowledge production and the world of being in educational sites, and, as Picower and Mayorga (2015) tell us, we must ask: '*What race has to do with it?*'

This whole text may say different things to you as you read each column and between the lines (or so I hope). To me it speaks now of a case study in ~~collaboration~~ with ~~dialogue~~ and negotiation with participants-erased. In the abstract, on paper, it talks about devolving power to participants (us). The knowledge gaps it identified privileged inquiry into Spanish distortions and inequities they face. The elephant in the room, the invisible 'other', was the researcher.

In my literature review, I drew on essentialising discourses to reach dream space (Mutua & Swadener, 2004) milestones that would mobilise a new critical Spanish practice,

critical approach to Spanish, will be positively affected by: increasing learners' awareness of themselves and how they learn; their metacognitive strategies for learning Spanish and how self-efficacy can be gained; strengthening relationships between learners' beliefs about choices and the strategies they use; their efforts and persistence on tasks, and the meaningfulness or purpose of the domain for learning (Graham, 2006).

Increasing learners' awareness of learning, strengths and weaknesses, and development, in this study, plays an important role in the development of critical knowledge and skills which may lead to empowerment in the Spanish language and beyond, through ongoing self-evaluation. Journal writing will enable reflection on planning, monitoring, evaluating and problem solving (Vandergrift, 2005). However, basic strategy instruction (See Oxford, 1990; Graham, 2006) is used to provoke learners' consciousness-raising (Freire, 1973). The aim of the journal is for students to reflect on the process of learning over several academic terms. Students will be encouraged to choose areas of relevance to their learning and beliefs, to promote their autonomy, will and meaningful goal setting.

This component of this study supports demands for research that pay attention to individual meanings, interpretations, and responses to learning and environments, called for in language learning and motivation research in 2005 (Vandergrift, 2005;

and, in doing so, I quite unconsciously re-categorised participants' knowledge and set out to re-order their practice. I quietly assumed they weren't already critically engaged in their learning and teaching, and thus it would be my role to assist, convert and enable a new way.

*Lands of promise...*

My reflection on my guided apprenticeship, is that the standard 'PhD' space, stems and suffers, quite directly from pursuing, what Demas and Saavedra (2004, p.216) describe as:

Enlightenment concepts of natural law...  
[where] ...we have accepted the notion of "human nature" as an axiom (Canella, 1997), that is, humans as natural beings whose lives can be explained through truth-oriented scientific inquiry.

Es mi testimonio (it's my testimony), that I didn't recognise this soon enough, or at critical points in participant collaboration. This right-hand-column may be critiqued for its confessional tone (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) or for the interpretive work entrusted to readers. But here, personal accounts count (Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Reed Danahay, 1997; Anzaldúa, 1987; 2009)!

'Evidence' for these claims come, strewn across the thesis' multiple texts. The material ways in which discourses, theories, people, practices, power, agency and 'self' frame what is enacted is 'real'. It may not be easy to 'articulate' or to theorise or to explain or to intellectualise or to give visceral account of, but 'messy' it is.

As a teacher and researcher, I need to have the facultad (capacity) to read into my learning,

Brantmeier, 2005; Graham, 2006), and at the time of this thesis' submission (Baldwin et al., 2017; Chou, 2012; Lopez, 2010; Maherzi, 2011; Méndez & Peña, 2013). It provides data on student perspectives of learning and strategy use; student evaluations of teaching and learning in Spanish; and it offers insights into how beliefs (about learning, motivation, participation, and teacher/student relationships) develop over (almost) an academic year.

Few studies provide such a focus in 2L learning (Graham, 2006) or in the domain of Spanish as a Foreign Language teaching with aims to positively affect student's motivations, voices, and critical language proficiency, in a secondary school (in 2005). This emphasizes the need for critical approaches which strive to engage learners in their empowerment, through a transformative education.

Alternative approaches to 'traditional' teaching of languages exemplify a significant shift in thinking about teaching and learning, which has slowly transferred into practice, policy, and belief. The shift shows a rejection of instrumentalist approaches, also known as a 'banking system' of education to learning which is student-empowerment-centred (Freire, 1970; SACSA, 2006). System and logistic influences of learner-centred learning may not be addressed within a traditional "grammar translation method" or even by 'communicative' approaches to languages (Nunan, 1999, p.89). This study's alternative pedagogical approach may provide insight into

and practice, no matter how 'messy' and contradictory. Anzaldúa defines *la facultad* (or *faculty*) as:

the capacity to see in surface phenomena the meaning of deeper realities, to see the deep structure below the surface. It is an instant "sensing", a quick perception arrived at without conscious reasoning. It is an acute awareness mediated by the part of the psyche that does not speak, that communicates in images and symbols which are the faces of feelings, that is, behind which feelings reside/hide (Anzaldúa, 1987, p.60)

I suggest *la facultad* in collaborative projects relies on a desire to *convivir* (verb, literally, to *co-live* or *to be in 'communion'*). While there can be, in my view, no literal translation of this term, it means to cultivate a deep sense of mutual engagement and respect. The act has cultural and family significance.

In my family, with my partner Andrew, no topic or debate is off the table. Being part of my extended family, given its members so diverse religious and political ideologies, and educational 'opportunity' and experience, and how these can be employed to silence, manipulate, and punish the 'younger' generations who struggle to participate on the borders of their Uruguayan and Australian selves, is not without its challenges. There are non-negotiables, taboos, and racism. My partner is the 'white' man. My daughter is our extended family's bridge, and hope. And this is a struggle worth living and doing long-term. Relationships between teacher, student and researcher collaborators may not be ever without their challenges and may not develop



teaching and learning Spanish and reduce growing inequities in its delivery and participation.

### **Approaches to language teaching**

In the early 1960s, language learning was focused on students showing knowledge of grammatical norms and this knowledge was acquired sequentially following rules, perceived to form a “unified system” (Nunan, 1999, p.9). The student undertook exercises in these norms to gain “skills”, internalize the rules to communicate meaning while being encouraged to aim for native speaker competence (Nunan, 1999, p.9). From a critical pedagogy perspective this approach to language learning involves the teacher “effecting” changes in the knowledge of the students (Freire, as cited in Shor, 1989), rather than a ‘mutual’ transformation of knowledge with ‘personal’ meaning. It wasn’t till the 1970s, that expressing meaning theoretically relevant (Nunan, 1999, p.9). In the 1980s, there was a shift in this perspective toward communicative trends (Nunan, 1999, p.9).

According to Graves (2000), teachers’ beliefs and practices inform their teaching based on their earlier experiences as students and, as teachers. Stern (as cited in Graves, 2000) states that teachers articulate their beliefs about knowledge and learning in the process of their teaching and in contexts defined by internal and external factors and valued outcomes. This process of defining beliefs and practices is

such intimacies that may ‘better’ enable critical inquiry and reflexivity, but what if they did?

The privilege of engaging in collective inquiry into the beautiful pluralistic language(s) and culture(s) of the Spanish speaking world that are dear to my heart, part of my being and belonging, draws on a longing at the core of my family, my past, my history, and future identity. This dimension of this research was not an experiment (nor did I burden the participants with it). It could not be engineered or ordered. Such a project could not be something separate to me. The dispassionate text I wrote in 2005 was a performance for the reader. It was nevertheless a part of me. So, I am fully biased, implicated, and reliant on this newer writing project and its success, unashamedly.

Some writers acknowledge that what is often achieved on the page is somewhat more rhetorical or allegorical than what may live out in everyday practice. This certainly sums up my experience as a reader and writer of some texts. The idealised play of words can, in hindsight, be destructive and lead to a praxis of violence: a never-ending litany of impractical policies, politics and programs that are never realised. Aboriginal deaths in custody continue to rise; Domestic Violence continues to rise; Poverty and survival modes are epidemic; Wars are ongoing and innocent victims and children die by the thousands every day (is there any point in finding references for universally known facts? Sometimes a moment is more powerful, when I saw the picture of this text, I had to rush to our little Scotti in tears, mourning for a mum I didn’t know.

considered ‘evolutionary’ and constructive. Teachers adopt, adapt and create, and therefore, their curriculum and pedagogy, may develop ‘a local flavour’, perhaps, combining methodologies (Nunan, 1999) of impact on students’ learning (metacognition), motivation, proficiency and participation. Research into task-based language approaches found this (Shehadeh, 2012). The experiences of teaching practice are here hypothesized to impact student proficiency.

### **Proficiency**

Proficiency has been defined as a level of ability and skilful organization of knowledge, texts and structures valued for personal and academic meaning; communicating functionally, mechanics and contextual socio-linguistic knowledge (Bachman & Palmer, as cited in Norris, 1999, p.10). This is relevant to this study which seeks to empower students to become ‘more’ verbally proficient and thus, capable of initiating change in their learning in Spanish. It is recognized that linguistic accuracy “is only one component of proficiency...” (Chastain, as cited in Norris, 1999, p.10) and if a more sophisticated form of proficiency is to be attained, it will depend on dynamics in learning scenarios and in group and individual aims, among other things. However, other factors, such as SACE language exams, SSABSA’s expectations of teaching and learning, also play a key role in defining learning and teaching outcomes in schooling in SA.

- When the body of a four-year-old Syrian boy washes up on a shore in Turkey (ABC, 2015) a policy of inaction fails us all.

I don’t want to join those that only ‘write’ about justice. I’m no radical revolutionary f, but in one’s blatant complacency hidden in scholarly prowess, one destroys more than what one builds on the ground. In making fictional castles on the page, one can create homelessness in the suburbs. I want my words to reflect ‘a’ reality and change its terrible parts. I want to unpack and fight the ‘oppressive’ practices that enable silencing of students, teachers, and researchers. I want you to know what happened in this PhD that limited ‘our’ dialogue. I want to name the ways in which I was a vessel for oppression. This is difficult for me to write.

I’ll write how I know and love best: with images, experiences, stories, poetry, and passion. I’ll struggle my way on the page the best I can, to tap into my flawed memory, undertaking memory work (Haug, 1987) and sensory recall to provide you with as much detail as is possible, a personal taste of what I experienced, in the ‘daily’ classroom environment, and in the PhD journey. My purpose is not to entertain. We are never mere spectators, anyway. What I do hope for is to transport you to a place, to attempt to embody or engender a bit of this collective experience. I do this without playing the game that conceals. To be authoritative in this way, to sell out, is one option I reject (Moraga & Anzaldúa, 2008).

A review of available reports of students' performance in Spanish Continuers (SSABSA, 2005) and Spanish Extended (SSABSA, 1999) levels, revealed that students' 'proficiency' in S.A was repeatedly classified as low. Examiners described students' performance in exams as "mediocre" (SSABSA, 2005, p.1) or satisfactory (SSABSA, 1999). Examiners also criticized students' abilities in areas of transfer of language, stating that students "...struggle if the question was not predictable..." (SSABSA, 2005, p.1) and were unable to "...give sustained responses..." (ibid). The reports in use at the time of the study highlight that many candidates memorise chunks of text and were unable to present an "effective discussion" (SSABSA, 1999, p.2).

Such reports advised teachers of Spanish at senior levels to provide opportunities for students to practice developing opinions, justifying arguments, and using higher levels of analysis and interpretation, to show spontaneity (SSABSA, 2005, p.3). However, during the visits to Spanish classrooms, in this study's preparatory stage, continuous dialogue between teachers and students in Spanish, was not witnessed, even in two senior year classrooms attended. These observations are important given that contradictions between examiner expectations and opportunities provided to learners may exist.

Local Spanish teacher's professional development (PD), and language proficiency in Spanish has been reported to be 'deficient',

When Spanish language, culture and peoples are marginalised in Australia, as a system of education, as a methodology for teaching and learning, as an 'exotic' or token gesture, it is me who suffers. However, it is me who also 'humbly' thrives. Much of what has occurred in this study has also turned out to be beautiful. I fully agree with bell hooks when she says that "the classroom remains the most radical space of possibility in the academy" (1994, p.12). This hope is what this new journey on the page is about for me. This is what the PhD journey has awarded me already (PhD granted or not). To this I dedicate these words.

And perhaps, finally, the biggest contribution I can make is to do this all, with passion.

**passion counts!**

according to Spanish teachers' themselves (Berniz, 2000; 2005). There may also be tensions between underlying philosophy of teaching with a communicative approach, for instance, which has less reliance on language forms, something that examiners reports emphasize as another area of weakness in students' language use (SSABSA, 2005, 1999). This may impact teacher practice, as noted in research finding links between teacher resistance to adopt more of a 'facilitator' role, when proficiency for such roles is insufficient (Shehadeh, 2012).

Of interest to this study is how little examiners' reports reference cultural knowledge employed by learners. This is important given the demands for intercultural learning in education. This raises questions while highlighting tensions. For instance, examiners may critique that a student "chose to personalize their answers and therefore failed to deal with the issues in a systematic, organized manner." (SSABSA, 1999, pp.1-4). These reports provide mixed messages posing challenges for Spanish language teachers and students.

### **Cultural proficiency**

There is much debate about defining culture in language teaching as it's linked to people, values, identities and social structures or beliefs which impact welfare, identity, and existence (Carreira, 2004; Schecter & Bayley, 2004). Local research has identified a need for

intercultural learning as a component of all students' learning in Australia, not just in 2L (ACARA, 2012; 2015). This acknowledges the need for learners to be aware and sensitive to values and cross-cultural influences which impact their engagement and understanding of cultures (ILTP Project, 2006). To support Spanish students' understandings of Spanish and the complex processes involved in constructing knowledge of the self and of linguistic and cultural identity, requires a different approach to instruction that may give a priority to negotiating dialogue with learners and a higher learner and teacher commitment to reflection on learning and integrated products of learning (Leask, 2004). It is predicted that a critical approach to Spanish will promote this; through learning that is dialogical, in addition to communicative and where 'reflective learning' and sensitivity to the diversity across Spanish varieties and cultures, can be mutually constructed in critical inquiry (Freire, 1979; Shor, 1998).

Mutual construction and a supportive learning environment is important to reducing the risks associated with constructing beliefs and knowledge about 'other' cultures, which is part of the role of a language curriculum participant (Leask, 2004). These are certainly aims of the SACSA framework, as stated, but it is unclear whether these skills are valued in secondary education. It is expected that an alternative approach which stimulates these knowledges, dispositions, and awareness in

students, can raise the intellectual and affective domains of language use, where students can lead meaningful conversations, if given chances to critically think about what language is, how they use it and why.

### **A Critical Spanish Pedagogy**

A critical pedagogy (CP) approach (inspired by the works of Freire 1970; Giroux, 1994; McLaren, 2002; Shor, 1992; Wink, 2000) applied to critical foreign language teaching and learning is an evocative approach to learning (Norton & Toohey, 2004; Hones, 2002; Moreno, 2004). It demands that teaching and learning be transformed with students, and that learning be teacher- and student-centred (Kanpol, 1997).

CP in this study will seek in-depth critical dialogue and reflection in the Spanish language. It aims to set up learning opportunities using strategies in which learners can use and construct authentic language/culture and reflect on generative themes, amplifying self-expression, and enhancing awareness of ways of communicating, being and doing (Shor, 1989). These domains impact learners' lives and interests and may aid developing high personal meaning and strategies for learning and self-expression (Norton & Toohey, 2004).

The development of language/cultural (linguacultural) proficiency in this method can enable learners to express their voices, in their own words, and hence, initiate exchanges with personal meaning (Norton & Toohey, 2004).

Such aims require students to have experiences in challenging personal beliefs and expression than is often unavailable in traditional approaches which focus on language mechanics, stereotypical versions of culture and static 'rule' governed communication. It is hypothesized here that more effective use of the target language can be achieved.

A brief historical look at critical teaching is necessary in explaining this alternative approach to 'grammar' oriented methods. Its use is problematic as 'traditional' approaches continue to receive support from 'foreign' language teachers in contemporary practice worldwide (Anh, 2013; Curnow & Kohler, 2007; Islam, 2011; Norton & Toohey, 2005).

### **An alternative critical Pedagogy**

CP is 'pedagogy' concerned with what we believe, how we learn, what we learn, whose interests are served (and why) and how change can be stimulated to bring about better circumstances. The focal issue is transforming social frameworks to bring about a 'more' just way through: making knowledge problematic; understanding and questioning power relations and strengthening people's leadership and dialogue with them (Freire, 1998; Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985).

What's just' has been debated in education (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985; Ellsworth, 1989; Pratt, 1989; Smyth, 1989; McInerney, 2000). It is problematic because it deals with ideals and beliefs and evaluations of how to live. These

define learning through socialization and what is to be empowering education.

A CP identifies schools as the places where this process of empowerment begins (not ends) (hooks, 1994): they are ‘sites of opportunity’ with the potential to affect socio-cultural outcomes and lives (Dutton & Grant as cited in Smyth, 1992). Empowerment, as stated, is the actual process students go through to begin to develop and exercise their critical powers (Freire, 1979; Shor, 1998). The process of enabling just socio-cultural consequences in school therefore is as dependent on the quality of learning and teaching as it is on the social-power relations impacting the wellbeing of the learner community. In schools, meaning, truths and knowledge are encountered, understood, and interpreted for personal-professional use. Thus, how we interpret our lives and world somewhat determines our participation (Shacklock et al., 1992).

An aim of education in Australia is to generate responsible and informed citizens who actively contribute to Australia’s well-being (ACARA, 2014). For this reason, students need to have experiences in understanding how their reality and options for growth, are influenced by forces, circumstances, and interactions in society (Rodriguez, 2005). This applies equally to the language curriculum, viewed usually as a tool for communication which trivializes culture, language and power (Noone, 1998).

In a CP approach to Spanish cultures and languages, not only of dominant groups, inquiry



assumes a central role in which the cultural and the communicative are more than ‘organically’ linked. This depth in meaning-making is central to intercultural practice (Leask, 2004).

The efficacies created within the school structures (Apple, as cited in Shor, 1992, p.13) shape our reading of the academic and social world (Freire, 1979). This is not to say, as Bowles and Gintis (1976), Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), and to a degree Foucault (1980) claim, that agency and existence are reduced to a mechanized state, but that dominating forces, related to power, and ideologies, influence and are modified by social input, reflection, and contestation (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985).

### **CP: an evolving theory and praxis**

CP is a practice in pedagogy, and a philosophy of education (Giroux, 1988; Shor, 1989; Lather, 1995; Kanpol, 1998; McLaren, 2000; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Bartlett, 2005). In Australia, there have been few empirical studies in CP in languages in schooling, however, some studies enacted a social justice focus (McInerney, 2002; Ryan, 2005).

A theory of critical pedagogy does not assume sequential reproduction. Its concern is to discover and transform ‘oppression’ with participants and recognizes that beings are fluid in an uncertain society (Ryan, 2005). CP cannot be imported (Freire, 1970).

Early research in CP in Australia (Kemmis, Cole & Suggett, 1983; Smyth, 1987) provides

insight into how researchers and to some extent, teachers, may deal with problematic issues in CP. This research highlights dilemmas related to social control, and to ‘dissonances or abrasions’ across multiple perspectives defining learning (Noone & Cartwright, 1996). Strategies to manage behaviour are contentious (Cooper & Kulisa, n.d.).

Smyth (1989) researched teachers’ and students’ perspectives and negotiations of meaning and content in schools. He concluded that “the deficiencies and discriminatory practices singled out for consideration (by teachers and students), have deep cultural and social origins” which are “impossible” to ‘fully’ resolve (Smyth, 1987, p.49). Other research claimed that CP is helpful in uncovering “hidden” issues through critical questioning (Kilderry, 2004). The ‘hidden curriculum’, meaning the non-neutral role of schools, can expose decisions regarding information and how it is transmitted in the curriculum, and to what potential effect (Freire, 1972; Giroux, 1981).

Other research in Australia, called productive pedagogy (Hall, 2004; Hayes et al., 2006), advocates constructivist views of learning and practices to enhance students’ voice (Fields, 2001). It places a high priority on students and teachers’ self-reflection (Hall, 2004) and values evaluating teaching and learning critically (Harrison & Worthington, 2002). However, the “realization of student learning outcomes” (ibid) promoted, is not the

main objective of this study's critical approach (Shor, 1998). CP in this study supports that learning may begin in the classroom and enhance learner outcomes, but it should not end there and should enable transformative changes.

There are challenges in working with a CP in education (Noone & Cartwright, 1996; Moreno, 2004; Ryan, 2005). CP's emphasis on dialogue may reveal competing discourses about learning and knowledge, the ease found in transmission approaches (ibid) and other limitations (i.e. time, space, facilities) (Noone & Cartwright, 1998). This literature engages in theoretical critique, grounding these in specialist contexts, ideologies and interests (Gore, 1993) more than in 'everyday' classroom practice. Participants' voices are largely absent. This study challenges detached and restrictive approaches to language pedagogy and learning (Noone, 1996). It will listen to participant perspectives, responses and negotiations, occurring across two studies, in ongoing ways.

The section below discusses how a mixed method approach supports combining rich descriptions and unstructured data with qualitative measures, to better engage in monitoring changes in learning, behaviour, and action in critical practice.

### 3. FROM METHODOLOGY TO MESSODOLOGY

#### Methodology

This study employs a mixed method qualitative approach involving critical ethnographic methods and a case study format. This method enables researchers to “be in the field” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.6), situated in activity, while using interpretive, phenomenological, hermeneutic, and naturalist approaches to understand contexts and circumstance (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.3). This approach supports the research of people’s perspectives, theories, and practices related to designing, teaching, and studying Spanish in schools. It is expected that complex state, institutional, and personal data will be gathered in phase 1. This will be used to refine the methods, tools and pedagogical resources proposed for the case study in phase 2. The case study will enact a critical approach to Spanish in collaboration with classroom participants.

A mixed methods approach is suited for this study involving participants in Spanish language education and research. Rigor will be pursued through the triangulation of observations made in relation to knowledge and experiences lived as well as reflections accomplished. Individual and group interpretations of ‘official’ and ‘unofficial’ texts will be examined.

In this research, the qualities of the participants and the social and material environment are viewed to enliven and shape the

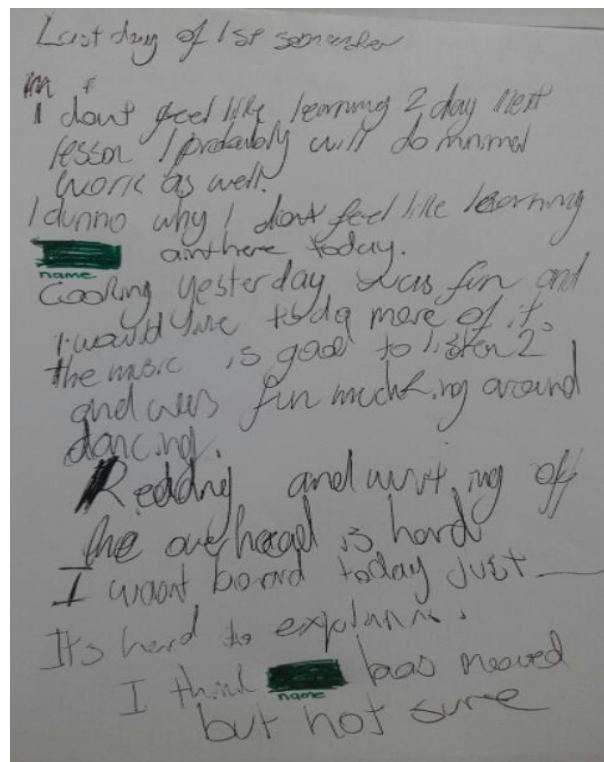


Image 7: Student Journal (2007)

*Last day of 1<sup>st</sup> semester*

*I don't feel like learning 2 day. next lesson I probably will do minimal work as well. I dunno why I don't feel like learning. [Friend's name erased to protect anonymity] aint here today.*

*Cooking yesterday was fun and I would like to do more of it. the music is good to listen 2 and was fun mucking around dancing.*

*Reading and writing off the overhead is hard. I wasn't board today just ..... It's hard to explain.*

*I think [friends name erased by author] has moved but not sure*

processes and meanings that create this curriculum. In describing past and current events involved in teacher-student interactions, and the group of officials' views, both qualitative and quantitative procedures and tools are used. The process enables gathering diverse data to make estimates and build rich descriptions and analyses of participants' words (Silverman, 2001). This allows relating these to interpretations examined through questionnaire, journal and survey data to support understandings of learning and practice, and of changes in learning in student motivational indicators, language proficiency and voice.

### **Qualitative Approaches**

Qualitative approaches enable researchers to interpret and examine contexts, and the knowledge and understandings of participants, in a 'natural setting' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) via observation and hypotheses generating research (Silverman, 2001). 'Traditional' classrooms belong to teachers and students and the dynamics of participants in the school community and system structures. A researcher's experiences and interpretations of the 'setting' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 1) are not value-free (Denzin & Lincoln, 2001).

Denzin and Lincoln (2001) claim that individual beliefs and actions intersect with culture in the world of lived experience and that the tacit influences on that relationship are difficult to define (p. 8). Paulo Freire's analysis of 'conscientisation' shares this view of people who, "...not as recipients...", but as knowing subjects

### **Messodology**

As this student's reflections on a day at school show, there are moments in a person's life in which she or he or they (or we) can't quite make sense of things in the 'real' world. For me, making sense of the meanings and practices of multiple peoples, institutions, and discourses, is complex, if not impossible, but most definitely confusing.

Social inquiries cannot be understood or explained simply through black and white thinking (binaries) or through instrumental processes. Meanings are always mediated in our lived experience (Foucault, 1972) regardless of whether we like it, know it, or 'fully' grasp how it occurs. This fascinates me and encouraged my 'messy' notes in the margin to become accounts which linked to stories and reflexive explorations in this study, and in participant lives.

The accounts or stories we tell about our lived experiences with participants in the field will involve informed guesswork, and be limited (Chase, 2005). Some scholars argue there is no self (Foucault et al., 1988), but selves, and that notions which had been historically considered to be stable, natural, or biological, like race, gender etc, are themselves social and historical creations (Frankenberg, 1993; Hill Collins, 1990). These shape us, and we shape them, and some will critique this intellectual oversimplification (Solorzano & Yosso, 2011). Thus, engaging in research requires some 'introspective' exploration of possible

achieve a deepening awareness both of their social cultural reality and their capacity to transform it (1985, p. 93). As in these perspectives, various standpoints, and approaches to qualitative research (hermeneutics, feminism, semiotics, phenomenology) are driven by inquiry which stresses the ‘social constructedness’ of realities (Denzin & Lincoln, 2001, p. 9). These seek to study the world directly while consciously observing and documenting constraints in observation. This is why qualitative methods are rich: they cross disciplinary boundaries, strengthening the “breadth, complexity and depth of any inquiry” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2001, p. 5).

### **Ethnographic Methods**

Ethnography is a form of social research that explores social phenomena and “grounded data” (known as ‘unstructured’ data) usually small in scale (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997). In ethnographic studies, a combination of observation, interviews, and document analyses are used to provide support for defining the area studied (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997).

In this study, participants are Spanish teachers, students, and officials, involved in the Spanish curriculum. Participant perspectives will be sought, and their anecdotes, stories, and reflections will be included (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997, p. 443). This study will employ ethnographic methods to (1) explore social phenomena: perspectives, feelings and beliefs that inform practices, knowledge, and actions (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997); (2)

constructions and relations from somewhere and by someone (Lakof, 1973, p.46).

Put simply, I agree with the statement that: “humans are cultural beings and we can’t understand them without recognising the cultural dimensions of their lives” (Wadham, Pudsey & Boyd, 2009, p. 1). I would argue, with others, that the practices in PhD research are particular constructions with taken for granted racial, political and class-based assumptions (Johnson, Lee & Green, 2000). What I call an ‘orthodox’ approach to PhD research in my university is articulated by Bishop (2005, p.112) in the terms “social pathology research approach”. This involves the potential use of deficit cultural worldviews and involves, for instance, taken for granted ways of seeing the world through white phallogentric secular middle-class lenses (perhaps unconsciously). Some authors over-simplify, undermine, and commodify ‘other’ individual’s (i.e. non-western perspectives) and their ways of being in their constructions of language and discourse and practices (Bishop, 2005, p.112). Many works considered ‘seminal works’ in anthropology and sociology bear the mark of their colonial roots: a privileging of objectivity, rationalism, individual ‘prowess’, and racism (expert versus ‘primitive’ knower) (McGloin, 2016, p.841; Tuhiwai Smith, 2005). In such practices, neutrality is pursued through ‘alienation’ (Bishop, 2005). Such work rarely privileges the body; it’s impulses, emotions, or movement: these lenses, associated with the ‘feminine’, are classed as oppositional (and illegitimate obstacles) to

work with a range of data, including verbal data generated from interview and observation; and (3) enact a 'case study' (Flick, 2006). The researcher seeks to participate in the social scene and gather understanding of it while maintaining a 'critical' standpoint.

In taking an interest in Spanish teachers' voices and Spanish students' voices, this research undertakes a critical ethnographic approach to understanding the classroom culture in a Spanish classroom and the discourses created relationally around 'Spanish' depicted in the curriculum. A critical ethnographer seeks to analyse instances where participants, in their interaction with dialogue, action, and reflection-praxis, and in relation to research, appear to construct the context and potentials to change that environment by identifying sources of perceptions, actions, and their effects (Reyes-Ruiz, 2001). A critical approach to research and data seeks to uncover hidden assumptions. Reflections of teachers and students in the process of inquiry are often absent from such research. This study addresses these issues and does not take for granted the nature of the research process, or of researcher control over procedures and outcomes (McInerney, 2001) and their effects on participants' representations and lives.

### **Case study**

With the data generated from the larger groups of participants, in Year 9, in five schools, and from leadership and teaching positions, this researcher can prepare to critically understand external and

clear thinking, rationality, and reason (Wadham, Pudsey & Boyd, 2009). There are entire research communities advocating the split between mind and body (hooks, 1994, p.191).

Concerns raised in Bishop's Maori research (2005) are shared by international researchers who have been on the receiving end of discriminatory material and symbolic effects (See Anzaldúa, 1987; Chow, 2014; hooks, 1981, 2013; Moreton-Robinson, 2004; Mutua & Swadener, 2004; Nicolacopoulos & Vassilacopulos, 2011; Smith, 1999). In such communities, it is traditional to critique work that exclusively cites white and Eurocentric research. For examples of this, one can examine reference lists, and how these reveal researcher (race/language) affiliations and preferred schools of thought. My own list embodies my affiliation to writer's identities, positioning, to their actions, practices, and political intent. But I declared this in the spirit of this thesis. So, the difference here is that some researchers do not 'know' or examine 'how' their practices are embedded in power-race-class relations and practices (to name a few). The assumption in such work is that writing, and research practice are associated with stability of thinking; a work of ideas or numbers.

My research has taught me that not only non-white or marginal groups, but also teachers and students, have had a tense relationship with western research (Wadham, Pudsey & Boyd, 2009). In my own experiences, I have perceived researchers' works as intrusive, single-minded, and

internal influences, on an individual sample of the population, a Year 10 Spanish classroom, “the subject of a case analysis” (Flick, 2006). This case is perceived as an example to illustrate external, internal, group and personal influences and effects at work in context. It is assumed that the intricacies in the field and the recognition of external and internal constraints (from participants themselves), will build research and knowledge regarding learning and pedagogical notions relevant to Spanish curriculum and explore ‘causal’ effects at work (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 4).

It is predicted that a case study will enable specialized attention to the development of a grounded theory and perspectives over the process of an academic year in a school (Tellis, 1997). Participants’ feedback will be sought to generate the grounded theory, which will evolve with them in action. The researcher will record and monitor classroom dynamics and interpret data critically, by making links to local school and system context and exploring alternative views and avenues for potential changes to Spanish teaching and learning.

### **Participant Observation**

The researcher will engage in participant observation in the case study for a period of 4 to 6 weeks. During this time, the researcher will make extensive field notes about pedagogy and learning, including teacher-student interactions during lessons. Descriptive statements or ideas will be used to summarize and describe

scripted and therefore, unethical, as have others (i.e. Rosaldo, 1989; Vidich & Lyman, 2000; Tedlock, 2000). Little is ever revealed about vulnerabilities or conflict, especially in ‘reference’ to their own thinking or labours (Aldridge, 2015; Behar, 1996; Tilly-Lubbs & Calva, 2016). Western anthropology and sociology have been described as disciplines “born out of concern to understand the ‘other,’ ... [as well as] ...the self” (Vidich & Lyman, 2000, p. 38). This ‘other’, in early texts, was described as the “exotic other, a primitive, non-white person from a foreign culture judged to be less civilized than that of the researcher” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 2). In early ethnography, researchers thought they were civilising the unruly (Vidich & Lyman, 2000). Methods make me sick. Just consider it being desirable to:

coax out of the native by patient sympathy the deeper connections .... (quoted in Stocking, cited in Tedlock, 2000, p. 456).

While most present-day researchers recognise these ideas as racist many in ‘mainstream’ education do not examine how they may have ‘conquered’ the ‘other’ or how their race matters. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2005) warns us of a return to imperialist notions of ‘discovery’ masked in neoliberal, globalized and marketized ways of knowing. Alison Ravenscroft (2011, p. 3) suggests we examine the ‘elusive’ ... ‘pervasive’... [and] ‘ill defined’ lens of whiteness, in all its multiplicity, “in the archive and the written word”. Many thus recognise that what may be classed as ‘mainstream research practices’ are caught up in ‘the reproduction’ of class,



observations (Coakes & Steed, 1998). Observations will be made with a modification of the observation instrument used in the *New Basics Project* (Lingard, Mills & Hayes, 2000, p.107) (See Appendix C). This model supports observing and examining lessons, classroom interactions and the ‘hidden curriculum’ with a socially ‘just’ mindset (Lingard, Mills & Hayes, 2000).

### Field Notes

Field notes will be compiled on the teachers’ pre-lesson preparation, written or spoken reflections (in conversations or journal entries) throughout the case study. Notes will focus on:

- beliefs and reflections upon planning, teaching and student response
- Approaches to critical Spanish language and cultural learning for stimulating aspects of student motivation with the intention to empower learners meta-cognitively
- Strategies used to enable substantive conversation in Spanish
- Discussion of contested knowledge
- Views and practices underpinning selection of content and process (regarding Spanish linguaculture)

Foreign language classroom research has historically adopted a focus on teaching language, from a linguistics perspective, and so it has been difficult to find ethnographic techniques and tools to help study how students make relationships with the target culture through language teaching

race, gender relations, and other forms of “oppression” (McLaren, 1994, p.xvi).

Indigenous, feminist, and Latin American researchers provide me with alternative perspectives to ‘western’ approaches. Unquestioned use of ‘dominant’ lenses enable colonial tools and players to me (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Moreton-Robinson, 2011; hooks, 2013). And I believe researchers must be accountable for what their stories and works do and say to themselves and to (and of) others (Bochner, 2000; Bishop, 2005). I believe we need to learn and unlearn how whiteness and privilege “erupts and transforms” us in, as Frankenberg (cited in Moreton-Robinson, 2011, p.vii) suggests, the everyday “contours of everyday life.”

While I understand mediated knowledge and practice is complex, narrative research can articulate rich meanings and the significance of experiences and ways of seeing, being, and doing for the people living them (Bochner, 2000; Tilley-Lubbs & Calva, 2016). Nevertheless, as Chase (2005) suggests, our stories are still our constructions.

This personal narrative is:

...retrospective meaning making – the shaping or ordering of past experience. Narrative is a way of understanding one’s own and others’ actions, of organizing events and objects into a meaningful whole, and of connecting and seeing the consequences of actions and events over time. (Chase, 2005, p. 656)

(Norton, Toohey & Blum-Martinez, 2005). Since it is claimed of ethnographic approaches to language classroom observation that ‘categories arise out of the observations and field notes rather than being imposed in advance’, a ‘test trial’ of classroom observation, field note taking, and the observation tool adapted was undertaken in stage one (Byram & Esarte-Sarries, 1991, p. 297). This procedure highlighted the need for a more systematic approach to enable description of behaviours and talk, and the examination of potential changes over time (Paterson et al., 2003). The dynamic nature of social settings may demand further modifications of these instruments (Paterson et al., 2003).

### **Recording**

To observe classroom interaction, I will request participants’ permission to audiotape lessons. The recorded data will be used, respecting confidentiality, to support the researcher’s ability to conduct a sound record of class discussion and improve the precision of accounts of participant dialogue (Paterson et al., 2003).

The decision to record lessons arose from the ‘test trial’ which demonstrated that it is “impossible to get everything” happening in lessons (Mays & Pope, 1995, p. 4). While taping lessons will not provide the visual record of nonverbal behaviours in real time; ‘audio’ is perceived to reduce the potentially invasive impact on the participants that filming may stimulate (Mays & Pope, 1995). Audio facilitates revisiting data in action, not in real time.

As a storyteller pursuing reflexivity from a mestiza standpoint, I am exploring and uncovering how and why I am conditioned. I have done this at times without a ‘recipe’. I am also always examining how I condition others and to what possible consequences (along a continuum of possibilities, and constraints and through impulse) my work may contribute or negate. Turning the observation lens back on the researcher highlights and may redress some of the power imbalances of ‘tidy’ stories that treat ‘subjects’ as the objects of an expert’s gaze from a God’s-eye-view (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Using a narrative voice allows me to dissect the positivist lens that I used which privileged ordered, linear and logico-scientific accounts, for instance, in my transcription analysis, which ultimately made my participants and my own humanity and identity blurred and invisible (Saldivar-Hull, 2000).

There were moments in this project where my body and emotions knew more than I could explain through words. Multiple emotions constantly communicated with me, nudged at me, or alerted me. This allowed me to better connect with and engage participants and empathise with them. That “feeling of connectedness” (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p.4) was an enabling force when institutional, social, and personal discourses and practices were questioned – testing us and pitting us against each other.

The use of the body and emotions as sources of knowledge is not limited to narrative inquiry (Anzaldúa, 2011; Bishop,

The researcher expects to observe a lesson, and make field notes in real time, and after lessons she will examine the audio while later using the coding sheet to look for cues, patterns, and emerging themes (not already determined). Audio recordings may support the researchers' search for new themes, previously unnoticed talk, and specific/rich detail. The researcher will transcribe recordings and check meaning with participants to extend analysis where possible. The data gathered from field notes, transcriptions, and coding of taped lessons will aid the examination of what occurs in dialogue, work artefacts, and journal entries in relation to:

- Deconstruction of language / text
- Substance in conversation and in student/teacher work
- Critical teacher/learner strategies
- Approaches to stimulate student motivation, proficiency and voice for reflective learning
- Negotiations of meaning and power
- Transformation, problematization and connectedness of knowledge, with individual and social meanings.

These foci may change in collaborations with participants in the study.

### **Case Study Data Analysis**

Two major issues will be a focus of observations in the classroom in phase 2. The first is the process and content constructed by participants in learning the culture(s) and language(s)

2005; Ellis, 2004; Holman Jones, 2005; Inckle, 2007; Reed-Danahey, 1997). Most importantly, there is currently a push for alternatives to 'traditional' doctorates and PhDs (Brabazon & Dagli, 2010; Engels-Schwarspaul, 2013; Brabazon, 2016 (vlog).

My embodied emotions unsettled my naivety and provoked my learning in unchartered locations. These impulses sparked movement in ways that theories had not.

There, in my body, seemingly rational and thoughtful conclusions (*conclusions*) generated many questions and turmoil.

My tertiary education had not prepared me for this (Bishop, 2005); this was exacerbated by the underrepresentation of the body in western PhD research available to me (Nepia, 2013).

Diverse researchers acknowledge the presence of the body and emotions as sites of struggle in meaning making (Heshusius, 1994; Thayer-Bacon, 1997; Bishop, 2005; Holman Jones, 2005). They argue for its centrality to questions of presence and participation in 'direct' while inexplicable ways. When present, these argue, several identities may be embodied. I can think of researcher-author; researcher-participant; researcher-scholar, researcher-apprentice, researcher-performer, researcher-critic, and researcher-citizen. Each requires a unique reading, shifts, and interaction with the wor(l)d, from within it. Knowledge is experienced, conceptualised, and felt too

<p>(linguaculture) of Spanish speaking countries. This aims to identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which linguaculture(s) (country/ies) is present in activity</li> <li>• How (whose knowledge?)</li> <li>• What interests students have when it comes to Spanish (linguaculture)</li> <li>• Whether critical analyses of linguaculture or ideas occur.</li> </ul> <p>This might allow a description between approaches to Spanish teaching and the perceptions of students about its learning. It will also allow an examination of changes over time in lessons.</p> <p>The observation coding sheet will be used to examine, among other categories, the dominant and non-dominant cultures drawn upon in lessons, whether generative themes or students' learning strategies, illustrate application of a critical stance, and deconstructions of linguaculture or text. The interpretations of culture, noted in field notes, will also enable in-depth exploration of approaches to knowledge in process, and their potential impacts on students.</p> <p>In this study engaging with diverse cultural perspectives and native speaker input into cultures and experiences, is perceived to aid proficiency as a result of the explicit critical dialogue approach taken and of real time interactions with Spanish speakers, and texts, and their cultural and linguistic diversity. As stated, SSABSA examiners reported (2005) that Spanish students rarely show spontaneity in oral exams.</p>	<p>(Bishop, 2005). It expresses “embodied, tacit, intonational, gestural, improvisational, co-experiential, and covert means” (Conquergood, as cited in Holman Jones, 2005, p. 767). Paying close attention to how loudly participants' bodies (gestures, emotions, stillness etc) communicated to me throughout collaboration, demanded bringing these actions and experiences to the text. The messiness of the reading of bodies, of intuitions, and emotions may confront readers expecting 'consolidation' techniques (Nepia, 2013). My knowledge is not illegitimate (Engels-Schwarzpaul, 2013).</p> <p>Along my meaning-making journey, I've made methodological decisions based on: empathy for participants, fear, and inspiration from supervisors, last-minute singular or joint improvisations, anger for consequences, and through guttural, moral and disciplinary knowledge. Do I tell this story, or do I mask it? This became a dilemma.</p> <p>You see, in collaborations with participants, as well as in my dialogue with this PhD's field's stakeholders, I was intuitively and repeatedly doing what Back (as cited in Davies, 2015, p.28) suggested sociologists do: I had to “reassess the appropriateness of ...[my]...tools in order to turn towards 'vital life...'” (citing Behar, 2003, p.37). As a PhD is a journey of learning (in my case of reflexive learning), one's reassessments actively morph in responsive, reactive, and political ways. To write for my potential reader, I've had to 'tame' this text, while keeping true to myself(ves) and to participants. As other apprentices have</p>
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<p>This demands student be provided opportunities to do so. It is predicted that authentic encounters will inspire student interest in others and in their own language learning. Students may become empowered and more flexible in using Spanish if they have opportunities to show transfer of knowledge and skills required in conversation (unlike text-book roleplays).</p> <p>The observation of ‘talk’ about culture, the types of teaching approaches in use, and the process of learning enacted, will enable the observation and interpretation of effects of approaches to teaching and learning and participant perspectives (Byram &amp; Esarte Sarres, 1991, p. 297). This may require analysis of texts and textbook content (Byram &amp; Esarte Sarres, 1991). Such observations support this study’s representation of participants’ perspectives and practices over time, in pre-and-post collaborative interventions.</p> <p>The second aim of observation is to examine participant talk. This refers to speech acts uttered in lessons. I will analyse field notes and transcripts of classroom dialogue to identify procedures used for talking (turn taking, initiative and language form) and the content of dialogue (transcription method outlined in depth in chapter 9). I will make notes on the ‘depth’ or ‘complexity’ of discussions and on teacher versus learner-initiated comments. This will help identify and distinguish talk between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher-student (teacher or student as expert, facilitator, learner, creator)</li> </ul>	<p>stated, if our own supervisors can’t understand our work, how accessible is what we are doing (Nepia, 2013; Mitchell &amp; Edwards, 2013)? I fear some of this might not be ‘so’ accessible, but a lot will be.</p> <p>Thinking back to the beginning of this journey, to the literatures informing my methodology, I imagine it was easier to understand the more general, and affirmative ideas privileged in the academic texts I was reading. I can see how I found refuge in the more linear texts that imagined a reality out there for me to find. The texts gave me an objective and process to execute, with steps. They were less intimidating to me as a learner than the sometimes militant, and philosophically dense texts I found and discarded. I could make sense of the language. Exclusivity restricted my body’s mobility.</p> <p>Feminists and ‘women of colour’ critique the inaccessibility of some master narratives (Anzaldúa, 2000; hooks, 1990; Lorde 1984; Luke &amp; Gore, 1992), reinforcing white, heterosexual, middle-class and phallogocentric superiority (Anzaldúa &amp; Moraga, 1983; Salídvar-Hull, 2000). Lorde (1979, p.95) reminds us of the ‘raw power’ of difference, within ‘women’, when she says:</p> <p>As women, we have been taught to either ignore our differences or to view them as causes for separation and suspicion rather than as forces to change. Without community, there is no liberation .... But community must not mean a shedding of our differences, nor the pathetic pretense that these differences do not exist.</p>
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- Student-teacher (transaction or spontaneous exchange or a mix)
- Student-student (student as expert, facilitator, collaborator, or creator).

And the flexibility and the types of talk:

- Use of Spanish and English
- Types of questions (taking risks, seeking clarification, showing interest, questioning views etc)
- Form of critique (alternative perspectives, identifying problems, taken for granted notions etc.)
- Approach to spontaneity
- Reflection stimulated (personal, metacognitive, or metalanguage)
- Facilitating cultural substance
- Enabling an academic or life focus (curriculum/ student generated).

## Participants

The participants in this study include five Year 9 groups and one Year 10 group and their respective Spanish teachers in five public schools. Officials involved in programming curriculum and government initiatives and professional development of significance to Spanish curriculum at the time were sought for interviews. Student's perceptions of Spanish learning were elicited via a survey (in stage 1 and 2) and via informal conversations and journal entries (stage 2).

I have committed to not writing a disembodied master text. But some abstractness is inevitable.

I dislike texts that privilege theoretical abstractions over peoples' everyday experiences and struggles (hooks, 1990). Writers that must be "cool, under control, detached and analytical" ... make me suspicious (Bochner, 2000). However, in 2005, I wrote and executed master's processes somewhat systematically. This shaped how I 'conceived' of fallibilities and resistance, and critical pedagogy. My initial assumptions when challenges were magnified (to me), given my distorted (double) consciousness, was that I was doing something wrong and that there was something wrong with 'other' participants. Positivist texts have a way of convincing you that 'objectivity' is possible and necessary, and blame can be awarded. My text highlights that the body, enacting observation and movement, is 'necessary' (Geertz, 1973, p.23)

Over time I broadened my questions and listening capacity. I tried to 'better' grasp the POWER of power, but not before:

I allowed white rationality to tell me that the existence of the "other world" was mere pagan superstition. I accepted their reality... the rational, reasoning mode which is connected with external reality, the upper world, and is considered the most developed consciousness – the consciousness of duality. The other mode of consciousness facilitates images from the soul and the unconscious through dreams and imagination. ... The work of mestiza consciousness is to break down the subject-object duality that keeps her a prisoner and to

## Interviews

Interviews will be conducted to seek teachers' and officials' views, understandings of, and responses to, Spanish teaching and learning in schools. Teachers and officials will be asked about pedagogy, practices, and dealings with official system structures that affect Spanish curriculum in the sample. These participants are key informants of the nature of teaching and learning in Spanish in local schools. The use of semi-structured interviews will enhance the understanding of system and local influences on the context through first-hand interpretations and to elicit opinions regarding the research inquiry while enabling informant's expression about issues they perceive to be important. Although coding semi-structured interviews can be complex because of people's descriptions, depth, and varying perspectives (Burns, 2000), these are essential to gathering relevant biographical details of life and context (Silverman, 2006). Interview, and survey trials proved helpful in highlighting the complexity and time-consuming nature of these tasks. The advantages of open ended tools lie with the authentic depth elicited.

Official and teachers' interviews will be limited to one hour. Verbal and written responses will be transcribed verbatim and coded. Patterns will be sought in the data. Themes and important criteria such as frequency, intensity, assumptions of quality and quantity will be looked for, to help examine the characteristics of the data and any categories which may be generated to view

show in the flesh and through the images in her work how duality is transcended. (Anzaldúa, 1987, pp.58-59/102).

In my PhD, my own and my first supervisors' fears translated. This study was a mixed-methodology on steroids. It became a messodology moved by tensions, hopes and contradictions and the fight to keep my subjectivity, and participants' voices alive. It is 'messy' practice:

[A] mixture of experiential and analytical ways of knowing – that is, a privileged standpoint... It cannot be acquired through books or even distanced observation ... this privileged standpoint does not emerge from "authority of experience" but rather from the passion of experience, the passion of remembrance. (hooks, 1994, p.90)

The 'spirit' of this collaborative research is that all participants can have a meaningful say in the interactions of a project and its products, but who is to say that participants want to? Cross-institutional collaborations, commissioned by one party, are by default complex (Elbaz-Luwisch, 1997; Miles & Huberman, 1984; Phillips, 2013; Reason & Bradbury, 2001). I believe this is especially 'true' in research between schools and universities.

Today, collaborations with universities are seen to be problematic as some resemble the tensions of the market (where schools are consumers buying products). However, there is hope if schools, communities, and researchers can collaborate at grassroots, and where power relations are not ignored (Imtoul, Kameniar & Bradley, 2009;

comparisons and conclusions (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997, p. 520). Creating contextualized categories through patterns in data will enable the researcher to make informed judgments in preparing theories and potential practices, which are responsive and reflective of local contexts, perspectives and aims, as well as to developing deeper understanding of challenges to alternative approaches.

### **Interviews with officials**

Central to describing a context for the Spanish language curriculum in local schools is the process of interviewing officials involved in Spanish language education at the time. The data gathered will be triangulated and compared with the views of teachers and students. Officials will be asked to reflect upon:

- Their role in the Spanish curriculum
- Historical, social, and systematic influences on Spanish in schools
- Student participation and attrition
- Initiatives targeting Spanish and student engagement
- System effects and future planning.

### **Interviews with Teachers**

Spanish teachers were chosen on the basis that they teach Years 9 and or 10 in a public school. The focus of interviews will be on teachers' perceptions of their work and practices. Teachers' reflections on student's learning and participation in Spanish and their theories and beliefs about pedagogy are essential cues to understanding

Buckskin, 2012; Schulz, 2014). These ways have triggered a changing discourse in the training of teachers, as practitioner researchers of their own future practices in Australia, and this, I feel is to be celebrated (Davies et al., 2012).

[as above]. My perception of 'messy' practice is constructed always in my responses to my experiences of 'reading' into collaborative research methodology in my PhD induction year. There, knowledge of research collaboration efforts was often thin on the detail of how problematic and contradictory collaborator relations can be (research into collaborative studies was invisible in my proposal). What was present was based on textbook texts used to understand qualitative research (Burns, 2000; Huberman & Miles, 2002). This privileged the consensual, goal-oriented, and successful negotiations and outcomes of projects. In my experience, collaboration between participants in PhD research demands some participants and stakeholders will have more input (at certain times) than others. Some may be empowered (at certain times) while others may be disempowered (at certain times). Issues surrounding dialogue, negotiation, power sharing, and interactions led not to greater clarity necessarily but to more complexity, and doubt. However, there is new knowledge and the potential for new practice, in paying attention to these (Engels-Schwarzspaul, 2013). And all the time I still stop to ask God:



accepted practices and theories of learning and teaching (Graves, 2000). Teachers' views of current practice and alternatives are essential to designing and negotiating viable, relevant and responsive approaches and avenues for change (with participants).

Information gathered from interviews will be used to present accepted practices and beliefs about the teaching and learning of Spanish, at the time of the study. Interview data will also enable the design of tools and materials for stage 2. Teachers will be asked to discuss:

- How they became Spanish teachers and what their role is
- The beliefs and ideals that influence their teaching practice in Spanish
- Student-teacher relationships and students' learning and interests
- Planning (methods, themes, and materials) for teaching Spanish
- Perceptions of critical approaches
- Engaging Spanish community
- Learning of Spanish as an avenue for producing changes in society.

**Students' views**

Students are the main players in learning and are considered important sources of information and knowledge in this study. Students' views will be elicited to understand individual and group motivations, cognitive/affective interests, and goals for learning Spanish in school and beyond.

*¡Dios mío!*  
*¿Cómo ha pasado el tiempo?*  
*Como pesa.*  
*El tiempo pasa y parezco víctima: pasajera incapaz*  
*de nada.*  
*La verdad es que no soy víctima.*  
*Este viaje y pasar son necesarios.*  
*Cuando creo entender algo,*  
*otra cosa se enreda.*  
*Cuando se algo más,*  
*mi puño no lo sabe describir*  
*o mi boca es torpe*  
*pa los oídos de cierta gente.*  
*¿Y si lo escribo, pero mi texto no es justo con*  
*aquellos quienes quiero respetar?*  
*Vivir sin arriesgar*  
*no es vivir,*  
*es sobrevivencia.*  
*El tiempo pesará,*  
*pero cargarlo*  
*fortalece!*  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
*Oh my God!*  
*How time has passed.*  
*How it weighs.*  
*Time flies and I look like a victim:*  
*a passenger incapable of anything.*  
*The truth is I'm no victim.*  
*This journey and passage are necessary.*  
*When I think I understand something,*  
*something else is entangled.*  
*When I know something more,*  
*my fist doesn't know how to describe it or*  
*my mouth is clumsy for the ears of certain peoples.*

The focus on aspects of student motivation and language proficiency will lead to understanding, monitoring, catering for, and identifying motivational factors that are personally significant. Students' affective descriptions of learning will be elicited in depth through their reflections (journal entries) on current and past experiences (and surveys). Situational interest can be studied in viewing performances (observation and conversations) and in self-ratings (surveys), as well as evaluations of motivational content, tasks, and sources to articulating areas that motivate students or increase their interests to pursue empowerment through improvements in cognitive performance (Hidi & Baird, 1988) and critical learning. For this reason, a survey tool to monitor aspects of students' motivation over time was developed. A test of proficiency was also devised for monitoring speech and cultural awareness. Students may reveal other matters.

### **Student Survey questionnaires**

Students' views will be elicited from a survey questionnaire with open-ended format. A total of 90 students, in five schools, will be surveyed on their past and current evaluations and expectations from their learning in Spanish. Some distinctions could not be made by school site since Spanish is compulsory at two of the five schools in Year 9, a variation that exists across the sector. Data will be kept and coded separately per school prior to drawing conclusions between groups (stage 1) or individuals (stage 2).

*And what if I write it and my text does not do  
justice to those whom I respect?  
To live without risks is not living,  
its survival.  
Time may weigh  
but carrying it strengthens.  
\*\*\*\*\**

[translating for passion, not word].

This project shines a light on the mess using a "supportive voice" and my 'earlier' voices closer in times, places, and relations to participants in this study (Chase, 2005, p. 665). My story hopes to move with the reader, back and forth, in and away, from the text and me. I hope you can sense this, read into and critique it. Most importantly, I hope to inspire uncomfortable 'alien' disorientations through the text, before proceeding with more 'inclusive tactics' that enable a dialogue, empathic listening and social change (Saldívar-Hull, 2000, p. 173). I hope my manifestos and comunicados (*reports*) raise awareness of pain and evoke emotions (not fury). Because much of this, I feel, occurred during collaborations with participants. I do my own description to 'translate' my experience to the text. I create a space to display where I have felt welcome, taken under the wing, crushed, and struggle to set myself free. I feel:

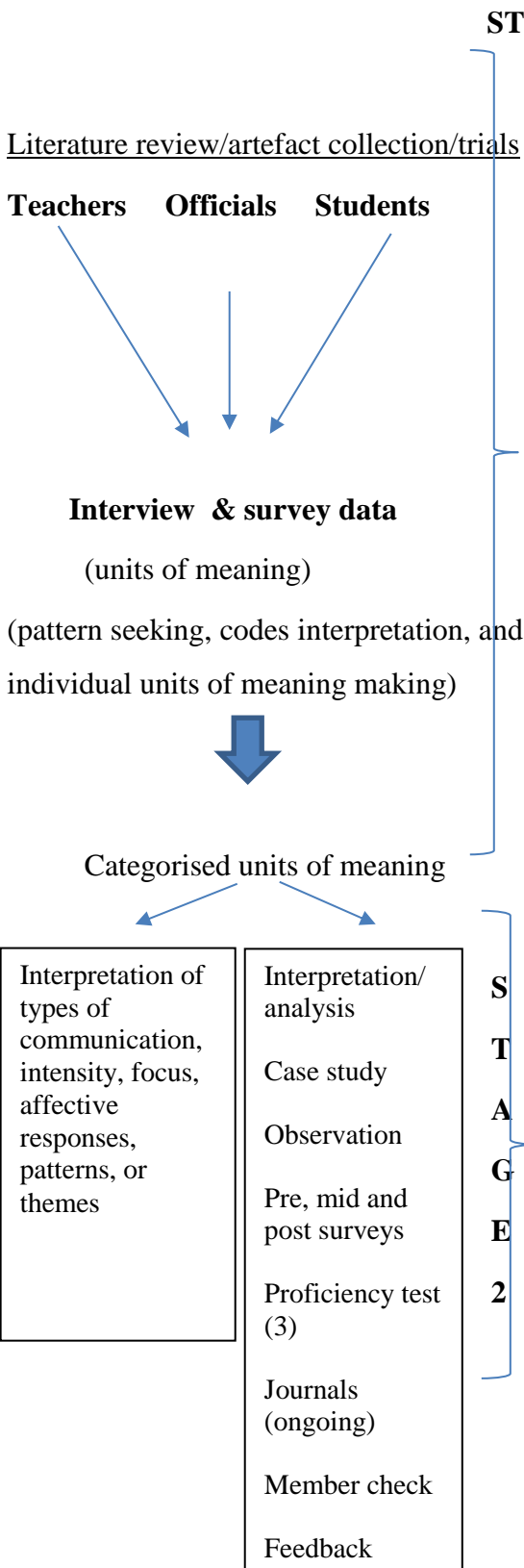
*I am a kite, held back, sometimes gently,  
sometimes forcefully, by a string. I can sway  
all over the place way up there – a thread  
keeps me grounded-resisting the force of  
powerful winds. The spirit of this thesis keeps  
me swaying yet grounded.  
(meditation, 10:41, a Tuesday night)*

<p>All students in one Year 9 classroom in each school site will be asked to reflect on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experiences and perceptions of Spanish teaching and learning</li> <li>• Reasons for continuing or ceasing study in Spanish</li> <li>• Factors they perceive to impact their learning and participation</li> <li>• Ways to improve ‘Spanish’ teaching/learning based on their interests.</li> </ul> <p>A trial phase took place to evaluate the appropriateness of the survey with participant feedback. The modified tool and researcher observations will complement the data on student perspectives and beliefs about their learning (throughout stage 2).</p> <p><b>Journal Writing</b></p> <p>In stage two, journals will be used by participants (the teacher, students, and researcher) to record reflections, knowledge, and understandings of metacognition and affective responses, provoked throughout the case study and its intervention phases. The aim of journal writing will be to reflect on pedagogy, learning, and key moments identified by the learner (all participants). The researcher will engage in interaction with participants’ entries, if agreed, in collaboration to enable critical reflective exchanges. Reflections are used as unstructured data to support rich descriptions of voices and how learners perceive their learning in context and time.</p>	<p>Such imperatives make the text part narrative, part auto-ethnography, and part testimonio (Beverley, 2008; Miller, 2008; Reyes &amp; Rodríguez, 2012). My text is personal theorising (Collins, 1991) with “reflexive narratives of liberation” to write:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">...a first person, oral or written account drawing on experiential, self-conscious, narrative practice to articulate an urgent voicing of something to which one bears witness. (Reyes &amp; Rodriguez, 2012, p. 525).</p> <p>This makes for deliberately political and intimate reflexivity. For these very reasons, these priorities make the text unpredictable in parts. My commitment is not to theory (I respect theory) but to people and stories (Bochner, 2000).</p> <p>Impersonal, itemised aims and methods, reify tools and give evidence for results achieved by one (and hail him/her/they).</p> <p>But, in this project, I was drawn into multiple participant signs and rhythms. I danced with, for, and even against partners whom introduced steps and spins within our still emerging choreography. I had to be led and thus follow in tensions in some moments. I was terrified of ending the dance.</p> <p>On the dance floor, moves resembled messy moments when two inexperienced partners dance a Cumbia (a Uruguayan dance), the first time. Research can be conceptualised as a dance, it’s not new (Nepia, 2013). The mess in partnerships is noticeable (Dana &amp; Yendol-Hoppey, 2014; Pajares, 1992). In fact, Davies (2015, p. 31)</p>
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<p>The journal aims to record reflection on affective responses to learning, the interestingness of tasks, methods, resources, and interactions; and to engage with aspects of participants' motivations through their evaluations. These may extend participant practices negotiated.</p> <p>If students request clarification or ideas on what they may write about in their journals, the teacher or researcher will broadly encourage reflection on their 'actual' or desired learning in Spanish, on their motivations, voices, and proficiency, or on their feedback on lessons.</p> <p><b>Triangulation</b></p> <p>Triangulation is a process which incorporates 'a cross-validation of and between data, data collection procedures, periods timed, and theoretical systems' (McMillan &amp; Schumacher, 1997, p. 520). The use of multiple sources and views on 'relevant' issues provide for some identification of convergence or divergence (Lawson, personal communication, 2006). This is possible between and within groups and policy and practice (Lawson, personal communication, 2006). This process helps find regularities and unique instances and to create diverse data which can be analysed to understand patterns, nuances, and perspectives, as shown below.<sup>16</sup></p>	<p>description of 'mess' in her dance with research could be mine:</p> <p>...immersion in a tumult of comings, goings, questionings, explorations, interferences, socialising and paralysis, trying out different identities-interviewer, interviewee, incompetent technician, teacher, student...</p> <p>That feels so real to me!</p> <p>In this collaborative project, subtle bumps between peoples' 'paradigmatic' borderlands and powerful relations, enriched and challenged this PhD. It broadened dialogue and highlighted that unstructured, un-choreographed, and ambiguous knowledges and practices developed en convivencia con otros (<i>in co-existence</i> with others). These say a lot about the PhD bureaucracy and processes.</p> <p>This multimodal product transforms a field which normally privileges the written single column (Davies, 2015). My need to respond to ethical issues arising spontaneously forced me to embrace mess in partnerships (Kuriloff, Andrus &amp; Ravitch, 2011; Davies, 2015). The pressure to report 'happy' and 'precise' endings would be unrepresentative. So, this is not just a political commitment to 'deacademizing' the PhD field (Anzaldúa, 1987; Saavedra, 2011).</p> <p>Davies (2015) cautions scholars to the cost of ignoring 'mess'. I see the risks. Nevertheless, I have found myself, as Memmi</p>
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<sup>16</sup> Adapted from Mc Millan and Schumacher (1997, p. 521).

**Diagram 1: Triangulation process**



(1965, p.45) states, conflicted by a “position of ambiguity”, serving different imperatives. And while qualitative research lends itself to designs that evolve in negotiation (Klehr, 2012), support for loosely ‘standardised’ forms (Eisner, 1981; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; Galeano, 2004; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Seidman, 2013), is not often on paper.

I am suggesting the PhD is a distinct social practice (Lee & Boud, 2009; Peseta & Brew, 2009; Ward, 2013). If it can be open to not seeking “definitive answers” (Klehr, 2014) and open to ‘messier’ dialogue, it may open up possibilities and journeys. This is respectful and responsible scholarship (Bishop, 2005). I can dream of what this can become.

This messodology, hereon, allows a marginalised person to spring up and compete “on equal terms with previously dominant discourses” dehumanizing participants (including me) (Ryan, 1999). I’m placing a value on ‘my own’ emancipation, a long-term project. Using the ‘native’ card won’t silence me (Smith, 1999). I assert my right to ‘escape’ (Tuhiwai Smith, 2005, p. 85) and ‘self-determine’ in solidarity with participants. And what about the many participants of research? To this Linda Tuhiwai Smith explains that:

Women, gay and lesbian communities, ethnic minorities, and other marginalized communities have made similar journeys of critical discovery of the role of research in their lives.  
(Tuhiwai Smith, 2005, p. 87)

This approach to triangulation increases the depth of the investigation and the critical analysis of documents which guide regulations, prior knowledge, held assumptions and theories, and the presentation of unique, popular, and alternative perspectives. Comparative methods are used to examine diverse perspectives, similarities, and differences. Data include artefact collections and participant referrals. ‘Observational data’ that may emerge in participant interactions will value and respect their confidentiality (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997, p.521).

### **Quantitative Data Analysis**

The data collected in this study will be used to identify participant perceptions, experiences, and practices. Interviews will be transcribed. Questionnaire, journal, proficiency test, and interview data will be analysed. A comparative method will be used to generate codes and establish generalizations using a guiding cue sheet, as stated. Time may be recorded to monitor intensity or length of procedures. Codes will be used to compare, make links, and present information to participants for feedback. Thematic analysis will be used to illustrate institutional, public and personal perceptions and practices endorsed in context (Flick, 2006).

In terms of the data analysis of surveys of Year 9 students (stage 1), random sampling was not used. Descriptive statistics will thus be used to understand student scores. Individual differences between schools will not be studied. As multiple

Here I reclaim my *conocimiento, idioma y cultura mestiza (my knowledge, language, and hybrid culture)* (Tuhiwai Smith, 2005). I use my vernacular (hooks, 1994: to code switch to my delight (Anzaldúa, 1987). Here is my splitting and awakening in my inner and outer life, no longer suppressed (Thomas, 2009). This ‘messy text’ is mine where ownership is rarely granted to the ‘subaltern’.

I value this privilege, even as I struggle to finish this text. I embody “the personal text as a critical intervention in social, political, and cultural life” (Holman Jones, 2000, p.763). Auto-ethnography allows me to speak of my ‘self’ as part of the research journey (Holman Jones, 2005).

And so, I must, and will.

surveys were applied to examine changes in learning over time, in stage 2, frequencies, patterns and percentages will be discussed.

### **Proficiency**

In stage two, Spanish students' proficiency will be studied over time. Proficiency is understood, as stated, as the level of verbal and cultural proficiency demonstrated. Without understanding what current levels are maintained by students or how the school, the teacher and the current curriculum define these levels, it is difficult to define a priori an appropriate tool for measure (and the SACSA framework does not assess proficiency). However, it is expected that the use of a language measuring tool, an amended version of the bilingual syntax measure (Guerrero & Del Vecchio, 1996), will aid this process. This tool will be examined with participants to value their expertise. Modification of this measure will allow joint examination of students' intercultural development in speaking and displaying complex knowledges, in lessons and in audio recordings in stage two (Bachman & Palmer, as cited in Norris, 1999, p. 10)

### **Concluding remarks on methodology**

This case study research is best supported by a qualitative approach as it aims to analyse, study, and make inferences on subjects in action (Denzin & Lincoln, 2001). There are calls for language learning research and teaching to address social issues, rather than focus on linguistic, stereotypical, or homogenous approaches

<p>(Crookes, 1993; Black, Wright, &amp; Cruickshank, 2016; Norton &amp; Toohy, 2004; Moreno-Lopez, 2005).</p> <p>The methodologies used in this study are designed to complement, and value participants' practices. The following chapters explain how methods, instruments, and the broader research process undertaken were engaged, received, challenged, and evaluated, by multiple participants. The ensuing discussion addresses each individual stage and phases of the collaborative study.</p>	
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**Image 8: La Nueva Democracia (David Alfaro Siqueiros)**

The image below belongs to a famous Mexican mural depicting liberation from oppression, as cited in *Historia de la Sintonía* (website) 2014, retrieved from: <http://www.historiadelasinfonia.es/naciones/la-sinfonia-en-mexico/vida-musical-en-mexico/la-pintura/>. It speaks to the powerful hybrid body being torn and still fighting with hope against many and multiple forces at once.





## 4. ENTERING THE FIELD: IN STRUGGLE

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Let me begin the simple process of drifting.

I begin peeling back layers of my consciousness. Here, the thesis, my theory, my practice, is like an 'onion' pulled out from the soil. It's dirty, but under the sunlight layers and fibers, become 'more' visible, to me, and wow, I can marvel at the textures my eyes can see in the outer layers of its skin.

Held up to the light I see it's so much more complex and porous, and beautiful than what I first thought. Where do I begin to peel, to access more of the flesh without some 'sting' and 'bleeding'? I'm sure there's many ways to de-skin it, so I'll go with my mestiza way.

In this study, I'll go with my first attempts to hold things up to the light, to close inspection. I can go with my first informed impressions, with what I knew and could 'do' across the case study period. I'm going with my womanly intuition, now, needing an inadequate, risky, and necessary stripping of layers, and fibers. In doing so, I look to my innards and my questioning from the gut (as in *Speaking in Tongues: The Third World Woman Writer*) (Anzaldúa, 2015, p.170). This creates an "...imaginal, spiritual-activist, and ontological dimension" of intimacy with my past selves (Keating, 2015, p. xxvii), remembering that "...nothing happens in the "real" world unless it first happens in the images in our heads." (Anzaldúa, 1987, p.109).

This chapter re-enacts my socio-cognitive theory and lens on Spanish students' motivations in this study. It draws on my 2006 'developing' Freirean standpoint, to examine inequities faced in the Spanish language curriculum in schools in SA. It allows participants to speak up to the challenges Spanish students and Spanish teachers, and even curriculum advisors and high school principals face in an inequitable 'languages' curriculum field. This story (or the voices within) has not been told in research to date. It highlights the challenges to Spanish linguacultures learning within a monocultural and monolingual borderland 'hostile' to multicultural and multilingual pluralities (Garcia, 2011) in which Eurocentrism is, as McLaren states, the "cultural anchor" (1994, p.xi).

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## Preparatory Study: results and findings

This chapter outlines the preparatory study, stage one of this research project undertaken in 2006. The study consisted of two parts involving distinct research processes and foci, and diverse data sets and stakeholders. The methodology, as stated, is qualitative, however, quantitative assumptions underpin the design. These methodologies influence the data, results, and findings.

The study's mixed-methodology allowed the investigation of multiple participant perspectives. It allowed learning from, and examining aspects of participants' perspectives on Spanish teaching, curriculum, and learning in several sites. The data focus allowed access to 'one-off' perspectives from participants in public education sites, and the South Australian Department of Education.

The research process in this study's preparatory study drew on single semi-structured interviews and Year 9 student surveys. The methodology and tools employed with stage one participants were to aid participant collaborations in stage two. The enacted methods are contextualised, to situate the data and results.

The chapter has two sections. The first provides an overview of the research processes enacted following the study's phases and their distinct approach to participant engagement. The second section reports on data gathered from participants in each study.

### Participants

As discussed in chapter three, Spanish teachers and Spanish student participants' views have been largely ignored in research to date. Studies were not located in which stakeholders co-designed the Spanish curriculum, pedagogy and learning, in local school communities; and had responsibility over curriculum monitoring or assessment of impacts of 'interventions' on students' learning, motivations and voices. Engaging and sharing participants' views, reflections, and feedback about Spanish teaching and learning in SA closes this gap.

Disruptive questions:  
findings from the gut

Who speaks?

Whose interests and curiosities lead the way?

Does it sound too 'good' to be 'true'?

Does 'gathering' involve manual labour?

How does this positioning shape the study and participants 'everyday' exchanges and emerging relationships ?

## **Informed Consent**

In this study, all participants' consent was sought and approved by the University's Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (SBREC), a panel of academics, the Department of Education and Children's Services' (DECS) and individual participants and schools.

### ***Adult participant informed consent***

Participants consent was sought in 2006 and 2007. The research process and instruments were introduced to participants and varied in accordance with participant roles and expected involvement in the study. An information package was developed for each group.

### ***Students' Informed Consent (one group)***

Students involved in this study were under 18, and thus, law required parental consent. To enable this, students' Spanish teachers introduced them briefly to the study. The teacher invited the researcher to meet the students and introduce the project aims, significance, research methods and processes in a brief presentation seeking student questions and feedback. Students were given the instruction to discuss and read the information pack supplied with their 'guardians' or parents. It detailed students/parent/caregiver rights and introduced the study and expectations in basic English. A consent form provided a space to give or deny consent. Collection of forms was difficult and relied on extensive follow up over weeks (2-6). Throughout this time participant interviews were undertaken.

### ***Interviews***

Five Year 9 Spanish teachers, two DECS curriculum advisors, and five high school principals were interviewed in this study. Three semi-structured interview questionnaires were developed for three participant groups. Interviews elicited participant perspectives on the strengths and challenges in the Spanish curriculum in schools. Most interviewees were engaged for the preparatory study undertaken in 2006 (stage one). One teacher was interviewed in 2007 and 2008 (in stage two). After stage one interviews, all participating teachers were invited to collaborate in stage two. As none

**Why seek institutional consent prior to participants' consent?**

**Are we starting off on a point of mistrust? What history inspires this?**

**Is an 'external' body best positioned to structure consent?**

**How informed can participants (and researchers/supervisors) be, if a study employs negotiations, yet to come?**

**What about consent post-case study?**

volunteered, a teacher's referral enabled engaging a Year 10 Spanish teacher. During this process, surveys were conducted.

### ***Spanish student surveys***

A representative sample of students learning Spanish in Years 8, 9 and 10 in participating schools was invited to complete a survey during stage one of this study. Students were involved in either: a trial survey (one Year 8 class) or the revised and final survey. The trial is not included.

The survey developed focused on aspects of Spanish students' motivations, participation, and voices. Its trial in a split Year 8/9 (year-level) class inspired amendments negotiated with participants. The final survey was applied in Year 9, in stage one, and later revised with participants in a Year 10 class in stage two.

### **Limitations**

There are several limitations to this study. Firstly, there was a misguided assumption about participants' prior knowledge of 'phenomena' investigated. It was not part of the study's design to ask participants, for instance, what they understood to be motivation. Analysis of multiple data revealed mismatches between participants' interpretations of research questions and intended meanings. However, the methodology used was deemed 'reliable' and 'rigorous' as the researcher did not influence participants' views on meanings ascribed (Burns, 2005). This practice has been critiqued (Morse et al., 2002; Mulhall, 2002; Ponterrotto, 2005).

While this study used participant approved member check, final results and findings have not yet been shared. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, data analysis was not finalised for approximately eight years due to institutional processes, participant delays, and researcher circumstances. Finding participants for the study took over nine months, and data collection spanned 3 years, as approved by the University. Changes in the direction of the study led to three years of research team debates and to changing supervisors. Also, experiences impacting the researcher's life demanded intermission from study for 3 years and 7 months. This extended the PhD candidature and access to participants.

### **Conditions of Candidature**

**Why weren't students interviewed? Why the differential treatment? Is there a hierarchy of knowledge in research practice in education?**

**Is it possible for a researcher to discover in the field that her study is not actually needed?**

**What structures and conditions make critical collaborative research an impossibility or undesirable to Spanish teachers?**

**Why exclude the trial?**

An Australian Postgraduate Award scholarship was won in 2005 to undertake this study. It was ceded in 2006 to begin university teaching. The study was then undertaken part-time for 7 years. From 2015-2017.

### **The study's contribution**

As discussed in the methodology chapter, this study uses a qualitative mixed-methodology. Stage one aided understanding participant identified macro and micro factors of influence to Spanish in schools. Data generated enabled access to institutional, pedagogical, social, individual, and political factors framing theory and practice in the then current Spanish language curriculum. Participant data and results address a key gap in the researcher's own previous research (Berniz, 2001) and in the fields of critical language pedagogies in Australia and in the fields of Spanish students' motivations, voices and proficiencies internationally.

### **The study's enacted design**

The study design enabled engaging and learning from participant perspectives, experiences, and practices. Stage one involved the researcher gaining a feel for classroom culture within Spanish in middle-schools. The grounded approach to gaining volunteers enabled the development of a multi-perspectival outlook on the field. In the first stage, methods included informal fieldwork observations, one-off interviews, and one-off student surveys. The unexpected delivery of 'critical' workshops tailored to Year 9 students was required to recruit volunteers for stage two. This delayed its commencement.

### **Stage one: data**

The first stage of the study sought multiple participants' views on the history of Spanish teaching in SA schools, and on learner experiences, motivations, decisions, and participation in Spanish in local classrooms. Thirteen interviews and 90 student surveys were undertaken. Participant suggestions and critique of curriculum and teaching were gathered. Interviews were transcribed and granted member check. Data analysis examined participant preferences and the frequency and strength of views in a process of triangulation.

**Does the 'orthodoxy' assume volunteers are readily available?**

**Are PhD candidates 'insured' against 'natural' events or participant delays?**

**Do four-year candidatures deter undertaking 'longer-term' collaborative research?**

**What individual, cultural, and financial capitals, and life trajectories, may enable 'timely' completion?**

### Critical workshops volunteered in stage one

Eight workshops were volunteered to recruit participants for stage two. In these, Year 9 students were engaged in Spanish in critical-consciousness-raising dialogue and reflection on the researcher's heritage, and experiences in an Indigenous Mexican community. A teacher wrote a letter of thanks (Participant, 2006) stating:

*It was a fascinating talk and students have since shown an increased interest... I could see the students were interested and you captivated their attention.... You were very flexible and open in your approach ... this invited students to participate. ...If your aim was to get them thinking it worked. After the lesson ..., students continued to ask questions about ... issues you raised and we planned other work based on their curiosity. I believe your discussion raised their awareness of issues that relate to privilege and social justice and I am confident this triggered deep reflections.... Your energy and enthusiasm for Spanish motivated them and engaged them in the talk and that is a rare quality of much value to awakening students' passion for learning Spanish but also for keeping the language alive in the community... you have a great skill. You really involve people in learning and you treat people as equal participants...*

### Research assumptions challenged

It was anticipated that a stage one teacher would volunteer for stage two, which did not occur due to participant workloads and other constraints. A participants' enthusiasm for the project prompted a referral. Meetings, and communications with the new participant ensued, with enthusiasm, however, there were delays in completing new consent processes and meeting new student participants. Enthusiasm for the project did not ensure 'stable' engagement with research process or prompt consent form return.

### Review of macro and micro study hypotheses

Multiple hypotheses were explored in this study. It was hypothesized that a critical pedagogical approach was not in use in participating schools. To provide investigate this, five Spanish teachers were interviewed, and five Year 9 student groups were surveyed. In addition, Spanish curriculum advisors, and high school principals were also interviewed to understand

Can studies make contributions to lives and not be considered contributions to knowledge?

Were ideas of negotiating power, curriculum, and teaching with students and a researcher potentially too invasive for some of the teachers?

What shapes teacher inability or reluctance to participate in a study when impressed by impact?

Did the discussion of the Spanish curriculum's history in education consider Australia's uneasy race relations (Bunda, 2008)?

their perspectives on these matters. Another hypothesis was that comparison of data between stages (one and two) would yield measurable ‘results’ and illustrate ‘dominant’ and ‘marginal’ issues, from the diverse perspectives. Data analyses assumed causal links and assessed the ‘frequency’ and ‘strength’ of responses. It was also hypothesized that participants’ feedback on Spanish teaching, learning, curriculum, and its leadership would provide rich and sophisticated first-hand analyses, leading towards improvement of Spanish practice in schools. Finally, it was hypothesized that participants would feel free to ‘critically’ evaluate systemic, social, and other challenges, faced in this field, if probed empathically.

### **Stage one data: Participant Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken to ascertain individual views on the Spanish curriculum. The focus of interviews varied slightly to understand multiple dimensions of: Spanish teaching and learning in schools; public/private initiatives for Spanish programs and curriculum, and possible factors that impact Spanish students’ learning, motivations, and participation. Gender is excluded from data to protect anonymity, given the small size of the population of participants in Spanish in SA.

### **South Australian Spanish curriculum advisor consent and interviews (DECS, 2006).**

Two Spanish curriculum advisors were interviewed in this study. They were contacted via phone and email. An information package and letter of consent was provided with rights to anonymity and to withdraw outlined. Both advisors provided consent. Member check of transcripts was sought.

One Spanish advisor promptly returned the interview transcript and authorised its use for the study. The second returned half of the transcript and despite numerous assurances, the remaining section was not returned. The researcher believes that tensions in participants’ roles in the study and in their involvement in Spanish Teachers’ PD provision had emerged. Due to this, the advisor’s transcript was not used, though consent was not withdrawn.

**How do early career researchers manage vulnerabilities and power-relations?**

**How often do studies report results and findings in the everyday vernacular of participants?**

**Can brief encounters prior to consent meaningfully enable trust?**

**Can participants in positions of authority feel threatened by a PhD candidate’s research?**

**Is silence a form of ‘withdrawal’?**

## Curriculum Advisor interview questionnaire

The interview questionnaire investigated advisor perceptions of:

1. Their role in the Spanish curriculum
2. Changes to their role
3. The history of the Spanish language curriculum in SA
4. Middle/ senior school initiatives
5. Concerns regarding students' proficiency or enrolment
6. System influences on students' decisions to learn Spanish
7. Future plans for Spanish in DECS or in other sites.

The following sections answer these questions, in this order.

### A Spanish curriculum advisor's role and his/her perceived changes to the role

The curriculum advisor held multiple roles in relation to Spanish language curriculum planning and implementation in government schools over an extended period. As a senior advisor on language policy, teacher PD, curriculum programming, and on curriculum services, he/she explained that:

“...Spanish is one of the languages that we as the department support [pause] one out of ten plus Aboriginal languages um that we support in regards to provision of PD for teachers and Spanish is also included in our policy directions and engagement strategies.”

(Language Curriculum Advisor, 2006)

Regarding whether this role had changed, the advisor highlighted that changes to funding impacted duties undertaken. The advisor suggested that the only constant in these roles was that Spanish was “...one of the identified languages in South Australia”. His/her current role required her/him to “...manage really, the deliverables of the contract... [that language service providers were given] ... “as opposed to actually delivering” programs [i.e. PD].

Can a researcher's publications discourage participants from participating in a study, particularly, if she engages critically in PD system evaluations?

Has the centralised Eurocentric language service represented Spanish language/culture varieties?

What qualifications are required by DECD of advisors in SA?



## **On the history of Spanish in SA (2006)**

The advisor discussed that Spanish is one of DECS' identified languages. It is the department which provides support for Spanish teachers' PD. The Professional Learning Services developed in the early 90s: a provision which changed over several years. In 1994, there were "...language specific advisors that formed a part of a team...". In 1999 an "... outsourced model of curriculum support..." was implemented. This meant that "...overseeing and managing the services provided rested with curriculum services, however, the actual job of providing the PD was outsourced to schools or organisations [with] ... leadership [within the] languages curriculum... [and/or with expertise in the] ...culture. The advisor had to "develop an operational structure for the provision of support for all languages." A "...merit selection process..." was used to choose schools to serve specific languages.

The advisor explained that at the time of the interview "Norwood Morialta High School" was provided funding for a Spanish coordinator. Its role was to maintain communication with Spanish teachers (i.e. through email, newsletters, or visits) and organise PD. The advisor stated that the major changes in support provision were its changing from one of "internal" to "external provision".

## **Initiatives in Spanish in middle school and senior years**

The Spanish advisor explained that implementing initiatives is key to his/her role in overseeing projects in schools. These target support for nine languages and Aboriginal languages "chosen out of community consultation". As Spanish is one of the nine languages chosen, it "doesn't have any special consideration."

The advisor also noted that 'inter-governmental agreements' were being pursued with the French, German, and Spanish governments. A consultant was appointed and funded by the government of Spain. The DECD advisor was working closely with the consultant and said that having a "native

**What criteria is used to define 'merit'?**

**Is a preoccupation with enrolment rather than proficiency an effect of a 'supposed' 'overcrowded curriculum' or a result of existing 'language' hierarchies?**

**Is the advisor aware of NALSAS in discussing the decline of Spanish?**

speaker” consultant was a “huge achievement”, offering contemporary insights and “authentic resources” of benefit to local PD initiatives.

### **Advisor perspectives on student proficiency and enrolments in Spanish**

In response to the question of whether there are any concerns in Spanish regarding Spanish students’ proficiency levels or regarding Spanish students’ participation in the curriculum in schools, the advisor highlighted that he/she “wouldn’t single out Spanish”. She/he discussed student ‘enrolment’ and noted that “...retention of language students is always a concern”. She/he reflected on the decline in the numbers in Spanish and in the overall number of language students. He/she believed the decline was linked to how “...languages education is perceived within our society...” The advisor suggested “...we still have a long way to go before it is recognised as one of eight um core learning areas.”

### **Curriculum advisor views on social factors influencing Spanish students’ participation and enrolment**

When the advisor was invited to discuss “any social influences ...” of impact on students’ decisions to learn Spanish or drop the language once it is no longer compulsory, she/he highlighted that there is no “...data that indicates that ... [and] anecdotal data would say to me that Spanish is one of the most popular so no I don't think that umm that those issues impact on Spanish being a choice or not.”

### **Spanish advisor perspectives on system-based influences which may influence students’ decisions to learn Spanish**

The Spanish advisor responded to this question on system influences by noting several matters including: perceptions of languages, values in the community, system responses to community perceptions, teacher supply, leadership in the community, teacher advocacy, teacher knowledge of reasons to raise the profile of languages, and inadequate human resources management leading to the loss of valuable teachers.

**Can pre-determining interview length impact participants?**

**Can participants misinterpret questions and novice researchers not notice?**

**Do advisors have academic freedom to speak uncensored?**

## **Advisor perspectives on future plans for Spanish in DECS or other government initiatives in SA**

The advisor highlighted that there were “no plans to target Spanish in particular whatsoever um because all our languages are treated equally [pause] we do have a DECS Languages Statement...”. [which] describes the policy context of the department until 2011 where Spanish is highlighted and there is a languages engagement strategy implementing a three-tier partnership within DECS... [and] “...the state office, the work of schools and the work of districts” outlining ten priorities for the next ten years. He/she highlighted that “by 2011 all students will be given the opportunity to achieve the standards in our curriculum framework” (in SACSA). The adviser added SACSA strands, for instance, the Understanding Culture and Understanding Language, look for “...more than just proficiency...”, however, as “...languages is generally taught between 1 and 2 hours a week ... you have to be realistic about the proficiency level you can reach ...”. She/he added that “the key leverage point to get proficiency up is to increase the value of languages education [pause]. The advisor expressed the need to “drum up” political support from “department leadership”.

## **Preparatory phase interviews with high school principals in SA public schools**

The principals’ interviews were conducted next in the round of interviews. Principals were invited to participate in this study as they are responsible for overseeing Spanish curriculum and program implementation in their school.

Principals’ interview questions investigated their perceptions of:

1. Their perceived role in the Spanish curriculum at their school
2. The history of Spanish in the school
3. Middle/senior school initiatives in use in Spanish
4. Student participation in Spanish
5. Social and system influences on student participation
6. Government or private initiatives for Spanish in the last 5 years
7. Future plans for Spanish.

**How ‘much’ of what a participant says, or doesn’t say, is data?**

**What understandings of leadership, of education, and of languages, are required of SA principals overseeing language programs?**

**Could more ‘open’ dialogue enable ‘risky’ interview debates if participants’ hold adverse views towards the topic or study?**

The following sections answer these questions in this order.

### **Principal's informed consent**

Five high school principals at public schools were interviewed in stage one. The informed consent process as used with advisors was replicated with principals. All principals gave consent and completed member.

### **Issues with high school principals' anonymity**

At the time of data analysis, it became apparent to the researcher that the small sample of schools teaching complete (Year 8-12) Spanish programs in SA, either on site, or via direct involvement with the School of Languages, could easily be identifiable. For this reason, data revealing specific details of school programs, language combinations and initiatives had to be omitted. In order to respect and distinguish principals' views, each was assigned a code. The first principal interviewed is identified with the code: 'School A', the second, is 'School B', and so on. This assists interpretation.

### **The principals' perceived roles in relation to Spanish**

Two of the five principals interviewed gave a detailed response on their roles in relation to Spanish at their school. The principal for 'School A' stated that he/she was "... the educational leader responsible for the curriculum". The Principal for 'School B' stated: "... I'm responsible for um the operation of the entire school..." "... Spanish is one ... of our languages and ... our role is to provide opportunities for students to learn a language." The principal stated that this included collaboration with feeder schools, and local and international institutions. The Principal for 'School C' stated that: "as principal I'm responsible for the curriculum" ... "I'm not sure on what grounds Spanish was introduced into the curriculum but we have two languages that we teach ..." and "...my role is basically to maintain an overview of the curriculum, make decisions about what err subjects" are taught. 'School D' was a deputy principal. He/she explained: "...part of my role is to look after the language programs...", "...an

**Why not start with principals' standpoints on the purpose of education?**

**What are principals' expectations of languages, and of language teachers and learners? Do they expect intercultural proficiency?**

overarching responsibility....” The Principal for ‘School E’ saw his/her role was unchanged by curriculum area, and that student subject choice, regional school programs, the historical strength of languages in the school, and availability of teachers, impacted decision making “...in terms of what languages and how much...” to offer.

### **Principals’ perceived changes to their role**

The principals’ responses to this question were succinct. Four (of 5) principals noted no real changes for five years. However, their responses across the interview disclosed changes to their duties, responsibilities, agenda, and preferred managerial styles.

The principal of ‘School A’ stated that his/her primary role had remained the same. The principal of ‘School B’ stated it “...changed... [in] the management of teaching of languages” and provision of “...leadership in the curriculum implementation...” of the SACSA framework (in 2000). She/he said it was a “...big thing...” for teachers, and for the PD he/she would provide. All of this would shape “...the look of Spanish...”, she/he said.

The principal of ‘School C’ reported no past changes to his/her role but highlighted changes to come. She/he advised that the school would implement a “...new curriculum model...” to support “Maths, Science and English”. This decision emerged from the principal’s “concern about the curriculum.” [languages]. She/he explained that “... many students eh are unsuccessful in at a certain year level and then go on to do that subject at higher year levels...” [and then] “...don't have the eh basics to be able to cope with it”. The curriculum is therefore being revised “...so that eh students who want to go on have the opportunity to be successful.” The ‘revision’ allows students to: “...choose different topics”. He/she anticipated that languages may suffer in the change.

The principal of ‘School E’ stated that her/his role had “not really changed” but what had changed was how he/she approached decision-making. He/she provided a detailed anecdote on a “political barney” between administrators and language teaching staff. The principal’s experience influenced her/his new approach to consultation. He/she

**Can principal interest, apathy, passion, or disinterest impact programs and stakeholders?**

**What is a good Spanish teacher according to principals?**

concluded saying: "... staff don't make a curriculum decision about whether we have ... [*X language or Y language*] ... it's not for everybody to decide."

### **On the history of Spanish in five local schools**

The principals held varied understandings of the history of the Spanish in their school. Two of the five principals provided detailed knowledge of it. Two principals expressed limited understandings and one expressed no knowledge of this background.

The principal of 'School A' explained that Spanish had been a primary language at the school for an extended period. He/she discussed strong relationships with feeder schools and unique immersion and extension programs. The school had offered focused programs and international student exchanges which were under threat in 2006.

The principal of 'School B' stated that he/she couldn't "remember" "...when Spanish was introduced" and would provide enrolment statistics to help with this. The principal of 'School C' stated that Spanish was at the school prior to his/her arrival and she/he was "not sure the grounds on which Spanish was first introduced...".

The principal of 'School D' provided considerable detail although Spanish preceded the principal's time at the school. She/he noted that language teaching staff had been pivotal to initiatives rolled out and that staff "passion", travel and study expanded "the offerings that the school had". The principal highlighted that staff initiatives supported the expansion of staffing and student interest in Spanish.

The principal of 'School E' expressed concern with Spanish's "under-appreciated" status, as an "international language". She/he said, "people ... rave on about Chinese (pause) ... on the door step ... but I think they under-appreciate the importance of Spanish ...". He/she also said that "historically it was quite strong..." ... "over five years..." but that a culling of subjects "hurt" Spanish. This principal (School E), as that of 'School D', discussed teacher quality. She/he said, a "strong and good Spanish teacher" is key. She/he recalled one had "built it up and it was very strong" [and] 'the subject flourishes', (but if the teacher isn't good, it won't be chosen).

**What do interpretations of a question on initiatives say about leadership?**

**Can consecutive questions highlighting 'gaps' in participant knowledge generate increasing unease in participants?**

**Can principals hold 'narrow' views of learning?**

### **Middle and senior school initiatives in use in Spanish**

All principals reported diverse initiatives running at their schools. These are listed to protect school anonymity. Initiatives discussed included: immersion programs linking primary schools with accelerated Year 8, 9 and 10 secondary programs, Year 11 students' learning programs, SACSA framework PD for Spanish teachers, reporting strategies PD, work with the University of SA's Research Centre for Languages, Multi-literacies projects for Spanish background speakers, performance management (for teachers to develop year, term and weekly plans), web page development for student support, employment of a new teacher (on fractional time), and, Spanish government programs. Of the five principals interviewed, one of the principals repeated that it was not his/her role to know of initiatives. He/she stated that:

"I think it's fair to say that within the secondary school structure there's a learning area coordinator and it may well be that the learning area coordinator who asserts a role in that regard but ... (pause) ...because we have a limited allocation of coordinators for ... [*X subject* and *X subject*] ... advised by the same coordinator and his expertise has been dependent on the eh staff the teaching staff ...[it] ... (pause) we've had a little bit of instability in ...the teaching of languages a...I guess [there's] a basic curriculum that eh that people follow".

### **Principal perspectives on student participation in Spanish**

Principals interpreted the question on students' participation in Spanish to be a question of 'enrolment' more than engagement or 'participation'. The principal from 'School A' discussed "growth". The principal from School 'B' outlined how Spanish and another language have "the most enrolments". The principals from schools 'C' and 'D' noted that Spanish was compulsory in some levels which secured enrolment. The principal from School 'C' clarified that: "there's a drop in Spanish but there is also a drop in other languages and that's ... (pause)... more to do with the SACE pattern and the requirements that the students need to meet and also, what they believe their future career path is and whether Spanish fits..." He/she

**Does the question of student participation in all subject areas attract reflection on the influence of family background, social networks, travel access, career pathways, university access, work prospects (etc.)?**

said more students continue with Spanish in senior years. The principal from ‘School E’ said, the issue now was “lowish” enrolment and going “through a bit of an issue with a teacher...”

The principals repeatedly discuss the compulsory status of language learning. Four principals stated that enrolments drop when a language is not compulsory. The principal from ‘School C’ said “there’s a significant drop off” with choice. The principal from ‘School D’ stated that “participation is positive” even though languages are compulsory.

In this item, two principals discussed student participation and teacher quality as factors with causal relationships. The principal from ‘School A’ said: “... I think there is a strong sense of partnership between who is the teacher and the students (pause) so I think where we have good relationships we tend to have growth ...[where] “...we’ve got good teachers”. The principal from ‘School E’ claimed that participation, in terms of enrolment, was directly a result of teacher strength. He/she recalled an anecdote, stating that teachers make all the difference and because “languages are always wobbly so Spanish went through a bit of a bad year but its improving now... [as the] teacher ... is much stronger ....”

On the topic of ‘teacher quality’, the principal from ‘School E’ explained that “...if the staff were dreadful ... it was chaos every lesson”. He/she recalled having “dreadful” (Spanish) teachers for three years and wanted “...decent teachers”. She/he noted things were different: “now we have ... strong teachers but we have strong conservative teachers...”. The principal argued for “changing the nature of teaching and learning so it is engaging and interesting (pause) right (pause) so that kids are turned on by it in the same way they need to be turned on by any subject”.

The principal of ‘School B’ noted student participation was complex. He/she highlighted that Spanish, and another language had “good enrolments” and that “the fact that it is one of our most popular languages does show that there is a strong interest in Spanish ... in the broader community.” This view makes causal links between language popularity in school and in community.

**Can  
preoccupation  
with  
enrolment and  
causal links  
between  
enrolment and  
teacher  
effectiveness,  
be damaging  
to some?**



## **Social and system influences on student participation in Spanish?**

### **Social influences**

All five principals interviewed believed that participation in languages was influenced by diverse social influences. The principal from 'School A' outlined that friends, opportunities for travel, career pathways, university entry and work potential (i.e. in hospitality) are social impacts. He/she explained that "being a European subject and spoken by such large numbers around the world (pause) it's a language that can be taken anywhere.". The principal from 'School B' talked about student backgrounds and that "clearly eh they want to study the language because of those family connections and social networks." She/he said: students from "South American background" benefit from "Spanish being so positively portrayed in the media" [as] "all things Latin American" are "popular" and "...the young people are interested in (pause) the dance, the songs..." "... (pause) the movies that young people watch... have a positive impact on young people wanting to know about Spanish and Latin American cultures and the language [becomes] ...a cool thing to do". On this influence, he/she said, if "it inspires students to learn languages I'm pleased".

In contrast, the principal at 'School C' highlighted negative domino effects of social influences on student participation. She/he declared that the "biggest thing that influences" students in Spanish is "that they don't see a direct relevance" ...[as] "they don't anticipate that they'll be ever speaking Spanish or [*X language*] ...". This principal saw a link between student perceived relevance and effort and mentioned the challenges for teachers. She/he stated that "because they don't see it's relevant they don't put in a great deal of effort so it becomes quite difficult ...for the Spanish teachers ... to motivate students who are just not interested...". The principal said a student's interest in work, a student's social network, and social class restricted potential for "overseas travel" and influenced participation. He/she said that "there are a very wide range of ethnic groups within the school [and]...community and I'm not sure Spanish speaking people would stand out as a large group..." She/he also noted peer pressure,

**Is it common to see leaders critically reflect on system failures and how they are part of the problem?**

**What can result from deficit assumptions of the relationship between school community low-socio-economic 'status'?**

perceptions of teacher quality and enjoyment, [but was unsure if these were] socially influential.

Other social factors noted in principals' interviews suggested family background influences participation if learning the language is considered a 'new' (exciting) opportunity (Principal C). The principal from 'School D' perceived likeability, novelty, relevance, and utility of a language to family members (and backgrounds) could be a social influence on participation. (this item was unintentionally skipped in 'School E' principal's interview).

### **System Influences**

Principals held diverse perspectives on the question of 'system influences on student participation. All highlighted the value of teachers. The principal from 'School A's' response captures the general view that "the most significant... [system influence] is our ability as a system to provide quality teachers to deliver the curriculum in an exciting and engaging way and [with teachers] who have the qualifications (pause) ... [and that these are] the biggest issue anywhere in Australia". He/she said a good teacher' has 'passion' for his/her subject and an ability to 'engage learners' and help them understand and see the relevance of learning, rather than use rote learning approaches". She/he claimed good teachers "understand how students learn best and how they learn languages best" and that teachers need time and resources.

The principal from 'School B' was critical of the department. She/he said: "the fact that the department has done nothing at all in the area of long-term-planning for teacher supply and there is no liaison between the department and universities (pause) means ... the department just isn't preparing itself for future teachers ... There are many more schools that would be teaching Spanish if they could find teachers (pause) so this issue of teacher supply is critical." He/she critiqued a lack of leadership "at the highest levels." She/he said, there are schools opting out of Spanish because of 'lack of leadership' and 'incentives' and that central office should make languages compulsory up until Year 10.

The principal from 'School C' noted that teachers are an important influence and can introduce "instability" in a school. She/he said, "I'm sure

**With whom lies the locus of control over support for language curricula in schools?**

**Should principals' childhood language learning experiences shape their decision-making?**

**What evidence supports the claim that language 'materials' are transferable across all languages?**

it does because I think their choices are influenced by their perceptions of the teacher and whether they like the teacher whether they hate the teacher whether they make them work makes the lesson enjoyable and so on". He/she was also critical of how the "education department don't seem to care what language students study so long as they study a language". She/he noted that students learning several languages throughout their schooling gives the impression that "language is not all that important".

Some principals discussed impacts on student choices. The Principal from 'School D' reported restrictive "SACE pattern choice". For example, to have one language, too much choice at the Year 10/11 junction, and being forced to fit compulsory topics, influence senior student choices. The Principal from 'School E' said that: "140 languages are taught and that's too many..." and not realistic. The principal said teacher training and in-school support influence students' decisions.

### **Principals discuss government or private initiatives for Spanish in the last 5 years**

Principals struggled to discuss initiatives for Spanish in their school. School A's principal listed, "DECS, the Spanish Support Group and the advisory service". 'School B's principal' recalled initiatives in 'other' languages and noted SACSA materials "...applicable across all languages..." and the Professional Learning Service. 'School D's principal' noted an immersion workshop. School E's principal couldn't recall "...anything".

The Principal from 'School C' declared not being aware of any initiatives except that a Spanish teacher had given him/her a "booklet" [for] his/her desk. This principal reiterated his/her questioning of the "purpose of teaching Spanish? ... or any other LOTE?". In the past, he/she said, the purpose "was to be able to speak it fluently but now [it's about] "...cultural study".

### **Principals' perceptions of what impacts most students' decisions to drop Spanish once languages are no longer compulsory?**

According to principals, several system factors impact students' participation in Spanish. Four of the five principals discussed student

**What 'standards' render a pamphlet on a desk an initiative?**

**What equity issues arise with differential treatment, support and funding of some languages?**

subject choice as the main factor influencing attrition. Several noted the “sexy-ness”, ‘interesting-ness’, and the ‘smorgasbord’ of subject choices and how curriculum promotion, peers, and languages in completion, are influential. Perceived relevance to students’ learning, and negative student, parent and even “community perceptions” and teachers came up often in discussion. The table below summarises these and other themes.

**Table 1: System factors principals say impact students’ decisions to cease their study of Spanish in their schools**

Principal	Factors to stop learning Spanish
School A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choices</li> <li>• Low self-efficacy</li> <li>• Teacher/student partnerships</li> <li>• Parental views</li> </ul>
School B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived difficulty</li> <li>• Sustained effort required</li> <li>• Unpopularity of ‘rote’</li> <li>• Instant gratification sought</li> <li>• Culture</li> <li>• Poor study habits</li> <li>• Subject and variety choices</li> <li>• SACE /SSABSA/TER points</li> <li>• Student/parent perceptions</li> <li>• Pragmatic reasoning</li> <li>• Kid culture</li> <li>• Community perceptions</li> <li>• School counsellors</li> </ul>
School C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student character</li> <li>• Perceived relevance</li> <li>• Peer’s choices</li> <li>• Perceptions of teachers</li> <li>• Enjoyment</li> <li>• Alphabetic language links</li> </ul>
School D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher quality/knowledge/passion</li> <li>• Teaching methods/discipline</li> <li>• Community perceptions</li> </ul>
School E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching methods</li> <li>• Subject choices</li> <li>• Competing subject selection</li> <li>• Parent/student perception of vocational pathways</li> <li>• Perceptions of relevance</li> </ul>

**Can principals make internal school changes to reduce negative impact on students’ choices?**

**Has the education board made public the ‘exact’ formula used to calculate TER scores for Spanish students?**

The issue of subject ‘scales’ raised by the principal from ‘School B’ critiqued SSABSA’s (the mandated Senior Secondary Assessment Board of SA) calculation of language students’ TER (Tertiary Entrance Rank) scores. He/she said: “there is a scaling process that SSABSA runs ... [that is not transparent as] “...one student may have their marks scaled up and their friend that sits next to him might have their marks scaled down”. The principal found this “mysterious” and “flawed...”. [and did not doubt this] “turned a lot of kids off languages...”.

### **Principals’ reflections on initiatives to address challenges faced in the Spanish curriculum at their school**

Principals discussed multiple initiatives to address specific challenges in Spanish at their school. The principal from ‘School A’ discussed an “immersion program”, a “...school approach...” to teach “...higher-order thinking ...” and supporting teacher conference attendance. The principal at ‘School B’ repeated concerns regarding “the department not really doing enough and not providing enough leadership”. He/she also said low participation in Spanish, inadequate teacher supply and teacher’s low proficiency are important issues. She/he stated the Professional Learning Service was valued and well-funded and that while the Endeavour Language Teaching Fellowships worked some languages were excluded due to an ‘Asian language focus’. The principal from ‘School C’, on the other hand, re-emphasised that he/she did not know what occurs in languages ...” as that’s a ‘staff’ duty.

The principal from ‘School D’ discussed several ‘successful’ initiatives including: teacher-led initiatives, ranging methodologies, campus visits (at Flinders), an ‘international assembly’ (alumni speak on an international exchange), and valuing good teachers knowledgeable in primary to high school transitions (starting again from zero impacts students’ decisions). This principal critiqued department mismanagement of ‘good teachers’. She/he also stated that primary schools “say they teach languages (when) they don’t...”. They teach ... songs (etc.)”. The principal said teacher supply was challenging and varied teacher quality is important.

**Are maths,  
English,  
and science  
no longer  
compulsory  
in Year 9?**

**Can principals  
hold classist  
views of  
which  
students get  
to learn  
languages?**

## **Principals discuss future plans for Spanish**

The five principals were asked to reflect on any future DECS or non-government initiatives of relevance to Spanish in their school. The principal for 'School A' responded stating: "No in terms of DECS". The Principal for 'School B' stated that the *National Statement and Plan for languages* "is an articulation of the national curriculum for languages until 2008 (pause) and DECS has recently put out its new statement and strategy". He/she then listed new plans with the Spanish government, future Endeavour fellowships and national projects of generic relevance to 'all' languages. The principal for 'School C' stated that the school was questioning its offer as enrolment is "heading down". He/she said, "there's one school of thought that says that our nearest neighbours are Asian" and this should influence "what we do by way of LOTE". The principal concluded that if European languages were preferred Spanish would continue, but she/he believed an in-country experience, rather than poor learning was the best option.

## **Stage one: Year 9 Spanish Teachers**

### **Informed consent and interview procedures**

Year 9 Spanish teachers were contacted at their school after principal and coordinator consent was granted. It took two months to gain participants and receive their signed consent forms. The first contact with teachers involved the researcher introducing herself over the phone, explaining the referral process from 'management', and outlining the aims, background and methods proposed for the study. The teachers were then invited to ask questions and to consent to receive and review an information package, seeking their consent to being interviewed, as per the protocol with all interviews.

All teachers provided consent to participate in the preparatory phase and were informed of their right to withdraw at any time. No teachers withdrew their consent.

**Are teachers who learn a 'foreign' language at university proficient when they graduate?**

**Is it possible to employ maths teachers if they are not proficient in numeracy?**

### **Issues with Spanish teachers' informed consent**

At the time of data analysis for this study it became obvious to the researcher that disclosing certain Spanish teacher details (i.e. whether they were non-native or native Spanish teachers; the length of their service or the programs they engaged, and their gender etc.), could reveal their identity. Data is omitted to protect confidentiality.

To assist the reader with the evaluation of data presented, each interview is assigned a code, for example, 'School One' (not to be confused with 'School A' used earlier).

### **Spanish Teacher Interview questionnaire**

The interview developed for teachers centred discussion on their perceptions and knowledge of the Spanish curriculum, teaching, and learning, and on student participation. Four interviews were conducted in English and one in Spanish.

The teacher's interview questions covered:

1. How they came to teach Spanish
2. Their role
3. What shapes the Spanish curriculum
4. The reasons they believe justify learning Spanish in schools
5. Issues of 'equity' in the curriculum at their school
6. Issues that impact student participation and choices
7. The approach they use to teach Spanish
8. Their perceptions of their relationship with students
9. Student and teacher motivation
10. If/how they plan for student learning and motivation
11. Their understanding of 'Critical pedagogy'
12. What impact a critical focus on students' motivations, empowerment and proficiency might have on students' engagement in Spanish.

### **Teacher participant pathways into Spanish teaching**

Spanish teachers discussed diverse pathways into Spanish teaching. Four of five teachers held higher education or Teacher College qualifications awarded in SA or in a Spanish speaking country. One teacher majored in Spanish at university. Four had not planned to teach Spanish as a career pathway.

The teacher from 'School 1' said changes to the language curriculum at the school meant "adapting" to teach Spanish. The teacher from 'School 2'

**What may be said of an environment or 'ideology' positioning teachers as salespeople and students as customers?**

**Could teachers feel pressured to participate in a study if the Department and their principal gave the project their approval?**

**Why not start with what is participant standpoint on education?**

finished a teaching degree in a Spanish speaking country majoring in another language. So Spanish teaching became an option after migrating to Australia.

The teacher from School 3 had a decade of experience in teaching another subject. However, a lack of employment impacted her/him, and while teaching had not been a career choice at first, she/he found teaching rewarding. This teacher also began teaching Spanish years after her/his family migrated to Australia.

The Spanish teacher from ‘School 4’ did not discuss holding ‘formal’ qualifications in Spanish and explained that she/he was a native speaker and “it was a natural thing”. He/she added: “I just love Spanish and I love the culture... I had a passion about it I guess”. The teacher from ‘School 5’ described his/her education also in positive terms. He/she “... liked school...” and “... always enjoyed thinking about learning ...[and] liked languages....” This teacher learnt Spanish from a romantic partner’s family. She/he felt that learning language “broadens you as a person in the world (pause) it gives you greater understanding of others”.

### **Teachers’ perceptions of their role in teaching Spanish**

The five Spanish teachers held distinct views on their roles in teaching Spanish. The teacher from ‘School 1’ stated her/his role involved: promotion of tolerance and awareness of the influence of Spanish languages and peoples. He/she said: “the Spanish communities are widespread around the world and I think eh the influence of the Spanish language is important in our society today and therefore that it’s important that the students know about the Spanish speaking communities and the literature and the culture”. She/he thus aims to “impart aspects of that...”. The teacher from ‘School 2’ believed the role occurs within and outside the school. He/she discussed teaching the language and the culture, supporting Spanish teachers’ PD and enthusing students to learn.

The teacher from ‘School 3’ noted his/her role was a long-term project: to “*educar a las futuras generaciones*” (educating future generations). He/she said this relied on “*confianza*” (trust), a friendship with students, and a friendly environment in which students learn and are interested. The

**What may be the impact of diverse expertise, few resources, and potentially outdated Eurocentric textbooks?**

**What difference is there between an externally mandated curriculum and one that is ‘internally’ negotiated?**



teacher highlighted that it is important that students like what they're learning rather than pursue grades or follow parent orders. This teacher also said the role requires marketing skills: "*hay que vender el producto y para vender el producto hay que maquillarlo*" (the product must be sold and to sell the product one must apply make-up). The teacher concluded these approaches help students see a future in a language.

The teacher from 'School 4' described her/his role as something "huge" and involved "teaching everything" and "establishing relationships with the kids first" and a focus on structure, culture, and grammar in equal ways. The teacher from 'School 5' said the role of a Spanish teacher involves giving kids "exposure to the language" in ways that "empower them" and "...their minds to learn things for themselves to be able to communicate with others and knowing" themselves to be part of a plural society and not "trapped in a little mono-cultured" world. The teacher suggested teachers "show people ...[the]...many opportunities there" ... [as it] increases your potential".

### **On the Spanish curriculum in schools**

The teachers held diverse views on what the Spanish curriculum entails. Three of the five teachers discussed having some freedom to create it. The five teachers made no explicit referral to textbooks and three made no mention of an 'official' curriculum. One teacher explained how the SACSA framework influenced her/his planning in the middle school years and that SSABSA guidelines informed her/his planning in senior years. Another teacher explained that teaching from Years 7 to 12 should be guided by SSABSA.

Teachers discussed the 'control' they have in curriculum design. The teacher from 'School 1' said, the curriculum was "dictated largely by the requirements of SSABSA...". She/he said: "we have to complete a certain number of aspects to satisfy the syllabus requirements um but I believe that in five years of learning Spanish at high school level students can achieve a lot and I think there's no reason why a student can't go to a Spanish speaking country and cope extremely confidently." The teacher at 'School

**How different would it be to be taught by a teacher who believes her/his role involves ongoing inquiry, use of multiple texts, and resources beyond those available in a school, to a teacher that doesn't?**

2' said, the curriculum must be "in line with "...alphabetical languages..." ... (SACSA)" in documents which "...list the elements that you have to teach" [which are] "rigid". Also, other outcomes are determined by SSABSA levels in Spanish for seniors depending on their level (i.e. accelerated etc). This teacher said learning Spanish is "quite open", in the middle years". The teacher concluded that "an experienced teacher would look at what is in the curriculum" and the resources available at the school and would 'pick-and-choose' according to their "expertise and interest".

The teacher from 'School 3' explained that in the Spanish curriculum she/he ensures that language and culture are represented, and uses dictionaries, computers, and the internet to do this. He/she explained that in teaching culture she/he teaches students to be aware of other cultures, languages, and ways of thinking and learning. The teacher from 'School 4' explained that the curriculum is "in a process of change ... [and] needs a lot more work". The teacher criticised the 'official' curriculum and said: "we've got all these books and the curriculum oh looks lovely but day to day we still have to spend a lot of time actually coming up with the actual work...". The teacher said, "we don't want to be told what to do...". On the other hand, not having a curriculum "to hold onto" is difficult. At present, she/he argued, "it's a bit of a mess". "We've got some guidelines ... and I sort of make mine up".

The teacher from 'School 5' described the curriculum in general terms. In "...the beginning of the Spanish curriculum [Year 7] its very much about communication on a basic level (pause) identifying yourself, greeting people..., describing yourself and others." In high school, you can turn to "social issues and you know understanding the culture and history and geography and other parts of the world...[and]... social justice issues." The teacher then discussed themes, such as "bullfighting", as animal cruelty or tradition; "third world issues"; "poverty"; "lack of education"; "injustice"; "drug running"; "oil fields" and "political issues". He/she stated that "all the terrible things that happen in a lot of Spanish speaking countries" were part of the curriculum. The teacher stated, "most teachers build" on a textbook and use the internet in 'projects' in English because of students' limited lexis.

**Can a teacher's curriculum choices speak of her/his racialized stereotypes and othering practices?**

**Where do you begin to address inequities in schools if inequities are created within racial, social, cultural, structural, institutional, personal, public, and private zones?**

## What are the reasons for the maintenance of the Spanish language in schools?

Responses to this question were brief and were thus tabled below.

**Table: 2 Teacher's reasons for Spanish curriculum maintenance**

Teacher	Reasons
School 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Students enjoyment</li><li>▪ Popular singers</li></ul>
School 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Rich cultures</li><li>▪ For trade</li><li>▪ For identity</li><li>▪ Language maintenance</li></ul>
School 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Important</li><li>▪ Alphabetic language</li><li>▪ For literacy</li></ul>
School 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Attractive</li><li>▪ Useful</li><li>▪ Sounds nice</li><li>▪ Important family &amp; social groups</li></ul>
School 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Large Spanish speaking community</li><li>▪ Valid</li><li>▪ Students like 'their' lifestyles</li><li>▪ Trade</li><li>▪ Art</li><li>▪ Influence of U.S movies</li></ul>

## Teacher beliefs on the (in)equitable treatment of Spanish

The Spanish teachers were asked about whether they believed Spanish receives equitable treatment in the language curriculum at their school. Teacher responses note diverse interpretations of the term 'equitable'. Four teachers discuss complex inequities.

The teacher from 'School 1' discussed student enrolment and retention to suggest Spanish is 'okay'. The teacher from School 2's response focussed on teacher and institutional accountability, and critiqued teachers who sabotage activism and administrators and schools that are biased. The teacher from 'School 3' also criticised schools and school administration, but highlighted that non-language-teacher attitudes, and workloads enacted inequities.

The teacher from 'School 4' said: 'society' impacts on what happens in schools and the social perceptions of languages in schools, particularly in

Given the term 'equity' is debated is it risky not to discuss its meaning with participants?

How do you conclude on an issue which inspires such diverse interpretations?

Anglo-Australian contexts. The teacher criticised dominant privileging of English and noted counter-productive parent, community, and media attitudes to languages.

The teacher from 'School 5' was highly critical and discussed how adult ignorance, uninformed perspectives about the value of subjects, teacher attitudes, monolingual and monocultural ways, the culture of 'instant gratification', a lack of appreciation for history and culture, a narrow standpoint on the value of education, parental attitudes, and the attitude of the Education Department (DECS), as issues contributing to inequities shaping Spanish in schools.

Two teachers provided brief reflections. The teacher from 'School 4' said, "In this one [school] it does", but in others it doesn't. The other teacher (School 1) stated the 'Spanish curriculum holds its own' (retention) and is "on an equal level" [with another language].

Four teachers elaborated on inequities faced in Spanish. For instance, the teacher from 'School 2' stated that the topic of equity "...is a very political thing..." as is "...raising the status..." of Spanish. This is not only reliant on Spanish teachers, but on other teachers and administrators. The teacher explained that "...for your language to be prominent (pause) ... you need to be active (pause) ... make the language prominent." The teacher was concerned because "some teachers feel that there's no need to" be active. The teacher felt 'activism' was necessary to confront inequitable practices. She/he said school bias was overt in how the Asian language "was publicised" ... very differently to Spanish. He/she felt it grossly inequitable to have a newsletter and booklet for only one language sent to students for subject selection. He/she said: "the school creates language competition and tries to attract student that way. The teacher said, "this is not equitable"." The teacher saw that students of an Asian language were granted an in-country exchange and visitors, but the same isn't offered to Spanish. She/he said, if you don't speak up and question this would be "totally inequitable".

The teacher from School 3 suggested inequities start with management and within other teacher and SSO's (Schools Support Officer). The teacher said non-language-teachers perceive the language teacher in a primary

**What might be the long-term effects of low morale?**

**Do Spanish teachers report inequities and differential treatments? If so, to whom?**

**Can differential curriculum treatment create tensions between colleagues?**

school to be a child-carer. She/he criticised the term ‘NIT’ (Non-instructional-time), high workloads and lack of support. Conditions inspired her/him to resign once.

The teacher from ‘School 4’ highlighted that it’s not just schools but the broader society that doesn’t value languages. She/he stated that Australia, “being so far away from other countries... and with ... English being the language spoken other languages are going to be seen as a bit of an extra”. The teacher said parents, the community and media devalue ‘foreign languages’. The teacher from ‘School 5’ discussed ignorance and misunderstandings. She/he said, people believe “mathematical language” is important and language is perceived to be a “hobby”. The teacher said parents, teachers and the Department hold such views. She/he said, people who [haven’t] “learnt another language” fail to appreciate its value.

### **Strategies or incentives to learn Spanish in schools**

The teachers offered brief responses on incentives in schools. Incentives were perceived to be ‘given’ to or activated by teachers. All teachers suggested that travel was an important incentive.

Other incentives discussed varied.

The teacher from ‘School 1’ felt that incentives could come from teaching if one could “vary the program content ... to maintain students’ level of interest ...while] giving them a good grounding in the essentials...” needed for SACE (by playing games, reading about Spanish culture, using IT with and Spanish language websites).

The teacher from ‘School 2’ discussed *fiestas* (parties) as incentives but felt these were not an incentive for all students. The teacher believed subject selection resulted in a negative incentive if students had to choose between music and Spanish.

The teacher from ‘School 3’ said it was ‘regrettable’ that incentives available to students only came from teachers. This teacher organised large-scale *fiestas* yearly: a whole school approach with parents, and non-language teachers. The event celebrated food, dance, piñatas displays, costume parades, and flag baring, and ‘other’ teachers were invited to use

**Can students have double standards?**

**Can research interviews serve a greater purpose than ‘knowledge’ construction ?**

Spanish in their subjects. The teacher said this was exhausting because she/he *“nunca tenía apoyo de los maestro.... A mí me toco hacerlo todo hasta cocinar y luego tenía que pagar algunas personas que me ayudaban con la cocina ...nunca tuve apoyo”* [never had the support of other teachers. I had to do it all, including the cooking and I had to pay some people that helped me...]. This teacher said food and workshops are good but that the *fiesta* was the greatest incentive for students.

The teacher from ‘School 4’ stated that a major incentive driving ‘huge Spanish classes...’ was the ‘trip overseas’. The teacher said: ‘... they actually want to experience the actual real thing’. The teacher also said: ‘if parents are prepared to put money into the thing it’s because they are really serious about it.’ The teacher from ‘School 5’ also stressed ‘trips’. She/he felt that: ‘to be able to go and use the language somewhere else ... is an incentive.’ However, he/she perceived lack of support (a dis-incentive) from the school and staff and thought of ‘doing a lunch time Spanish lesson in the staff room’ to garner support’. Ironically, she discussed how his/her line manager once said, ‘feed them (laughs) and they will be back...’.

### **Spanish teacher views on negative influences on Spanish students’ learning and participation**

Spanish teachers’ responses to the question of negative impacts on students’ learning in schools were lengthy and similar. The teacher from ‘School 1’ critiqued subject choices in Year 10 and students’ negative attitudes to learning (i.e. choosing ‘easy’ subjects). The teacher from ‘School 2’ said students’ earlier experiences can negatively affect their learning. If students have been learning Spanish for seven years at primary school and they have learnt the basics, they will ‘hate’ compulsory enrolment and starting over. How languages are taught in primary schools and the number of hours of instruction may have a negative influence too, she/he said. However, this is complex, as: ‘the primary school teacher of languages often teaches...’ ‘500 students in one week [which is] a crime!’. The teacher suggested: ‘...that system...’ and how it affects students ‘not wanting to participate’ and staff being overworked must take the ‘blame’.

**Are all department teachers encouraged by administration to feed students to learn? If so, who funds it?**

**Is it likely that parents will oppose their children learning maths if they are unlikely to become accountants?**

The teacher from 'School 3' said lack of school, staff, and parental support was an issue. If parents don't value Spanish because they don't travel, or they believe English is all they need, the children learn this. School demographics also matter if long-term unemployment is the norm, she/she said. The teacher also stated that a budget for materials, an audio-lab, and internet is always lacking.

The teacher from 'School 4' believed "the community doesn't see it as a good thing". Some believe, "if you're not gonna make any money out of it it's not worth doing". Students can also be discouraged from languages through subject choices, career choices and 'other' teacher advice. This teacher felt sad when students were "dropping" Spanish to do "other subjects" they felt forced to do. Also, students may exit Spanish in 'fear' of the SACE exam.

The teacher from 'School 5' discussed little parental support and negative student attitudes. Sometimes 'entire' families can be negative. The teacher also suggested it was "a terrible way to start the year when it's compulsory." Other teachers can "shut down [students] potential". This teacher had to console students when they'd been advised to drop Spanish for university scores. The teacher said 'narrow-minded' views exist. Some people think you learn language to be a "language teacher". Many don't see the professional advantages for global contact in person or online.

### **Spanish teacher views on social influences impacting on Spanish students' participation in Spanish in Year 9**

Teacher's brief responses to the question of social influences are categorised thematically in the following table. The tally highlights frequency. Themes mentioned once are listed with no number assigned in the tally column. Other issues are discussed below.

**What structural or cultural assumptions may influence Spanish teachers' deficit views of 'poor' families?**

**Is it possible that student centric teaching encourages teachers to be micro-level focussed in their analyses in interviews?**

**What assumptions may impact Spanish speaking parents' negative perceptions of learning Spanish?**

**Table 3: Spanish teacher views on social influences impacting Year 9 Spanish students' participation**

Teacher identified social influences	Tally (5)
Family circumstances	5
Friends/Peers	5
Family/parents	4
Cultural events; 'Spanish' network; Extracurricular interests; Hormones; Identity construction; low attendance; Hunger; If language is compulsory; Student language perceptions	

**On the social influences of families**

Spanish teachers discussed family and family circumstances most when discussing social influences impacting students' participation in Spanish. The teacher from 'School 2' proposed a complex answer exploring wider intersections of class, employment, intergenerational disadvantage, and family 'health'. He/she said:

...if you work in an area where many of the students (pause) ... are on eh student card ... families are on very low income and some students whose parents have never worked and whose grandparents have never worked... and also eh dysfunctional families ...with problems with welfare officers (pause) so all those (pause) social outside the classroom they do have influence in students participating...

The teacher from 'School 3' raised family's beliefs and finances as critical to students' learning. She/he explained that: "...*hay personas que no trabajan personas que son pobres muchas veces los estudiantes vienen a la escuela sin desayuno...*" [there are people that don't work people who are poor often students come to school without having breakfast...]. The teacher added that lack of parent support and their negativity is influential, if they think: "*¿por qué van a aprender un idioma si aquí hablamos inglés?*" [why should they learn a language if we speak English here]. The teacher empathised with those unlikely to travel. Surprisingly, he/she said, Spanish speaking families can question learning Spanish, due to their own "*falta de educación...*" [lack of education].

**Is student hunger a social or a system issue, or both?**

**Can a participant be reluctant to offer critical 'system' evaluations?**



The teacher from School 4 said that at “a social level there seems to be less of a reason to do it” and while other factors like trade or “the media stuff, the movie stuff, the music, the Ricky Martin, the Shakira...”, are relevant, parents may prioritise “business ... or careers.” The teacher from ‘School 5’ believed that parents are either a positive or a negative influence on their ‘offspring’.

### ***Multiple discourses in social influences***

Racial (‘cleansing’), class-based, and ‘developmental’ ‘discourses’ shaped social influences noted in teacher responses to this item. A teacher noted that students of “Spanish speaking background...” have a positive “influence on the Anglo-Saxon students” [which promotes] “a sense of tolerance” among the ‘Anglo students’. The teacher from ‘School 2’, on the other hand, believed Year 9 students’ “hormonal changes” and “physical psychological emotional changes” influence their identity and how they approach their decisions. The teacher from ‘School 3’ noted ‘economic’ factors, and that tragically some students quit school to find work: “...*dejan la escuela y buscan trabajo*” are influential matters.

### **Spanish teacher views on ‘system’ influences that impact students’ participation**

Spanish teacher interpretation of ‘system’ influences varied. The teacher from ‘School 1’ claimed there were none. The teacher from ‘School 2’ discussed subject choices and “freedom”. The teacher from ‘School 3’ noted pressures from friends, family, and the community’s ‘monolingual’ mindset. She/he added that there are positive influences such as, “*la influencia Latina ... en este sistema a través de la de los medios ...*” (the Latin American influence ...infiltrating this system through media). The teacher from ‘School 4’ discussed parents, family background and university study, but that “...every student’s a different story”. The teacher from ‘School 5’ listed the compulsory nature of language, parents, the school, careers, and faculty culture. He/she said, “if you’ve got lots of excursions, hands-on food and dance ... they will engage...”. The teacher was critical of students as in maths they happily “follow a textbook”, but they have other demands of languages.

**Where can a teacher find support if leadership is lacking “at the highest levels”?**

**With whom lies the responsibility of monitoring international government support for languages in schools?**

## Spanish teacher beliefs about the changing status of Spanish in schools

Spanish teachers were asked if they believed the status of Spanish in schools is changing. Their responses varied. The teacher from 'School 1' discussed negative changes and impacts. She/he said, "there has been a detrimental effect on Spanish in that I understand that it has been phased out of one or two schools which I find a pity (pause) but the Spanish language is well worth learning and I would like to see it come back into those schools...and reintroduced into other schools...". The teacher from 'School 2' said, Spanish hasn't progressed even though "a lot of effort's put into it...". There's a "...lack of ...leaders" and teachers alone "don't have energy" given their intense workloads. The teacher from 'School 3', on the contrary, said: "*español ha dado un paso muy agigantado*" [Spanish has taken a gigantic step]. She/he elaborated saying:

*"la enseñanza se ha vuelto más activa hay más interacción entre los estudiantes (pause) no es simplemente llegar a la escuela aprender gramática aprender a traducir que muchos estudiantes lo hacían en forma literal sin pensar sin analizar pues ahora se discute se conversa se analiza se produce"* [education (in Spanish) has become more active there is more interaction between the students (pause) it is not about simply arriving at school to learn grammar and translation many students did this in a literal way without thinking without analysis and now it is possible to discuss, analyse and produce (language)].

This teacher felt it was easier to teach Spanish today as students are motivated. The teacher said that students' questions inspire him/her and the approach "*es más crítica*" [is more critical]. He/she stated that the approaches in use today enabled her/his own learning.

The teacher from 'School 4' felt "that Spanish is missing out" as some languages have specialist advisors. The teacher explained that a lot is left up to teachers who are "overloaded". The teacher was not sure why some languages have country government likes (i.e. France or Italy). The teacher from 'School 5' said "the status of Spanish is very underrated in SA" and its community numbers are important because they are small.

**Can  
overworked  
teachers resist  
change?**

## Spanish teacher approaches to teaching Spanish

Teachers' discussed methodologies in terms of types of activities, processes, plans and aims. One teacher mentioned using a communicative approach (School 3). He/she explained that she/he likes to "make the activities as varied as possible" and keeps in mind Year 12 "outcomes". This teacher was open to using games but felt these detracted learners and preferred to follow a syllabus.

The Spanish teacher from 'School 2' highlighted his/her native speaker status and said, "I can bring an extra aspect into the teaching of languages ... I can teach culture and language as one..." The teacher said that languages involve "widening" students' awareness of the world" and of connections with "real life". The teacher also said he/she had to "engage students" and "activate their brains".

The teacher from 'School 3' discussed her/his curriculum programming. In previous years she/he lacked freedom to decide and now he/she considered topics per term. The teacher stated that there's little opportunity to negotiate topics with young students, but that some choice is possible (i.e. in projects). The teacher said he/she must earn students' trust because without that they "*botan toda la clase y no enseñan nada*" [*they sabotage her/his plans*].

The Spanish teacher from 'School 4' discussed preparation of a syllabus. The teacher claimed that not all "students are the same" and therefore they have different needs and knowledge. The teacher said she/he tries to make it "real" so that they experience the language rather than "memorize". The teacher from 'School 5', on the other hand, said his/her teaching is fun, shows students language used in everyday life and the benefits to life, career, self-understanding, and world knowledge. The teacher aims to teach students to gain a "different cultural personality" through respect and care. She/he shows language is "exciting" and enables "access to people, access to reading, access to music etc." ... and ultimately "...a whole new perspective".

## Spanish teachers describe relationships with students

**If methodologies can inspire a change in 'cultural identity' and gaining 'new' cultural perspectives, can this be confronting as well as thought provoking for students?**

**How does racism impact on teachers' and students' relationships?**

Spanish teachers discussed their relationships with students in terms of their teaching philosophy, role, professional ‘work’ relationships or behaviour management strategies. The teacher from ‘School 1’ said he/she was “quite a strict teacher but also a fair one”. She/he said: “students are expected to be on task that we have a certain amount of things to get through and therefore my teaching methodologies reflect that...” (work and play balance).

The teacher from ‘School 2’ said that “making sure that other people [she/he] was working with learn and communicate that learning ... [is a] very important element of...the relationship”. In languages, he/she said, “you really need to make sure that the atmosphere is positive, make sure it’s fun, make sure that the kids relate to you.” The teacher said that “...while students may care little for a language they care a lot about how it is taught [and so] “establishing a positive working relation with students is priority number one.”

This teacher also discussed at length how his/her accent inspired “rejection” and resistance in lessons from some students. For this teacher, some teachers “need to fight with other issues apart from just teaching”. The teacher had coping strategies for students’ “offensive” acts. He/she said that despite multiculturalism in Australia, many kids are not “open-minded”.

The Spanish teacher from ‘School 3’ explained that his/her relationships with students were based on friendship and equality. The teacher highlighted that “*no soy el maestro que tiene la regla en la mano que el estudiante va a aprender lo que yo quiera sino que soy una persona más y les digo juntos vamos a aprender*” [I’m not the teacher that has the ruler in his/her hand that the student will learn what I say but instead that I’m just another person and I tell them that together we’ll learn]. The teacher encouraged students to be open to teach and correct her/his English and swapped roles.

The teacher from ‘School 4’ discussed the need get to know students so they “feel comfortable” [to] “open up” and “learn what they can”. She/he was flexible about performance to limit ‘failure’. The teacher from ‘School 5’ values a relationship that is “positive and open” because he/she said:

**What theories or research inspire teachers’ views of what motivates students? Should they have one?**

**What role can stereotypical Anglo-American movies play in students’ motivation and cultural beliefs?**

I see myself as a facilitator, ... that's got the tools that I can share ... I can teach kids how to use different social tools or different technological tools or how to access stuff for themselves...help them to open their minds [and]...get excited about learning...

### **What Spanish teachers believe motivates students and teachers in Year 9 Spanish**

#### **What motivates students?**

Spanish teachers believe multiple factors and processes motivate students. The teacher from 'School 1' stated, "students are motivated by and show respect for teachers who know their subject and how to teach it". When the "teacher is motivated" and "has a good command of the language", the "students respond accordingly". She/he added that "students are interested in culture". The teacher from 'School 2' claimed that students are motivated by "fun" and "entertaining activities". They like the internet and working by themselves or in groups. Some are motivated by "doing things with the music" and "the language" "like cooking" or "going to a restaurant". Students like roleplays, fashion parades and activities with "room to move" (though time consuming).

The teacher from 'School 3' said students are motivated by being able to speak in Spanish; they are career driven or influenced by USA. The teacher said movies highlight language, food, music and dance, and students 'tell you' this motivates them.

The teacher from 'School 4' discussed the value of good resources that are relevant and easy and then criticised the lack of access to resources from Latin America and Spain. The teacher argued that students are often interested in fashion, music, food, and not literature or history, but that it is not possible to generalise.

The teacher from 'School 5' said students are motivated by a desire to learn, by enjoyment of the language and by teachers. The teacher stated that students are motivated when they see that what they've learnt can be used and they feel they're improving. The teacher said, "the magic comes out when" students can "understand someone else or understand a song, a poem, a picture or a movie..."

**Does teacher access to authentic resources impact their motivation?**

**Does 'magic' impact students' learning?**

### **What motivates Spanish teachers?**

Spanish teachers' responses to this item showed distinct theories of 'motivation'. Four of the five teachers did not provide detail. Most 'felt' motivated by how students responded to their teaching. Two discussed 'behaviour' management in what (de) motivates them.

The teacher from 'School 1' outlined how often what motivates students does not motivate her/him given diverse and competing expectations. Students may seek out "fun things" and "entertaining" things like cooking or physical activities which may counter his/her concern for "rigor". The teacher recounted how interests can be "different" and that in a class where students begin the term resistant, mere attendance, working with a book is motivating.

The teacher from 'School 2' explained that "seeing a positive response from the students" is motivating. He/she said, "Spanish culture and language" motivate him/her and a focus on countries with authentic resources enhance students' motivation and interest, and "enhance" his/her teaching and motivation. The teacher from 'School 3' said, doing things well, not in a "*forma mediocre*" [mediocre way] was important and motivating and inspired pride.

The teacher from 'School 4' said "the biggest motivation is to see [students] having fun ...because they stop being naughty... [and they do] good work". This teacher suggested motivations are intertwined: if students are "doing something that they like ... [it] makes [her/him] feel good". The teacher from School 5 expressed that it was "exciting" to build on and witness students' language learning knowledge and proficiency and to improve, however, that the opposite occurred if teaching "the basics" (i.e. monotony).

### **Do Spanish teachers investigate students' interests, goals, or attributions during their planning of lessons?**

In short, Spanish teachers state that they investigate students' interests in their curriculum planning, however, teacher's responses, gave little insight into this (except one).

**Is it possible that teacher failure to motivate students may motivate student resistance?**

**Can teachers understand what motivates students if they don't ask but 'feel' they 'know' them? Are motivations stable?**

Responses note multiple interpretations of ‘interest’, and mainly refer to students’ ‘liking’ or ‘enjoying’ content or process. The teacher from ‘School 1’ explained that in 2006, a student survey was used to “determine why students continue with the study of Spanish...” and “what students like about Spanish...”. The survey was deemed to be important for student “retention” and “interests.”

The teacher from ‘School 2’ discussed limits in using a “needs analysis” process. He/she explained that, “because you plan your curriculum for the year ah the system doesn’t allow you enough flexibility or time to plan...”. The teacher explained that knowing the students since Year 8 helps his/her planning. The teacher from ‘School 3’ said she/he did not like to pre-plan curriculum or to follow a program, but that she/he preferred to “*saber que les interesa a los estudiantes que es lo que ellos quieren aprender*” [know what interests students what they want to learn]. The teacher discussed how she/he anticipates students’ apathy or lack of interest, by strategically not highlighting ‘grammar’ but teaching it in context and incidentally.

The teacher from ‘School 4’ stated that motivation “depends” on students’ year level”. She/he said: “I’m lucky because I know these students (i.e. is X going to be a pain). The teacher emphasised, it is all “very very exhausting and time consuming...” [to teach].

The teacher from ‘School 5’ responded enthusiastically saying: “absolutely all the time” because it is “important to keep them interested”. Upon the invitation to elaborate the teacher said he/she often can “spend time talking to them ... [and he/she] gives them [his/her opinion] of why learning language is good or I tell them my story (pause) ... and then I find out what they wanna do....”.

#### **Spanish teacher familiarity with critical pedagogies**

Three of five Spanish teachers said they were not familiar with critical pedagogies. One teacher said he/she was familiar with critical pedagogy. Two had not heard the term CP.

The teacher from ‘School 2’ had attended a Productive Pedagogies conference and used the approach which required “enormous energy and

**Can student data on motivation be used by teachers and researchers to secure attention or compliance?**

**Do students learn to use power as they ‘mature’ or can students ‘grow’ because they use it?**

time and resources” though it “worked very well”. The teacher from 'School 3' knew about a CP practice and said it:

...is like the new way of teaching that in the past it was like the traditional I presume...that the teacher had all the information and stood up on the board and gave the kids all the information ... I think the critical one is ... that we need to be involved with the kids in a different way (pause) that the learning goes both ways ... [and you ask] ...what student want to know.

The teacher from 'School 5' believed CP is about exploring opinions and questions critically. S/he said, “I could lecture them and make them repeat things ... but it doesn't have a lasting effect (pause) whereas if they're engaged ... [and]... interested they're much more likely to achieve academically”.

### **Do Spanish teachers perceive any advantages in 'increased' student motivation, empowerment, and proficiency by teaching Spanish critically?**

Four of the five Spanish teachers stated that they could envisage 'advantages' from using CP. The teacher from 'School 1' said: “I think if we teach the Spanish language critically it makes the students more aware of their own language as well and [improves their] critical thinking”. The teacher from 'School 2' had used productive pedagogies with senior students which worked well as students' motivation went up as the teacher was a guide and they had power to choose projects.”. The major concern for this teacher for the use of CP in Year 9 was “behaviour”. She/he said, you must achieve outcomes, consider social issues, have a 'safe' place and have resources. The teacher said it was challenging and time consuming and demanded doing research in addition to supporting the students. The teacher explained that Year 9 students need “a guiding hand”, may not cope with freedom and may want a 'traditional' approach to behaviour management. The teacher said some... “will jeopardise the learning of others” and while some like freedom others don't.

**Is it student pressure or is it colleagues' pressure that weighs most on teachers' minds when planning for their teaching?**

**How does the system ensure that Spanish teachers believe research is not their role (its absent in their reflections)?**



The teacher from 'School 3' listed various advantages in CP. She/he believed the role of education is to prepare "nuevas generaciones" [new generations] to "*defenderse en el futuro*" (stand up for themselves in the future). The teacher said CP encourages inquiry.

The teacher from 'School 4' saw advantages and disadvantages of a CP. She/he explained that he/she rejects traditional ways and using "power", however, that "it's a lot harder for the teacher ...because you have to cater for each" student, and "it's a lot of work" [if] "you have thirty students". The teacher said discussions could be noisy and colleagues may resent that. He/she highlighted that CPs are "... more real to what the language is... (it's alive)". The teacher felt "more support" is needed for teachers to use it, especially for non-native Spanish teachers whom already struggle.

The teacher from 'School 5' said a CP "wholeheartedly engages students with their learning .... The teacher felt 'traditional' approaches were ineffective. She/he said, "I could lecture them ... but ... engaged students are "likely to achieve academically" and go beyond. CP impacts on learners and teachers.

### **Concluding reflections**

Participants engaged in languages curriculum and leadership support, Spanish teaching and the oversight of curriculum programs in and beyond schools, in the field of Spanish, have contributed to this study's understanding of the 'patchy' knowledge of the history of Spanish in five schools. Clearly it is not the 'history' of Spanish that is 'patchy', but the manner in which the system has prioritised its location, records, planning and implementation processes in the Australian curriculum.

The history of Spanish is complex, rich and difficult to 'order', however, the gaps this study's participants address highlight deeply inequitable agenda in place in diverse metropolitan South Australian schools, and in the Department of Education. This study provides detailed understandings of how vastly 'low' a 'priority' is actually given to Spanish language learning, curriculum and teaching, in multiple sites, a finding noted by various scholars examining the macro and micro landscape of languages in Australian schooling (Black, Wright, & Cruickshank, 2016; Mellor, 2009;

**If government policy and programs are dedicated to Asian languages to the point of neglect of others, why report on student participation rates in Spanish at all if conditions are skewed?**

**Is the history of Spanish 'patchy' or does 'white' bias impact what gets recorded?**

Midgley, March 24, 2017; Weinmann & Arber, 2016). While inequities forced on language learning communities are not new (Lo Bianco, 1990), this study shows systemic inequities and values, visible in attitudes, policies, theories and practices, at the level of educational leadership and staff in schools, and within student, family, community and Spanish teacher cohorts, in both ‘obvious’, and more ‘hidden’ ways, as discussed by participants.

Participants discuss limited opportunities available to the Spanish curriculum in government and private initiatives, and strong discontent with the language’s marginal place in the SA curriculum. Detailed insights are presented on the ‘everyday’ practices and tensions experienced by participants. Evidence presented highlights the inequitable treatment of Spanish in schools and the devastating effects on Spanish language learning, but most strikingly on teacher’s morale and wellbeing, as well as students’ access, choice, and learning. Decisions made by non-classroom-based entities diminish opportunities for existing learners and learners to come, as shown in other research (Black, Wright, & Cruickshank, 2016). When media, scholars and language enthusiasts speak of ‘low participation’ in Spanish, we now know more about ‘why’ it is low, and it has nothing to do with ‘Spanish’ language(s) or culture(s), and most certainly, little to do with an absence of ‘intrinsic’ interest in Spanish language learning on the part of students.

Participants in this study cast a light on multiple factors in secondary education and community which work in favour and against inclusive environments for teaching, learning and participating in Spanish in schools. It appears that racism, classism, family poverty and dysfunction, as much as school culture, poor leadership, poor budgets, and absent collegial support, all influence restricting ‘dialogical’ consultation (Black, Wright, & Cruickshank, 2016). Critique of leadership, in schools, in the Department of Education and of government is widespread in this study.

Finally, participants highlight the complexities of individual, social, familial, cultural, environmental (i.e. classroom and community), and educational system influences shaping students’ motivations, and decisions to participate and resist Spanish. While competition in a ‘crowded

**Is Spanish  
being given a  
‘fair go’ (a fair  
chance) in  
SA?**

curriculum' seems key, other factors, such as Spanish teachers' workloads, Spanish teacher training, principal/advisor bias, 'social' politics, teacher disempowerment, inadequate colleague/school/DECD support, and the overwhelming effects of market ideologies and monolingualism, all impose significant inequities and pressures on Spanish students, teachers and on the curriculum (Weinmann & Arber, 2016). These are understood to actively contribute to low engagement and uptake in Spanish, and to distortions regarding what this curriculum has been, and is, but also, what it can be. From this study's participant interviews it can be concluded that the environment in some Australian schools, and in the community, is such that Spanish is under siege, from society, leaders, parents, students and neoliberal impulses (choice, individualism, economic rationalism, competition, prescription, marketing, and standardising/massification agendas) (Ball, 2017), hostile to Spanish plurilingualism in Australian education (Garcia, 2011).

## 5. SURVEYING TERRAIN TO RECOUP, TO SEE AHEAD

The commitment to enact a Freirean-inspired dialogue with participants, in local schools and in a university, enacts asymmetrical research designs and participant positionings and practices in the labours of participants within the dominant academic and school culture (Hambel, 2007) with 'wicked' and 'unsustainable' effects (Waddock & MacIntosh, 2011). Participants semi-negotiate ideas, processes, and products, and in the process tensions of identities and interests emerge in power struggles, in overt, messy and covert ways.

Situated institutional structures and associated research processes in diverse sites, and personal dispositions, shifting positionalities, and conditions, disrupt multiple (im)possibilities of going further and deeper with a people-first / dialogue-first methodology. Institutionalised tendencies to 'prescribe' and 'control' agency and action, in often contested and confusing ways, and via 'official' bureaucracies, and tendencies to simplify the complex, seek 'efficiencies', privilege methods and instruments over conversations, and hide the 'mess' and politics' in which pedagogy, learning and research gets 'done', allow churning out numbers, in '(un)timely' manners, and inadequate time to engage those research is 'actually' meant to serve, in the myriad wor(l)ds they 'see'.

A socio-cognitive lens on education, has a strong-hold in the faculty in which I undertook this study, in 2006, post proposal. It has a grip on parts of me, but questions from my 'gut' can't be silenced. I put my Freirean ambitions under erasure, when a trial survey with Year 8 Spanish students reveals they have NO interest in issues of social justice in Spanish (that survey had no Likert scales, more open-ended questions for probing 'generative themes' (See Appendix X). Students and teachers said and felt it was long and boring. I capitulated.

The survey re-designed and implemented in schools was the 'preference' of teacher, student, supervisor and 'intelligencia' participants (of those speaking out) in the 'zones' (where many don't). The PhD practice 'preferred' a 'technical' form of knowledge 'construction': called 'gathering'. It was validated. While the 'emergent' data brings to light invaluable insights into participants' perspectives, experiences and calls to action ignored, 'longer term' praxis for their empowerment requires compromising 'singularly' predetermined extant methodological purities for 'grassroot' personal and collective causes.

This chapter presents the results of the surveys of students' motivations and reflections on Spanish from my socio-cognitive and (limited) quantitative researcher lens (I painfully audited a year of statistics to seek approval. I failed to get it and live-up-to the expectations and ways of seeing the wor(l)d). Por suerte (luckily) I have appreciated others' different and contradictory ways and 'see' my own.

## Chapter outline

This chapter is divided into three sections in accordance with the sections included in the Year 9 student survey of motivations. The data summarises Spanish students' views in five participating schools. 90 students (and parents) gave consent to participate in this survey. One student's parents did not (and data was not gathered). The chapter discusses survey implementation, approach to analysis and survey results.

## Students' views of Spanish

This study's preparatory phase sought to learn about students' views and experiences of learning Spanish in schools. A survey was developed and revised with participants to generate data on Year 9 Spanish student voices, firstly, because their reflections, motivations and critical engagement in learning Spanish had been largely absent in published research in SA at the time of the design of the study (2005), and secondly, because student voices shed light on 'their' perspectives on individual, social, cultural, pedagogical, and institutional factors impacting their decisions to cease their participation in Spanish when the language is no longer compulsory. Spanish students' voices are central to questions of education, pedagogy and consciousness raising. A study of this 'nature' is still a gap in local and international research (in 2017).

## The survey on interest, motivation, and decision-making

The survey employed in this study encompassed three sections. The first asked students to tick one of two boxes to identify their sex, and to tick one of three options to identify their (dis)interest in Spanish. There were six other questions on the topic of interest in Spanish in this section. The second section of the survey involved the use of a 6-point Likert scale. This

## *Disruptive questions from the gut*

**Can motivation  
be meaningful  
when temporary,  
private, political,  
contradictory,  
and visceral?**

section included 20 statements for students to indicate whether they, at point 1, strongly agreed, or at point 6, strongly disagreed with a given statement. Amendments to the research participant focus meant that this section and data were omitted from stage one analysis (it remained in stage 2). The final section of the survey invited student reflection on their future expectations and requested their feedback on Spanish teaching and learning. The last item asked students if they were thinking of continuing (or not) with Spanish beyond Year 9 and to provide reasons for their decisions.

### **Limitations**

The quantitative design of the survey was limiting given its reliance on participants' undisclosed understandings of 'conceptual' meanings. When students undertook the survey and at the time of its analysis, there were mismatches and variation between the student/researcher interpretations of meanings. Students qualitative responses were also sometimes overtly different to their rankings in the Likert scale (i.e. on the issue of valuing culture). These issues make interpretation and results problematic. This is heightened by the absence of opportunities for participants to elaborate on 'rankings' to give insight into students' ascribed meanings. A more sophisticated process would allow 'verifying' analysis and results with students, on several occasions, as they saw fit.

### **Survey procedure**

All 90 (of 91) Year 9 students were provided with a survey and instructions on how to complete it. This approach was designed in 2005 to avoid researcher influence and gather a large sample of an overall small population's data in a practical way (Burns, 2000; Silverman, 2001). Students asked no questions on item meanings and their attention was drawn to the Likert scale (its

**Would interviewing Spanish students be a more effective and in-depth approach to researching their voices?**

**Would a survey designed by a Year 9 student better gage their interests?**

**What are students' impressions of research and of survey tools?**

6 options), asked to be open and honest, and told not to assume they could circle 'agree' down the right-hand side of the page.

### **Approach to analysis**

Student surveys were read and analysed in the order of survey questions using a thematic content analysis approach (Rivas, 2012). This process involved re-reading the data (from 2006-2015) to develop themes that summarised main and sub themes from participant responses. This is a 'grounded' approach to analysis as the themes are created from the close reading of 'participants' written words' rather than a priori reading of research 'literature'. This helped develop key ideas, from the data. However, the researcher's theory inspired survey questions and thus shapes participants responses. This is not an entirely 'inductive' approach and is somewhat grounded.

As suggested by Rivas (2012) the content analysis approach used is iterative, as one continues to read, refine codes and themes, and create patterns, until no 'other' themes appear (a zigzag approach). When a student's response ventures into what one may believe is an unrelated 'theme' a memo is recorded. To the best of her ability, the researcher discloses participant responses, regardless of their 'apparent' relevance while noting tensions. This sheds light on the complexities of surveys and participants' interpretation.

Students' qualitative responses, in section one and three of the survey, were categorised according to topics, interests, and themes (in various tables and figures) to provide snapshots of the diversity and frequency of themes (or patterns). Where students' words are the best representation of a 'theme' (code) these were used. These codes pursue a degree of 'authenticity'. Where a student has left a blank response the code '99' is used. Missing data is reported in discussion or in tables as such.

**Do schools actively seek to engage students' feedback on their educational services?**

**Can a study claiming to centre student voices but that draws on their writing alone be rigorous and or dialogical, in the Freirean sense?**

### Section 1 of the Survey of Students' Motivation

The following two tables summarise data from section 1. The categories of gender used in the survey were the 'norm' at the time of the study.

#### Student gender

Table 4 reports the number of self-identified female and male students per Year 9 Spanish class at each of the five schools. A total and percentages are given. Gender was not a main focus.

*Table 4: Year 9 student sample gender distribution*

School	Female (students)	Male (students)
School 1	8	9
School 2	5	8
School 3	20	5
School 4	1	4
School 5	18	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>57.7 %</b>	<b>42.2%</b>

#### Student interest

Section 1 of the student survey asked students to respond with a 'tick' if they felt learning Spanish was interesting. Students could choose from: 'yes', 'somewhat' or 'no' options given. The table below summarises students' selections as per each school.

How much of the survey encourages students to delve deeply into their personal beliefs?

How might a transgender student feel (be positioned) from this question?

Do students perceive surveys to be serious exercises? Do student squiggles and 'fowl' language included suggest they don't?

Should each item allow a space following to explain 'why'?



**Table 5: Do Spanish students believe Spanish is interesting?**

School	Yes	Somewhat	No
School 1	8	9	0
School 2	2	3	8
School 3	15	10	0
School 4	3	2	0
School 5	11	18	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>43.3%</b>	<b>46.6%</b>	<b>10%</b>

The data from item 1 Table 5 is reproduced below in accordance with students' gender. The following two tables provide the data for female and male students respectively.

**Table 6:**  
**Do female Spanish students believe Spanish is interesting?**

School	Yes	Somewhat	No
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>46.1%</b>	<b>44.2%</b>	<b>9.6%</b>

**Table 7:**  
**Do male Spanish students believe Spanish is interesting?**

School	Yes	Somewhat	No
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>39.4%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>10.5%</b>

The following discussion examines response frequency and percentages.

How frequently do students have an opportunity in Spanish or in other subjects to discuss their perceptions of teaching and learning? How does this shape how they respond?

What if a student who asks what is meant by interest is told 'just answer what you can'?

Do students' relationships and experiences with individual teacher's impact what they do in a lesson, even if this is an 'externally' managed survey?

Tables 6 and 7 show that more girls (57.7%) than boys (42.2%) study Spanish in year 9. The results also reveal that there are two large cohorts who report being ‘somewhat’ interested (46.6%) or ‘interested’ (43.3%) in learning Spanish. One group is not (10%). When examining these responses according to gender, girls are overall more interested (46.1%) than ‘somewhat’ interested (44.2%), than are boys. Boys percentages were higher for being ‘somewhat’ interested (50%). The spread between groups of boys was larger, with 39.4% declaring ‘interest’ and 10.5% declaring ‘no’ interest. There’s little difference in the percentages of boys and girls who claim to have ‘no’ interest in Spanish (9.6% / 10.5%).

***What parts of learning Spanish do Spanish students find interesting?***

Item two on the survey asked students to discuss what parts of learning Spanish are ‘interesting’ to them. The researcher assumed wrongly that all students would find some parts of interesting. Students’ responses generally matched this intent. However, a recurring pattern in responses was found in the negative responses. Students with negative perspectives opposed the question’s positive bias. Some students used one all-encompassing bold and capitalised word (i.e. ‘NOTHING!’). Surveys with extreme negative responses (i.e. ‘Nothing, I hate the language) offered minimal detail throughout the remainder of the survey. In addition, these surveys often included several blank responses. It is unknown if blank responses show disinterest in Spanish or apathy for survey completion (or both).

Most surveys included capital letters, punctuation, and emoticons. The detail of these was not studied.

**Do students’ current schooling experiences impact their views of subjects in their curriculum, particularly, if they say, “this school sucks”?**

**What are students’ perspectives on education?**

***School 1: Girls views on what parts of learning Spanish are interesting***

Year 9 girls (8 in a class of 17 students) at School 1 discussed interesting ‘parts’ of Spanish. Five (62.5%) girls highlighted ‘culture’ (i.e. food, people, and soap operas). The next popular topic was learning about countries (37.5%). One respondent expressed interest in learning about South America and Spain. Two respondents (25%) were interested in language. One student showed interest in animals, words, and games. Another student wrote “projects” on countries interest her.

***School 1: Boys views on what parts of learning Spanish are interesting***

Year 9 boys’ (9 boys in a class of 17) responses to this item yielded a greater diversity of topics than the girls’ data. Popular responses included: speaking Spanish (66%), language (see below) (66%) and learning about culture (55%). Others highlighted sports (22%). Students who expressed an interest in language noted: differences between English and Spanish (22%), putting sentences together (22%) and Spanish language (22%) as areas of interest. Responses indexed language parts (i.e. words) or cultural practices (i.e. traditions). Some focussed on skills or actions (i.e. translation). One student said, “feeling confident” to communicate in Spanish with others interests him. Numbers and a country visit was mentioned. One student said, the “challenge” of learning was interesting.

***School 2: Girls views on what’s interesting about learning Spanish***

At School 2 most girls (5 out of 13) responded negatively and succinctly to the question of what parts of Spanish are interesting. Three students (60%) said “nothing” was of interest. One said, “I hate learning Spanish”. Another (20%) said, ‘shopping centres’ were interesting. One student (20%) said the speakers’ language and culture were interesting.

**How do students’ identities, and relations in a ‘White’ Eurocentric ‘monolingual’ society, impact their responses?**

**Would students’ responses to Spanish vary if asked to rank their interest in Spanish alongside other subjects (as in Jung et al., 2007)?**

***School 2: Boys views about what's interesting in learning Spanish***

The boys at School 2 (8 out of a class of 13) responded succinctly to this question. Two boys (25%) said “nothing” was interesting. One (12.5%) wrote: “It’s boring but ok”. Two students (25%), said that speaking Spanish is interesting. One of these elaborated saying that learning words and sentences was interesting. Two (25%) students were interested in food (i.e. eating food). Individuals (12.5%) highlighted sport, excursions, “games that get you thinking” and “nice teachers”. One wrote he is “not very interested”. Another left a blank.

***School 3: Girls views about what's interesting in learning Spanish***

Twenty female students (in a class of 25 students) (100%) at School 3 responded positively to this question. Ten (50%) girls expressed interest in different cultures (‘Spanish’ and ‘Hispanic’). The next popular issue raised was ‘food’ (30%). One student said, “eating food and learning about it” is interesting. Several topics were raised by two students (10%) (learning a new language, cognates, history, videos/DVDs, conversations, vocabulary and, conjugating verbs). Many topics were noted once (5%) and included siestas; speaker interactions; English/Spanish similarities; pronunciations; words and sentences; tour guides; teacher Speaking Spanish; dance; everyday life language; speaking for communication; language and culture; the challenge; ‘other’ countries’ beliefs, customs, lifestyles; family, and drink. One student wrote, learning it is interesting “... like another world altogether”.

***School 3: Boys views about what's interesting in learning Spanish***

The topics that most interested the boys at School 3 (5 out of 25 students) were culture (80%) and language (40%). Other

**What number of ‘somewhat’ interested students would be acceptable to teachers?**

**Is it a positive result if in a compulsory subject only 10% of students don’t find it interesting?**

**Can students confuse intrinsic or extrinsic interest with affect or enjoyment, or are they possibly the same?**

topics mentioned once included speaking Spanish, bilingualism, celebrations, countries, time, verbs, and nouns.

***School 4: Girls views about what's interesting in learning Spanish***

At School 4 there was one female participant (in a class of 5 students). When asked about what parts of learning Spanish she found interesting, she wrote "...sport and the countries".

***School 4: Boys views about what's interesting in learning Spanish***

At School 4 there were four (total 5 students) boys in the class. Three expressed interest in Speaking Spanish (80%). One student wrote, "being able to speak Spanish with other Spanish speaking people" is interesting. Another student wrote, "conversations in Spanish" are interesting. The next popular topic was culture (50%). One student (20%) highlighted he was 'very' interested in "cultures and traditions". Another said, 'cultural diversity'. One student (20%) wrote that something new is interesting. Another preferred "fun activities". One student said Spanish "language is very interesting and complex". One student had dual interests: to speak and have one less SACE subject to do.

***School 5: Girls views about what's interesting in learning Spanish***

The girls at School 5 (18 out of 30 students) found multiple aspects of Spanish to be interesting (60% of the class). Four students (22.2%) mentioned 'culture' and three (16.6%) said 'games'. The next topics attracting two responses each (11.1%) included: food, creative activities, assignments, new words, pronunciation, festivals, socialising, and language similarities and differences. Two students (11.1%) critiqued bookwork. All other 'interesting' parts and topics in Spanish, with one response each, included: language and culture that is different;

**What might be the effect on teachers of a large percentage of students finding their subject / lessons (un)interesting?**

**How do researchers interpret data when 'hatred' for the language or teacher is declared?**

**Can students' interests be political and contradictory?**

**What interest do students serve by including drawings?**

lifestyles; countries; new challenging words and phrases; the alphabet; interesting words; cooking; history; speaking; going to Spain; learning it; having fun in it; doing projects; cultural differences; language differences; accents; using it; finding something new to learn, and the challenge of learning it.

### ***School 5: Boys views about what's interesting in learning Spanish***

The male students at School five (12 out of a total of 30 students) mentioned several areas of interest. Six students (50%) mentioned culture and two (16.6%) students said, 'culture that is different' to their own. Three (25%) students mentioned that aspects of language (i.e. new words, remembering words, gaining vocabulary etc) interest them. One student (8.3%) said that language difference is interesting. Three students (25%) said speaking in Spanish and one said how speakers speak. Two students (16.6%) discussed 'food'. Individual students noted: attractions, lifestyles, festivals, countries, assignments, numbers, workbooks, travel, how it's spoken widely, and movies.

### **What parts of learning Spanish don't interest students?**

Item three asked students to discuss parts of learning Spanish that are 'not' interesting to them. Student responses follow.

### **School 1: What parts of learning Spanish are NOT interesting to Year 9 girls?**

Five (62%) students (of 8 in a class of 17) discussed language forms as an uninteresting part of Spanish. Four girls (50%) said verbs (i.e. conjugations and irregular verbs) are uninteresting (12.5%) while one student acknowledged these are needed. Another student expressed disinterest in "going over and over and over vocab". One said she found "all aspects of Spanish" interesting. One student was unsure and, another left a blank.

**Is it possible that students who may be interested in a topic taught by one teacher, may have the opposite experience with another teacher?**

**School 1: What parts of learning Spanish are NOT interesting to Year 9 boys?**

Year 9 boys (9 males out of 17) held similar views to the girls. Verbs and conjugating verbs were most unpopular (66%). One student argued that verbs are needed. Three (33.3%) students said that grammar was uninteresting. One elaborated saying “non-stop grammar” lessons are negative. He said, “there’s only so much you can grasp”. The next least interesting topic mentioned by three (33.3%) students was homework. Two students (22.2%) mentioned hard tests. Several students gave one response each on the: 1) “huge” amount of study and concentration required, 2) difficult parts and 3) work quantity.

**School 2: What parts of learning Spanish are NOT interesting to Year 9 girls?**

Over half of the girls at school 2 found “everything” uninteresting (60%). One wrote she doesn’t “care about it”. Another mentioned that “all the speaking” is not interesting. One student wrote the word “none”.

**School 2: What parts of learning Spanish are NOT interesting to Year 9 boys?**

The boys at School 2 held strikingly similar views to the girls in this class. Three boys (37.5%) mentioned that ‘everything’ in Spanish is not interesting. Individual students (12.5%) mentioned: not understanding sentences or words; words and language; vocabulary and textbook work, and written work, in this item.

**School 3: What parts of learning Spanish are NOT interesting to Year 9 girls?**

The Year 9 girls at School 3 (20 students) provided a variety of responses. Five students (25%) said that verbs are not interesting. Five students (25%) noted tests. One student

**Given the diversity of students’ interests, it must be tricky for teachers to negotiate curriculum with multiple classes, and Year levels, and split year-level groups?**

**What dynamics in school 2 enable 50% disinterest?**

**How might interested students be affected by disinterested or disengaged students?**

argued tests don't "help" [her] "learn". Two students (10%) critiqued: repetitive work, bookwork, bullfighting, one-on-one conversations with the teacher and worksheet work. Individual students highlighted 'activity': doing projects, writing worksheets, learning language not spoken, doing reading comprehensions, doing written work often, completing crosswords and word searches, 'activities that don't allow you to do something with the language and not getting feedback on how well you've pronounced it'. One student said that work on countries and cities is not interesting. Another said textbook work disinterests her. Another student clarified that while learning Spanish interesting sometimes she gets "bored".

***School 3: What parts of learning Spanish are NOT interesting to Year 9 boys?***

The five boys at School three find unique parts of Spanish to be uninteresting. One boy (20%) said that too much writing is uninteresting when "not enough" time is spent on culture. Another stated that verbs and Spanish, are not interesting. One boy discussed worksheets, and another said, "when all you do is writing". One student explained that when the teacher rambles in Spanish, he finds it difficult to understand, and loses interest. He recommended they slow down.

***School 4: What parts of learning Spanish are NOT interesting to Year 9 girls and boys (class of 5)?***

This question combines both genders. The only female student at School 4 stated that "nouns and verbs" are not interesting to her. Of the four Year 9 boys, one student nominated verbs, one student said, "learning the different types of cultures", learning things 'he hasn't learnt before' and 'being able to speak Spanish to speakers', doesn't interest him. "The silent work" was noted as an activity that did not interest a student. Another stated, "I think ... Spanish has no flaws...".

**What dynamics are created in school 3 if 100% of this class is interested in learning about multiple aspects of Spanish?**

**Can interests vary and fluctuate?**




***School 5: What parts of learning Spanish are NOT interesting to Year 9 girls?***

The girls in this class reported a variety of uninteresting parts of Spanish. Over half of them (55%), ten students, nominated book work. Three girls stated that there was ‘too’ much time on this. One girl said the same about ‘written work’. The next most popular issues were the teacher talking “too much” (3 students, 16.6%), repetitive work (2 students, 11.1%), and tests (2 students, 11.1%). Two students discussed: learning language that can’t be remembered and verb endings. Individual students raised: Spanish speakers’ food and houses (differences); how grammar does not align with English; reading comprehensions; reading aloud; posters; going to Spain; writing dialogue; learning about countries or history; and numbers. One said, “the strict teacher” ... “acting weird” was not interesting. One student was ‘unsure’.

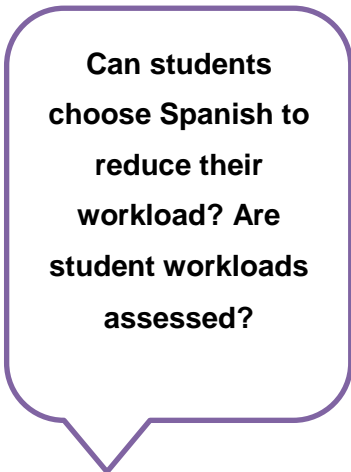
***School 5: What parts of learning Spanish are NOT interesting to Year 9 boys?***

Several topics and activities undertaken in Spanish lessons are not interesting to the boys at School five. Three boys (25%) highlighted that “only” doing bookwork was uninteresting. Another stated that “doing bookwork” for too long was uninteresting. Three other boys (25%) mentioned ‘culture’. Several said, worksheets, bullfighting, stupid games, aspects of history and Spain’s geography (once). One student wrote that “the people” are uninteresting. One student said he is uninterested when he cannot understand. There was one ‘blank’ response. One student wrote ‘there are none’.

**What can Spanish Teachers and Spanish Students do to make learning Spanish more interesting?**



**What impact on interest might small class sizes have?**



**Can students choose Spanish to reduce their workload? Are student workloads assessed?**

The following section summarises two items on the student survey. School and gender are reported. Responses are given in tables due to their brevity and as a better ‘visual’ aid.

Question 4 on the survey asked students: “What can Spanish teachers do to make learning Spanish more interesting”? Question 5 asked students: “What can you do to make learning Spanish more interesting?” (abbreviated table headings are provided). Across groups and schools there were similarities and differences. This led to using a tally of frequency. However, if a student said, “make Spanish more fun” and another said, “do fun things”, one code was used (similar meaning). Where there are ‘more’ nuanced differences, two codes are assigned. No number is recorded for single responses (due to lack of alignment in word formatting across columns). Students’ responses are deemed to have ‘explanatory power’ and are thus not accompanied by further researcher analyses in this item.

**School 1**

**Table 8: What Year 9 girls at School 1 believe Spanish Teachers and Spanish Students can do to make Spanish more interesting?**

<b>Teachers can</b>	<b>Tally</b>	<b>I can</b>	<b>Tally</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach culture</li> </ul>	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not sure</li> </ul>	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use learning games</li> </ul>	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No response</li> </ul>	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do projects</li> </ul>	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be positive</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do hands-on</li> </ul>	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay attention</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do less tests</li> </ul>	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have breakfast</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make it fun</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend lessons</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do excursions</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use Spanish</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do pronunciation</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do discussion</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do countries</li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on people</li> </ul>			

**How can student centric programming occur without an inquiry focus?**

**It is interesting to find that 30% of Spanish students in a class explicitly state that they find ‘difference’ of a linguistic or cultural nature, interesting?**

**Table 9: What Year 9 boys at School 1 believe Spanish Teachers and Spanish Students can do to make Spanish more interesting?**

Teachers can	Tally	I can	Tally
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Games to learn</li> <li>• Incorporate range of activities /no repetition</li> <li>• Excursions to Spanish places</li> <li>• Teach speaking</li> <li>• Less textbook</li> <li>• Nothing</li> <li>• Teach new words</li> <li>• Less worksheet</li> <li>• Cooking eating/cookbook</li> </ul>	<p>3</p> <p>3</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do homework</li> <li>• Think benefits</li> <li>• Do projects</li> <li>• No response</li> <li>• Try harder, be motivated</li> <li>• Improve attitude</li> <li>• Be interested (verb conjug.)</li> <li>• Do cultural inquiry</li> <li>• Join chat rooms</li> <li>• Learn countries</li> <li>• Concentrate</li> <li>• Be positive</li> <li>• Do excursions</li> </ul>	99

**If most participants are not interested in certain aspects of 'language' learning, do schools, teachers, curriculum developers, and students have a 'duty' to rethink this?**

**School 2**

**Table 10: What Year 9 girls at School 2 believe Spanish Teachers and Spanish Students can do to make Spanish more interesting?**

Teachers can	Tally	I can	Tally
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak English</li> <li>• Plan interesting work</li> <li>• Be funnier</li> <li>• Blank</li> <li>• Use role plays to learn and use it</li> <li>• Nothing / boring</li> </ul>	99	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nothing 'hate it'</li> <li>• Act interested</li> <li>• Listen</li> <li>• Get involved</li> <li>• I don't know</li> </ul>	2

**Are Year 9 girls in school 1 opposed to learning verbs or words or is it the way these are taught?**

**Table 11: What Year 9 boys at School 2 believe Spanish Teachers and Spanish Students can do to make Spanish more interesting?**

Teachers can	Tally	I can	Tally
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spanish Games</li> <li>Less work</li> <li>More fun</li> <li>Dance</li> <li>Avoid force</li> <li>Know subject</li> <li>They do enough</li> <li>Allow more time</li> <li>“None of them”</li> <li>Excursions</li> </ul>	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Say what I like</li> <li>Not learn it</li> <li>Try understand</li> <li>Blank</li> <li>Be organised</li> <li>“be easier”</li> <li>Participate</li> <li>Put in 110%</li> </ul>	99

Is it possible that students are simply not interested in repetitive ‘rote’ work and narrow methodological approaches to assessment in the discipline?

### School 3

*Table 12: What Year 9 girls at School 3 believe Spanish Teachers and Students can do to make Spanish interesting?*

Teachers can	Tally	I can	Tally
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cook/taste food</li> <li>Use videos</li> <li>Hands-on work</li> <li>Dance</li> <li>Make enjoyable</li> <li>Charts &amp; posters</li> <li>Pen pals</li> <li>Songs/Games</li> <li>Make books</li> <li>Excursions</li> <li>Speak Spanish</li> <li>Conversations</li> <li>Group convers.</li> <li>Hear interests</li> <li>Vary topics</li> <li>Vary teaching</li> <li>Role play</li> <li>Be creative</li> <li>Explain clearly</li> <li>More textbook</li> <li>Book for home</li> <li>Spoken tasks</li> <li>No writing/ memorisation</li> <li>Explain better</li> <li>Memory tips</li> <li>Teach culture</li> </ul>	6 3 2 2 2 2 99	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concentrate</li> <li>Blank (99)</li> <li>Practice for travel</li> <li>Apply myself</li> <li>Effort</li> <li>Not sure</li> <li>Request project</li> <li>Listen</li> <li>Don’t give up when its hard</li> <li>Get involved</li> <li>Share ideas</li> <li>Be enthusiast.</li> <li>Revise at home</li> <li>Participate</li> <li>Do culture</li> <li>Pay attention</li> <li>Seek to excel to use language later</li> <li>Use language</li> <li>Be awake</li> <li>Out of school research</li> </ul>	4 3 2 2 2 2

At what point can a researcher ignore that there is a negative dynamic between students, teacher, and principal at this school?

**Table 13: What Year 9 boys believe Spanish Teachers and Spanish Students can do to make Spanish more interesting?**

Teachers can	Tally	I can	Tally
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More culture</li> <li>• Teach countries</li> <li>• Teach history</li> <li>• Teach geography</li> <li>• Avoid homework</li> <li>• Assignm/grpwk</li> <li>• Slowdown</li> </ul>	3 2 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worksheets</li> <li>• Crosswords</li> <li>• Ask questions</li> <li>• Teach parents</li> <li>• Not sure</li> <li>• Cultural research</li> </ul>	99

**School 4**

**Table 14: What Year 9 girls at School 4 believe Spanish Teachers and Spanish Students can do to make Spanish more interesting?**

Teachers can	Tally	I can	Tally
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do fun activities / games</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think of it in more interesting ways</li> </ul>	

**Table 15: What Year 9 boys at School 4 believe Spanish Teachers and Spanish Students can do to make Spanish more interesting?**

Teachers can	Tally	I can	Tally
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce things of interest</li> <li>• Work in pairs</li> <li>• Easy things that still teach</li> <li>• Cultural excursions</li> <li>• Sports (topics)</li> <li>• Cultural study</li> <li>• Spanish guests</li> <li>• Interesting activities</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study more so conversations are interesting</li> <li>• Blank</li> <li>• Give the teacher my ideas</li> <li>• Get along with teachers</li> <li>• Avoid being bad in lessons</li> </ul>	99

**Is it passive learning practice, that mostly disinterests the boys at School 3?**

**School 5**

**Table 16: What Year 9 girls at School 5 believe Spanish Teachers and Spanish Students can do to make Spanish more interesting?**

<b>Teachers can</b>	<b>Tally</b>	<b>I can</b>	<b>Tally</b>
• Fun	5	• Give teacher ideas	3
• Games	5	• Try more	3
• Excursions	4	• Be open to learning	2
• Hands-on	4	• Concentrate	2
• It's interesting	3	• Keep mind open	2
• Project we design	3	• Do hands-on	2
• Don't over plan / talk less	2	• Pay attention	2
• Interactive activities	2	• Try fun/games	2
• Make it fun no bookwork/ tests	2	• Read in Spanish outside school	1
• Fun ways to learn verbs etc.	2	• Cooperate if not interested	1
• Less bookwork	2	• 99	
• Activities of interest to us		• Work more	
• Food		• More involved	
• Learn Spanish		• Learn and speak more	
• Cook weird stuff		• Go to Spain	
• Festivals		• Not sure, it's boring now	
• More assignments		• Take more of an interest	
• Translation		• Share it with your family	
• Recipes		• Take notes	
• Spanish etiquette		• Ask questions	
• Speak in Spanish		• Contribute to conversations	
• Teach relevant no childish activities		• Finish work	
• Do culture			
• Avoid timing			
• Teach more vocab			

**Isn't it a positive response when students amend how an item is written in a survey to ensure their opinion is heard?**

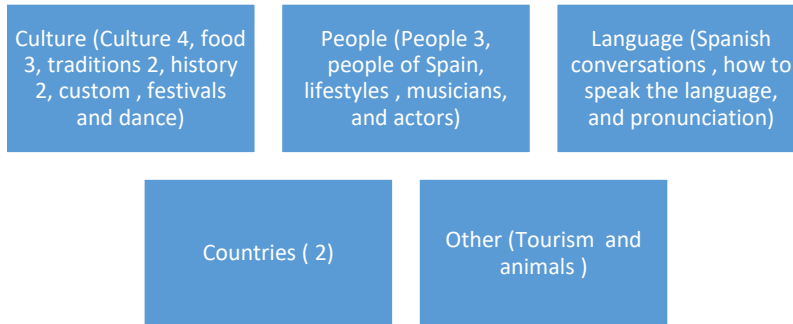
**Would it concern all teachers of Year 9 students who are 14 or 15 years of age that their educational preparation has not challenged them to know that one language is not a translation of another?**



### School 1: Girls views on topics of interest

Year 9 girls' topics are categorised into five areas: culture, countries, people, language and 'other' (various).

**Diagram 2: School 1 girls interesting topics**



**What work conditions may restrict teacher use of 'interactive' or 'inquiry' based learning activities?**

### School 1: Boys' views on topics of interest

Year 9 boys' topics are categorised into seven areas: culture, countries, learning Spanish language, task types, topics, learning, and activities (and one blank response).

**Diagram 3: School 1 boys interesting topics**



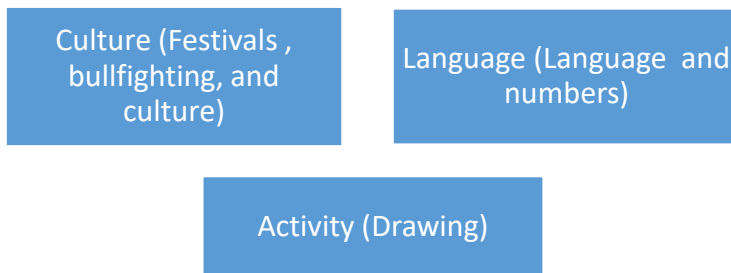
**What factors may cause female students across five schools to express that they have limited agency to make Spanish interesting?**



### School 2: Girls views on topics of interest

Year 9 girls' responses to this item are categorised into three areas: culture, language, and activity. One response was blank.

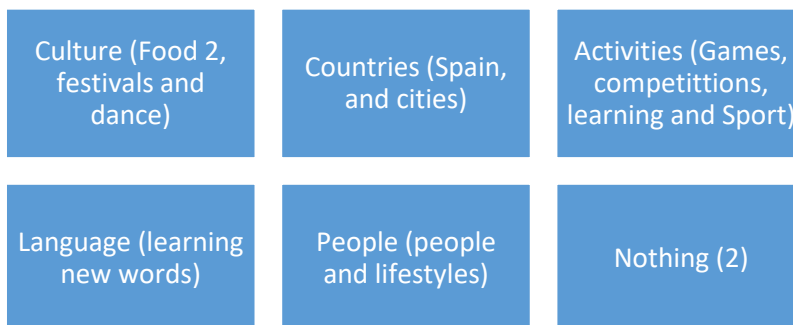
Diagram 4: School 2 girls interesting topics



### School 2: Boys views on topics of interest

Year 9 boys' responses to this item are categorised into five broad areas: culture, countries, activity, language, and people. One response was blank (99). Two wrote, "nothing".

Diagram 5: School 2 boys interesting topics



What factors may cause male students to express agency in making Spanish interesting?

How is it that students' critique resembles that of the researcher when she was a Spanish student twenty years ago?

### School 3: Girls views on topics of interest

Year 9 girls' responses to this item are categorised into: culture, language learning, countries, topics, and activity.

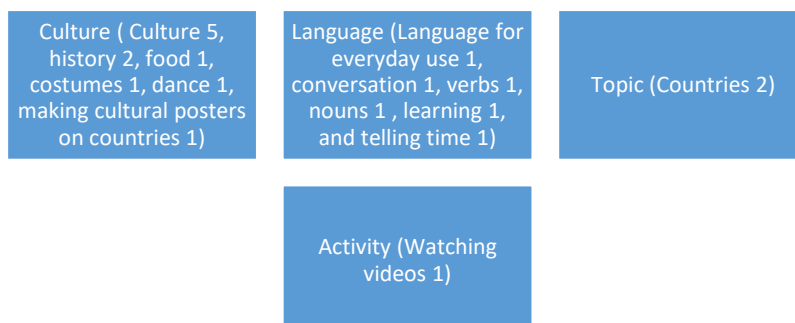
**Diagram 6: School 3 girls interesting topics**



### School 3: Boys views on topics of interest

Year 9 boys' responses to this item can be categorised into four areas: culture, language, topic, and activity.

**Diagram 7: School 3 boys interesting topics**



**What if students believe that no one can do anything to make Spanish interesting?**

**What of the constant critique of two teachers?**

### School 4: Girl's views on topics of interest

The Year 9 female in this class identified sport, countries, and culture as the topics that most interest her.

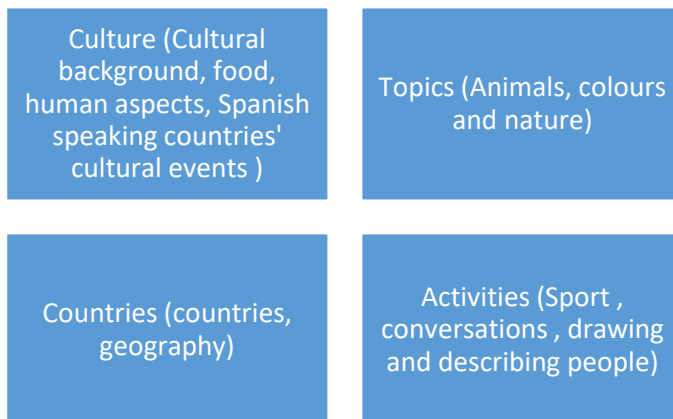
**Diagram 8: School 4 girls interesting topics**



### School 4: Boys views on topics of interest

The Year 9 boys' responses can be categorised into three areas: culture, topics, countries, and activities.

**Diagram 9: School 4 boys interesting topics**



### School 5: Girls views on topics of interest

The Year 9 girls' data is categorised into culture, countries, language, people, tasks, and topics. One student wrote, "no idea" and another left the item blank.

**Does an original supervisor's suggestion that participants' words are insufficient, on their own, to convey sophisticated 'meanings', suggest a 'narrow' view of research, of participants, or of 'truths' (or possibly all of the above)?**

**How can concentration improve student interest?**

### Diagram 10: School 5 girls interesting topics



**What may shape language learning that male students wish to learn more about the culture than the language?**

### School 5: Boys' views on topics of interest

The Year 9 boys' data is categorised into: culture, language, activities, countries, and topics. One student left a blank response.

### Diagram 11: School 5 boys interesting topics



**Why is it that female students seem to like games more than boys?**

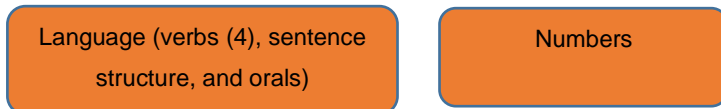
## What topics do not interest Year 9 Spanish students?

### School 1

#### *What topics do Year 9 girls find uninteresting when learning Spanish?*

The Year 9 girls at School 1 discussed language study and numeracy as ‘topics’ they found to be uninteresting. Two students left a blank response. One wrote “it’s all interesting”.

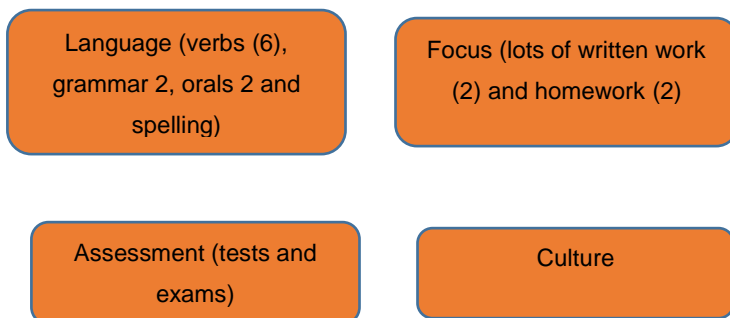
**Figure 5: School 1 Girls’ views on what’s uninteresting in learning Spanish**



#### *What topics do Year 9 boys find uninteresting when learning Spanish?*

Year 9 boys at School 1 discussed language or teaching focus. Other themes in assessment and culture were mentioned as topics found to be uninteresting.

**Figure 6: School 1 boys’ views on what’s uninteresting in learning Spanish**



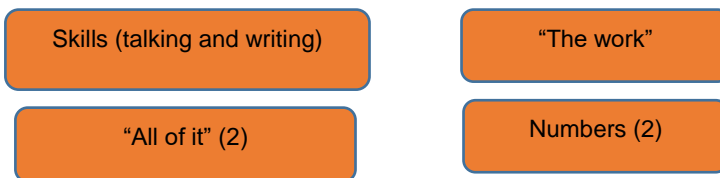
**What seems consistent in students’ assumptions about culture and Spanish culture in particular, across all five groups?**

## School 2

### *What topics do Year 9 girls find uninteresting when learning Spanish?*

The girls in this class reported being uninterested in the use of language skills and the work in class. Two students wrote, “all of it” is uninteresting. Two left blank responses.

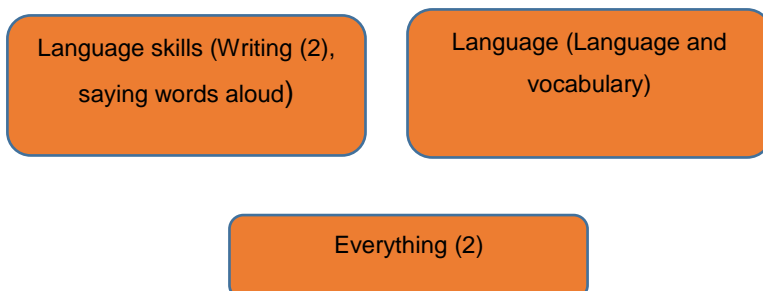
**Figure 7: School 2 girls’ views on what’s uninteresting in learning Spanish**



### *What topics do Year 9 boys find uninteresting when learning Spanish?*

Year 9 boys at School 2 identify language, language skills and topics to be uninteresting aspects of Spanish. Two students said “everything” is uninteresting and two left their responses blank.

**Figure 8: School 1 boys’ views on what’s uninteresting in learning Spanish**



Why do most students reflect ‘traditional’ views of what it means to be a ‘good student’ (i.e. application of individual effort, concentration, or attention)?

Why are projects and assignments so popular?

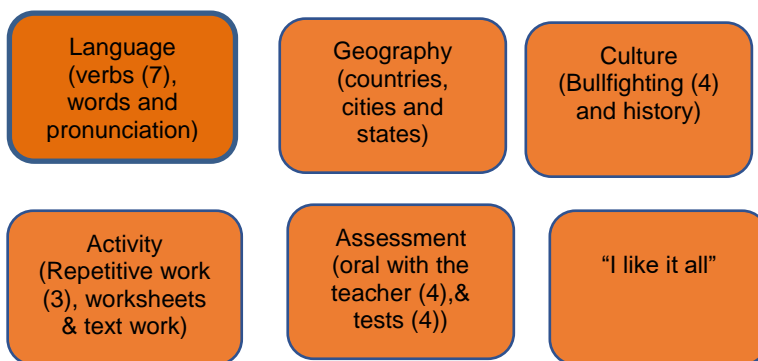
Is ‘getting fresh air’ a touch of humour or sarcasm?

### School 3

#### *What topics do Year 9 girls find uninteresting when learning Spanish?*

Several topics are uninteresting to girls in this class. Data referred to: language, geography, culture, lesson activity and assessment. A student “likes it all”. Two left blank responses.

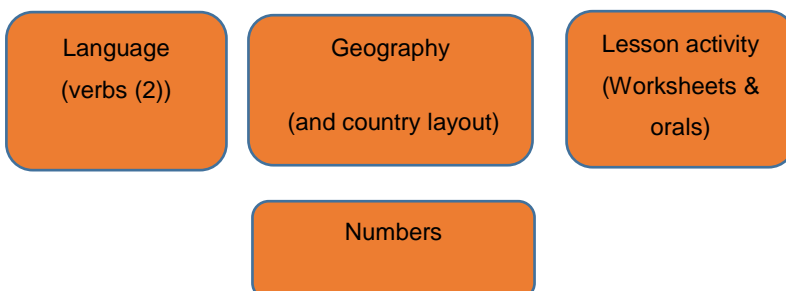
**Figure 9: School 3 girls’ views on what’s uninteresting in learning Spanish**



#### *What topics do Year 9 boys find uninteresting when learning Spanish?*

As per the Year 9 girls at School 3, boys find certain tasks to do with language, lesson activity, and geography to be uninteresting. One finds that “everything is interesting”.

**Figure 10: School 3 boys’ views on what’s uninteresting in learning Spanish**



**Again, is this about these individual ‘ideas’, ‘concepts’, and ‘content’ or is it about the methodology, the teacher style, or race relations in this class ?**

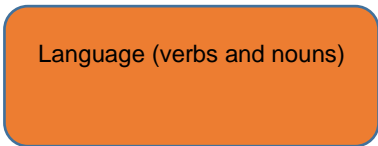
**Are ‘tests’ uninteresting or difficult (and thus, not enjoyed)? Are students pleasure seekers in Spanish?**

**School 4:**

***What topics do Year 9 girls find uninteresting when learning Spanish?***

The Year 9 Girl at School 4 finds verbs and nouns uninteresting.

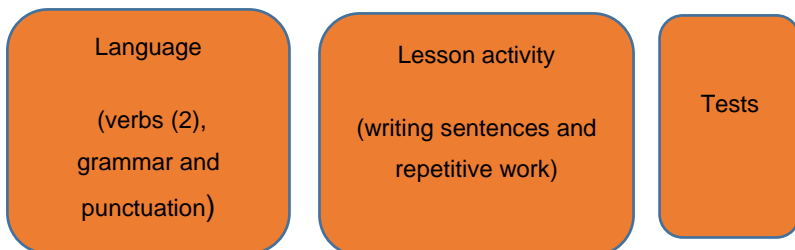
**Figure 11: School 4 girls' views on what's uninteresting in learning Spanish**



***What topics do Year 9 boys find uninteresting when learning Spanish?***

The five Year 9 boys at School 4 highlighted language, assessment, and lesson activity.

**Figure 12: School 4 boys' views on what's uninteresting in learning Spanish**



Where do students learn cultural stereotypes and tastes?

How diverse are the topics and processes of interest to girls?

Why is culture such a topic of interest at School 1? Is it because it is 'not' taught that it becomes more interesting?

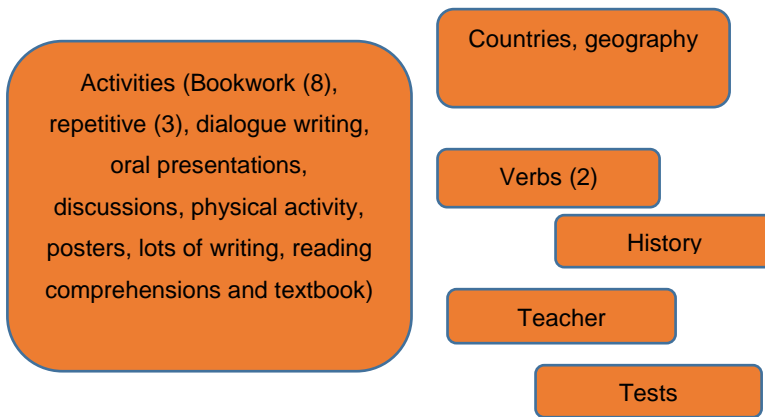


**School 5:**

***What topics do Year 9 girls find uninteresting when learning Spanish?***

Six categories were formed from the girls' responses to this item. Three students left their responses blank.

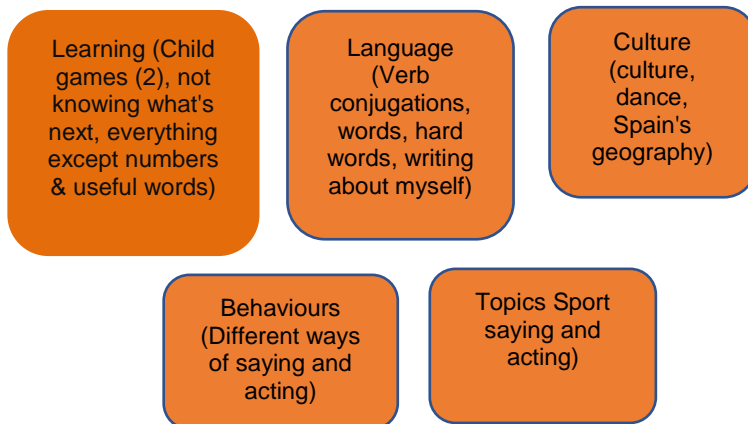
**Figure 13: School 5 girls' views on what's uninteresting in learning Spanish**



***What topics do Year 9 boys find uninteresting when learning Spanish?***

The boys from School 5 offered various 'topics' in this item. One left a blank response. Another said, "none". Others noted learning, language, culture, topics, and behaviours.

**Figure 14: School 5 boys' views on what's uninteresting in learning Spanish**



**In spite of the power of words, can writing itself illustrate 'assembly line' practices in academia?**

## **Year 9 survey conclusions**

The Year 9 Spanish student surveys raise similar issues as in other studies in which an interest in students' motivations in language learning in Australian schooling has been a focus (i.e. see Absalom, 2011; Curnow & Kohler, 2007; Cruickshank & Wright, 2016; Hajdu, 2005; Lopez, 2000; Schmidt, 2011). This conclusion will not systematically compare these findings, instead providing an overview of 'key' reflections noted, given the researchers' opposition to assumptions of systematic 'replicability' in research, and given the diversity of political stances on language learning across the studies themselves (Luke, 2004). Discussions of 'commonalities', 'differences' and 'tensions' cast light on issues, questions and activism needed and broaden understanding of 90 Spanish students' interest in five SA secondary schools with Year 8-12 Spanish.

Student interest here is situated within the context of the participants' experiences in and prior to 2005 in such schools, located in predominantly working class (category 4/5 schools, a high ranking on local scales of disadvantage (Government of South Australia, 2012). The results of 'interest', are not entirely positive, due to various paradoxical and mediating forces. Tensions shaping languages education in Australia are well documented, as discussed (i.e. Lo Bianco & Slaughter, 2009; Kohler, 2015).

Research conducted in Australia and elsewhere has found that society, family, peers, schooling structures, social class, personal experience, values, politics, environment, and culture, among other areas, can play a role in language students' motivations (Dörnei & Csizer, 2002; Lo Bianco & Slaughter, 2009). A recent study (Wright, Cruickshank, & Black, 2016, p.3), clarifies that there are 'no simple' ways to interpret motivations for language learning in schools. Since the 1960s (Lo Bianco, 2014), scholars regret languages are not a high

**Is there any doubt that 'challenging' and 'risky' aspects of critical learning of Spanish language(s) and culture(s) in these schools are either uninteresting, difficult or invisible to a majority of participants, but also to Australian-language-education-based researcher focus?**

priority in secondary schools in Australia (Blakkarly, 2014; Clyne, 2005; Slaughter & Lo Bianco, 2009). This study suggests this ‘challenge’ to students’ ‘interest’ in Spanish is no simple matter and is not of students’ doing.

What few studies do, including this one, is ask the difficult question: how does a ‘monolingual mindset’ (Clyne, 2005) limit students’ critical understandings of their language experiences, perceptions, values, and dispositions towards plurilingualism, in society, and in Spanish in school. While this study’s researcher agrees with Dunworth, and Zhang’s (2014, p.1) suggested need for a ‘balance of interests’ in decisions about intercultural languages learning, it sees ‘white Eurocentric privilege’, middle-class-ideals, and ‘banking’ ‘language learning/teaching practices, dimensions wedded in a ‘monolingual’ ideology’ (Kawasaki, 2014, p.163), as the biggest challenge to Spanish learning and student access and interest. Deeper examinations of how ideologies, identities and motivations intersect are necessary (Mercieca, 2014). Scholars must be critical and frank about ‘what’ opportunities and access are offered to students, and whose ‘interests’ are served. Measures’ of interest alone, without highlighting intersectional disadvantages and exclusions mislead readers (Liddicoat, Scarino, & Kohler, 2017).

As discussed in this study’s literature review and as per its interview findings, in Australia, languages are actively marginalised by ‘dominant’ forces in education and community. Differential national and local policies, ‘fluctuating’ institutional decision making, discriminatory funding, hierarchical program implementation, sparse external and internal school support, among other ‘economic rationalist’ discourses and practices, distort the value and depth of languages education and what counts as learning. If who has a say in what counts occurs elsewhere and is often led by

**How well does this analysis of data reveal ‘negative’ systemic, social, cultural and political structures of impact on Spanish students learning and motivations? What next from this?**

instrumental and neoliberal aims (Borg, 2012), without student input, little can be expected of their interest (Mercieca, 2014), and yet many still have interest in Spanish.

At a local level, as stated, much has been said about the difficulty of transforming education and teaching practices (Liddicoat, Scarino & Kohler, 2017). Discussion of how often grammar-translation activity is used in teaching languages and how this can ‘negatively’ impact student engagement and motivations and attract student criticism, as it does in this survey, is widespread (Hajdu, 2005 Kohler, 2015; Pavy, 2006; Slaughter & Lo Bianco, 2009; Xu & Moloney, 2014). Also, with an abundance of ‘conservative’ research, focused on structured research designs and quantifiable measures of academic achievement, proficiency or ‘interest’, little is known of what goes on behind-the-scenes in students’ personal/private/social/political motivations for language learning. There are many ‘bland’ (Lo Bianco, 2004), ‘blame-the victim’ or ‘method’ led inquiries (Kubota, 2004, p.30). Few openly discuss the failures (Cruickshank, 2012) or openly critique oppressive tactics at work in classrooms. Such work is ‘risky’. Indeed, there are paradoxes in teaching, learning, and research praxis in languages in contexts in which issues of “race, ethnicity, language, and power... [are often] ...taken-for-granted” or blatantly avoided (Kubota, 2004, p.30).

What students’ in this study name their (dis)interest, they illuminate what ‘counts’ as Spanish in their experience. This inspires multiple questions: are students’ learning Spanish linguaculture? are they travelling, sometimes happily, others reluctantly, and at others with ‘hatred’ (as in Jung et al., 2007), in studying language maps, undertaking repetitive routine strolls, and gathering little language souvenirs while briefly, ‘passing’ through ‘stereotypical’ landscapes to be sight-seers

**Is there any doubt that students across the five schools report a lack of interest in content and processes often used in GTMs?**

of 'high', 'exotic' or 'other' culture' (mostly of Spain)? If so, this is concerning.

When looking 'narrowly' at percentages in this survey, 43% of students ticked 'yes' when asked if Spanish is interesting: 46.6% chose 'Somewhat' and 10% selected 'No'. If the researcher taught five groups of which nearly half felt unmoved by its process/relations/products, she would be devastated. She would ask who and what mediates student 'disinterest' while knowing that 'numbers' are only part of the story. As Allan Luke states (2004, p.24), "schooling and teaching remain technologies of a nation". Its peoples, and institutions, and school cultures, structures, and ideological relations matter (Liddicoat, Scarino, & Kohler, 2017).

The 'socio-cognitive focus on 'student motivations' in this study, address a key gap in 'mainstream' knowledge of Spanish students' motivations, interests, and values, in Australian schools. While Spanish students' motivations, in 'working-class-schools' vary somewhat on an individual level, there are dominant, racialized and class-oriented patterns and themes across in the mixed-gender groups. Of the five groups, four overwhelmingly discuss 'culture' as the focus of most interest to them in Spanish (as a focus of learning and as a topic of interest). One groups' negativity was extreme. All students in one classroom stated that 'nothing' was interesting.

Across the four 'interested' groups, students' defined culture in 'conservative liberal' terms, as per a 'traditional curriculum', with a 'hidden' curriculum. Students talk of attraction and rejection of 'different' 'traditions', 'food', 'music' (etc.) (Kubota, 2004, p.31). Where there was a strong personal dislike for a teacher's Spanish 'culture' and accent, or for a teacher's methodology, two classroom's participants were critical of Spanish, as others have found (Absalom, 2012). Some students expressed 'racist' views and frequently the

**Are scholars who have been 'theoretically' concerned for many decades with Australia's tense history with race, multiculturalism, and plurilingualism in schooling (discussed in Chapter 5) dedicated to research practice to radically contest, uncover and 'transform' inequities on the ground in languages, with teachers and students? Does this study and recent work (i.e. Cruickshank et al., 2016) go far enough?**

words employed embodied 'exoticism' and 'othering' of the target language group (Kubota, 2005). One group gave extreme negative summaries of teaching, of learning and of activity in lessons, when they didn't leave 'blank' responses or 'scribbles'. This may relate to Kaplan and Bauldauf's (1997) finding, that dislike for a person, may lead to a dislike for their culture. Multiple studies have found that the target 'culture' is of interest to Australian language students (Hajdu, 2005; Scarino et al., 2007; Schmidt, 2011) as is the case here.

Decades of debates on what 'culture' is (Curnow, Liddicoat & Scarino, 2007) in this profession, would appear to have had little influence on students' expressed interests. These reveal a view of language and culture as 'separate' entities (Kohler, 2005). 'Target' culture appears to be somewhat of a commodity. It appears to be assessed by students in terms of its capacity to provide entertainment and pleasure (Wright, Black & Cruickshank, 2016), rather than whether it is personally transformative (Kubota, 2004) or whether inter-cultural representation and embodiment enable power (Stein, 2004).

The answer to the question what does not interest Year 9 Spanish students when learning Spanish, is resoundingly, 'language', in terms of language parts (the 'code' paradigm) (i.e. conjugations). All groups expressed disinterest in language forms and one group discussed excessive use of book work (i.e. worksheets and a focus on completing these which involved 'writing' alone). The frequency with which students, across all groups, discuss and critique how language parts are taught, cannot be ignored and is understood as evidence of 'banking' approaches to learning where teachers transmit 'knowledge' (language parts) and students are expected to 'passively' record and in this case, 'memorise' or 'write' these. Many discuss the 'repetitive' nature of activities in lessons, as in other research (Pavy, 2006; Kohler, 2015). There is also some critique of tests

**Do 'Australian' Spanish students have a desire for the exotic? Are these anthropological remnants of a not so distant past? Are students' entertainment and pleasure seekers? Or does society restrict how 'open' they are to (1) learning? And (2) languages learning?**

and activities with a skills and drills focus. Other studies have revealed such criticisms where students conclude that language learning can be ‘boring’, as some of these surveys stated (Jung et al., 2007). Students critique gives insights into the ‘manual’ labours that students’ are required to produce in Spanish lessons and together, these suggest that grammar-translation-approaches are used across all five classrooms (the extent can’t be guessed), however, the dominance and frequency with which ‘rote’ focus on verbs, conjugations, tenses, nouns and vocabulary, are discussed by students, is revealing.

When students are asked about which ‘topics’ interest them most, again, they write, ‘culture’ (even in the class that was most critical of Spanish). Students find ‘people’, ‘countries’, and interactive linguaculture activities (i.e. speaking, learning new words, etc.) to be ‘novel’ and of interest. In this regard, instrumental (to do well on tests) and integrative motivations (to get to speak to others) were evident (Gardner et al., 2004). Students desire learning for ‘functionality and immediacy’, as found in Jung’s (et al., 2007) study.

A handful of students express a deeper intrinsic interest (i.e. to do independent research, to join online chat groups to achieve fluency, and to teach their family members Spanish) (at a time before social media went viral). These students appear to see the ‘cultural’ capital of Spanish (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990), One student’s response was, ‘learning a language is interesting!’. On the other hand, the topics of least interest to students overall were: verbs, skills (i.e. silent writing) repetitive work and ‘childish’ games. Many suggested ‘games’ should aid learning to aid their interest.

Spanish students made diverse suggestions for teachers to make Spanish ‘more’ interesting but struggled to suggest things they could do. Popular choices in two schools suggested teachers focus on ‘culture’, one school highlighted cooking and

**How do we’  
reconcile the  
tensions between  
personal, working-  
class, cultural and  
‘critical’  
ideologies, with  
dominant ‘middle-  
class’ standpoints  
and ambitions, in  
ways standing, in  
stark contrast, and  
that create visceral  
boundaries for  
dialogue and  
collaboration, in  
working through  
differences, with  
purpose?**

video use, and another suggested games and excursions. One schools' students suggested the teacher 'speak English'. Several students in four schools desired a focus on projects, on speaking, and on doing 'fun' things with the language. Many showed limited reflexivity and agency to make learning Spanish interesting (i.e. 'concentrate' or 'pay attention), in stating in their writing the sorts of things teachers say of 'good language students' (Curnow & Kohler, 2007). Many interests were political (i.e. It's easy, less to study, etc.).

In sum, most of the surveys (within a complex 'monolingual' paradigm, and other developmental and discipline-based educational assumptions deemed problematic (i.e. a hierarchy of ages, 'general' subjects and a 'language' subjects, etc.)), reveal students' motivations position them, almost like 'tourists' and 'consumers', using Bauman's (1996) metaphors. The desires to 'travel', be 'entertained', be 'sensory-stimulated' (pleasure), be 'fed' (exotic foods), and speak Spanish 'overseas', blend values of a historically 'elitist' approach to language learning, with largely instrumental 'middle' class desires, in predominantly 'working-class' student cohorts. There is evidence of othering and 'neoliberal' values in which Spanish is a 'choice', possibly 'useful', but 'better' if pleasurable and 'exotic' (not 'critical', intellectually challenging or necessary). While there is evidence of 'situational' interest, in learning in student-centred ways, in topics, in teaching and task variety, few students reflect on a personal drive for learning Spanish, beyond the 'narrow' academic focus facilitated by the curriculum named in their first-hand experiences, as other studies have found (Lo Bianco & Slaughter, 2009). Most students' do not explicitly link their interests with careers or jobs (social and cultural capitals) (Wright, Cruickshank, & Black, 2016).



The surveys highlight that a lot must change to ‘undo’ the marginalisation of Spanish, in these classrooms, for it to have a ‘fair go’ in such sites and in the lives of students. Discussing students’ superficial ‘interest’, and scraping the ‘surface’ of ‘interests’ in this study’s approach to surveying students, are arguably insufficient in understanding and challenging, as Pippa Stein (2004, p.113) argues, in language and literacy learning in South Africa, the “political, cultural and social...” histories “characterized by fracturing, discontinuity, and diversity”, and how these ‘tensions’ ‘seep’ into the minds, bodies and hearts of students. This study’s data suggests interests embody a mesh of raced, classed, consumerist, instrumental, integrative, intrinsic, extrinsic, and political interests.

While a ‘snapshot’ of interests is given, as Stein (2004) suggests, one must go beyond what students’ ‘write’ to how students’ do things, like critique, silence or ‘disinterested’, disengaged’ and subversive activity to gain insights into what ‘moves’ them with interest. An enactment of CP with participants in a Year 10 Spanish classroom provides deeper insights into students’ interests, and resistance over time. It also shows the challenges, contradictions and possibilities that may be enabled when curriculum is negotiated with multiple parties in institutions of formal learning (within predominantly ‘monolingual’ contexts).

**How do ‘critical’ or  
‘radical’ researchers  
cope with isolation on  
the margin?**

## 6. PARTICIPANT WOR(L)D STRUGGLES UPON CONTACT

The chapter to follow is a single column. Participant data has the page, as the right-hand border commentary speaks elsewhere. This chapter continues to address 'study gaps', as consented to by participants. I honour 'our' agreement of 'informed consent', acutely aware that the voices need to be heard. The right-hand column listens out of a duty of care, in humility and rapport, and a need for *confianza* (*trust*) (Freire, 2005, p.104). Interpretation may vary. What is within my control is my will to withdraw my border commentary. On the page, I am still a hybrid being, torn between a will to truth and a will to reflexivity, a will to symbolism and a will to materialism. My narrative embodies this 'duality' and tension (Freire, 1996, p.30).

The chapter is a version of events, and participants intentions, texts and words can't be 'conflated' or known in any absolute terms (Spivak, 1988). It is my heart, and my inquiry, that tells me, after three terms in the lives of participants in this Year 10 classroom, that the writing to follow, better demonstrates a delivery of analysis and representation of data as promised to participants in 2006, 2007 and 2008. This is no act of 'benevolence.' Rather, to translate Spivak's reflection on research, I must consider removing the layers of abstraction and theory to not create a gulf between the participant I was in 2006, and the reflexive commentator I am becoming in 2017. I fear my mestiza voice, in the absence of face-to-face participant dialogue, could magnify a 'division of labour' already in schooling and academia (Spivak, 2008, p.275).

This chapter details insights and limitations of participant interviews, observation, transcriptions, classroom texts, and negotiations in case study ~~collaborations~~. Here the participants were my 'exotic' 'other' (a difficult lesson). In parts I embody the all-knowing expert (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) producing a critical discourse and conversational analysis. I struggle to break up and re-make what's fluid (Denzin, 2003, p.188). In parts I perform a colonial ethnography (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.933): I see, categorise, and judge. But there's more to this, there's 'slippage' (Kristeva, 2002) and, most importantly, 'love' (Freire, 1970, p.240; hooks, 2013, p.1). I show the people in the participants, in me, seeking a 'safe' dialogue. May my shapeshifting (Anzaldúa, 1987, p.88), my weaving and switching of codes and modes enable access to the struggles and transgressions (Denzin, 2003, p.187).

The texts to follow make meaning through what I have 'seen', heard, felt, and questioned but also, what I have come to understand, value, respect, and love.

## **Pre-collaborative intervention**

As per this study's introduction, and methodology, the focus of 'study' in this collaborative project was the (instrumental) investigation of whether a Critical Spanish (linguaculture) Pedagogy could 'positively' impact Spanish students' motivations, voices, and proficiency. A blend of 'socio-cognitive' and 'Freirean' theories, and shifting standpoints enabled and sabotaged 'praxis' with participants in:

- dialogue in Spanish/English
- negotiating curriculum
- power sharing
- problem-posing
- reflection on teaching, learning and research
- inquiry into students' motivations, proficiency and voices.
- collaborative feedback and ongoing evaluation of data and reflections.

In this 'contact zone' (Pratt, 1992, p.6) critical pedagogy and research practices are shaped by ideologies, power and people in messy, contentious but also hopeful and empowering ways.

### **What's to come**

Each phase of the collaborative study is rooted in the researcher's experience of 'being' in the Year 10 classroom engaged in observation, and in a space of 'mita y mita' (half [here] and half [there]) (Anzaldúa, 1987, p.41), between the experience of constructing and gathering participant data, and exploring it with participants, in differential ways, and the writing and performing of the 'story' told of that experience (Denzin, 2003). Data here include people, and their multimodal 'texts'. The assemblage of data, theory and observations are more than triangulated (Denzin & Giardina 2011), they are a bricolage (Denzin, 2003).

The following analysis combines classroom discourse and conversation analysis tools, and reflexive interpretive practice, to narrate the ways in which participants enact 'linguaculture' in: making meaning, positioning each other, and engaging in pedagogy and learning in practice, in positive, counterproductive, and covert ways. A partial picture of pre-intervention, collaborative and post-collaborative practices is detailed. A critical Freirean 'humanist' framework with overtones of a neo-Marxist (i.e. Freire, Shor, Macedo, etc.) and post-colonial feminist 'mestiza' lens (i.e. hooks, Anzaldúa, etc.) explores the theories, beliefs, and practices of participants: 14 Year 10 Spanish students, their teacher and the researcher-participant, giving her testimony of 'events' (Angrossino & Perez, 2000).

### ***Conditions apply***

As stated, the final version of this thesis has not been presented to any of the ‘study’ participants. The Year 10 Spanish teacher provided member check on all data and approved all resources employed in this project and, in 2008, declined to read the thesis due to workload issues. Students and teacher thus gave one-off consent and evaluated the case study project at two separate final meetings in 2008. Respect for the trust granted by participants is ongoing (Mauthner, Birch, Miller & Jessop 2012).

The pre-collaborative phase was designed in 2005 to understand participants’ practices in Spanish lessons; to learn from what and how the teacher and students enact Spanish in their class without the researcher ‘explicitly’ intervening in teaching or learning activity. Observation enabled the researcher to experience first-hand the complexities of teaching, learning and research, in the Year 10 classroom, on a day-to-day and moment-to-moment basis, across 54 lessons. Several research tools and processes were employed in this phase. Observation is also political as it sets in motion complex uses of power, of dispositions, and positionings which have historical links to racist, classist and sexist, among other forms of oppression, in symbolic, material and textual positionings (see Anzaldúa, Collins, Conquergood, Denzin, Freire, Foucault, hooks, Pratt, Tuhiwai Smith, etc.).

### **Participant Observation (description, disruption and the mundane ‘everyday’ activity)**

Participant observation in the pre-collaborative phase lasted five weeks (three lessons a week), during which the participants observed the researcher in lessons undertaking field-notes and audio recording activities. In each lesson she would consult students prior to sitting at an empty desk. Despite pre-agreed arrangements with participants to allow the researcher to restrict all interactions, as in the literature (Burns, 2000), to enable “...systematic description of events, behaviours and artefacts in the social setting” (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p.79), participants’ spontaneously engaged her and repositioned her in various roles (as friend, woman, teacher aid, exotic other, ally, and insider or, indirectly, as intruder/judge/outsider and resource). The shifting positioning influenced her reassessment of observations and fieldwork ‘memories’ (Haug, 1987) as recalled in situ (Denzin, 2009). Some of these roles are not new to research in education (Angrosino & Rosenberg, 2011; Tuhiwai-Smith, 2012). The researcher’s impact on ‘entry’ was clearly not erased (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Participants’ interests and relations at the time of observation enabled positive and contentious developments. Overt and covert power relations and dynamics began even before the participants granted consent in 2007. Miller and Bell (2012) argue that the boundaries of consent and participation are not very clear and can raise ethical dilemmas. The developing participant rapport marked the beginning of personal and collective journeys and commitments to respect, empathy, and work with

care for one-another. However, prescriptive methods installed disruptive hierarchies (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). This impeded opportunities to dialogue and consult openly with participants, and may have ‘triggered’ some participants ‘defensiveness’ to stand strong and not relinquish their own ‘marginal’ power. While the researcher’s priority was to observe, avoid harm and make records which would be inclusive and could reduce imposed hierarchies perceived (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012) the ‘perceived’ need to meet supervisory, and disciplinary expectations, trigger tensions which could not be resolved.

This chapter examines lesson transcripts, and diverse participant texts and exchanges, to demonstrate the possibilities, and challenges of Spanish language teaching, learning and research during the ‘messy’ and contradictory phases of ~~collaboration~~ collaboration. The analysis examines participants’ theories and practices, and those reproduced by the wider system shaping schooling and academia. This analysis addresses research questions set in the original and emergent study’s design.

### *Participants’ routines in pedagogy and research*

Participants’ routines and interactions, on the surface of their activities in teaching and learning Spanish, did not appear to change during the pre-collaborative intervention stage or the first three weeks of collaboration. However, the researcher received no access to lessons from week 1 of term 1, and thus, how her presence and activity intervened is unknown. As Foster and Class (2017) argue, researchers have ‘epistemic’ and ‘ethical’ duties in disclosing such dynamics.

The participant-negotiated approach to research practice was to examine “an authentic enactment” of the Spanish language curriculum in a Year 10 classroom: to view the “naturally occurring, ordinary events in” ... a ... “natural setting” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 10). The ‘naturalness’ of having a researcher daily in a classroom where she is actively involved in ‘gathering’ data and monitoring activity seems mythical (Barnard, 1998). Nevertheless, participants welcomed the joint inquiry into:

1. What approaches to teaching and learning Spanish are valued in the Year 10 class?
2. What is the nature of teacher-student interactions?
3. What factors do participants perceive to impact on learning and teaching in Spanish (+/-)?
4. What interests Spanish students and their teacher in relation to Spanish linguaculture?
5. What are students’ self-ratings of their interests, motivations, and voice?
6. Does student proficiency vary across the study’s phases?

Responses to these questions are discussed below. As researchers are ‘emotional beings’ with beliefs, the analyses and results are embedded within these (Chase, 2011). The text also embodies participant ‘interpellated’ fears, disunities and hopes.

## **Language teaching approaches in use in the Spanish classroom during the pre-collaborative phase**

Based on observations undertaken during the pre-collaborative intervention phase (between May and June of 2007) it is argued that a Grammar Translation Method (GTM) to Spanish, with English language as the medium of instruction and communication, was the valued approach employed in Spanish lessons. Lessons embody a ‘systematic’ focus on language teaching and minimal attention to culture, as Devin (2010) explains. The teacher largely took up a ‘transmissionistic’ positionings, and students often adopted a ‘recipient’ of knowledge role. A review of GTM literature was undertaken to better understand the theorised mechanics of such practices, for ‘explanatory effect’ (See Appendix D). Results and findings are contextualised in participants lives, texts and contexts (within the wider epoch).

### **An overview of GTM**

The GTM is characterized by a ‘mechanistic’ view of language that is ‘decontextualized’ of its cultural context (Mackerras, 2007; Lo Bianco, 2011). Its teaching is largely premised on instrumentalities: linguistic forms and functions (Celce-Murcia, 2000; Thoms, 2012; Mart, 2013), rather than social practice for intercultural purposes (Jia, 2000; Larsen-Freeman & Freeman, 2008) with their situated critical socio-cultural ends (Byram, 1997; Moreno-Lopez, 2004; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Nugent & Catalano, 2015). The methods, developed in applied linguistics, are declared ‘dominant’ in language teaching in Australia (Lo Bianco, 2011). In fact, Wedell and Malderez (2013, p. 86) argue it is “the most widely used language teaching method in the world....”.

As GTM did not emerge within education (Mackerras, 2007) or the sociology of education (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2010; Lo Bianco, 2010a), it ignores how individuals are social beings who learn, transform, and re-produce language. It assumes it is a ‘system’ of codes, patterns, and predictable functions. However, language can follow expected patterns and resist rules or involve spontaneous code-switching and borrowing techniques (Callahan, 2004; Walsh, 2006). Thus, the idea that units govern language is inaccurate (Devin, 2010). Contemporary use has transformed languages, communication, and interactions, as well as values and practices (i.e. see Merchant, 2001; Zappavigna, 2012). How we feel in communication and in representing ourselves matters (Zappavigna, 2012). Language use is hyper-dynamic; it is mediated in face-to-face, real, and delayed time, and via interactive devices (Miller, 2015). Its structures and uses are also creative. Think of the ways social media, tweeters, gamers, scientists, and Aus-lan users create or subvert use. ‘Real’ world language use is far from static (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2010).

Linguaculture shapes individuals (Smith, 2005; Zappavigna, 2012) and is established in culture (Friedrich, as cited in Mackerras, 2007). It is more than “a sociocultural and psycholinguistic

structure” (Krassner, 1999 p. 81) rooted and transformed in practice. It considers the non-linguistic awareness and capacities to navigate encounters (Krassner, 1999). Attention to socialisation and social structures in social practices and how these are being interpreted and represented is required.

In sum, a CP approach to Spanish, seen here as an oppositional alternative to a GTM, does not focus on language structures in isolation of context, culture or personally meaningful practice. It recognizes that language use enacts literacy(ies) in practices and culture with moral and ethical ramifications (Comber, 1996). In addition, in CP, culture and identity are not stable or singular, they are understood to be in need of constant revision with those it is meant to serve (Freire, 1996). Thus, analyses of pedagogical practices should seek to understand the forms and foci of practices mediated in lessons by discourses, practices, and people. After all, literacy is the sociocultural practices and competencies implicated in “effectively using socially constructed forms of communication and representation” (Trifonas, 2002, p.197) rather than discrete ‘skills’. In this regard, Trifonas (2002) states that:

Literacy involves gaining the skills and knowledge to read and interpret the world and to navigate and negotiate successfully its challenges, conflicts and crises. Reading and writing, media literacy, computer literacy, and multimedia literacies provide basic skills but require supplementation by multiple social and cultural literacies, ranging from ecoliteracy, economic and financial literacy to a variety of other competencies that enable us to live well in our social worlds (Trifonas, 2001, p. 197).

From a Freirean perspective, GTM fails to ask two profound questions: ‘whose code is favoured? And do its relations oppress? This matters in a pluricentric language (Thompson, 1992) like Spanish where 21 *Spanish languages* with Indigenous and Non-Indigenous varieties exist (Hershberger, Navey-Davis & Borrás, 2010). The assumption of a ‘standard’ Spanish is false (Gutiérrez, 1970). However, local researchers caution that language teacher beliefs, and practices are difficult to ‘transform’ given long-term and dominant assumptions (Kohler, 2010; Diaz, 2012) and continuing racialized cultural wars (Banfield, 2016; Denzin, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 2000). In this study, classroom texts and talk are examined to explore the ways in which they realise powerful symbolic and material practices through language and positioning.

#### ***Institutional talk: classroom discourse analysis***

Classroom discourse (or ‘institutional talk’) has been studied in languages by discourse analysts and found to exhibit a somewhat distinct pattern of talk in monolingual and bilingual classrooms (Long & Sato, 1983; Al-Karawi, 2005; Ghafarpour, 2016). Sinclair and Coulthard (as cited in Coulthard, 2013) developed a framework for analysing, categorising, and ranking institutional talk drawing on

Halliday's (1961) study of grammar which used a rank scale (Atkins, 2001). This work describes classroom discourse at the level of lesson, transaction, exchange, move and act.

Sinclair and Coulthard's revised work (2013) proposed the Interaction, Response, and Feedback (IRF) (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) sequence. It has been expanded to include an Initiation, Response, and Evaluation (IRE) (Mehan, 1979) sequence. Even though there are limitations to this framework (it reduces the analysis of students' turns to what is evaluated, praised, thanked, or fed back by the teacher), this study adopts the sequence while addressing limitations, and highlighting new strengths and further challenges.

### **THE IRE/IRF Sequence (a summary)**

The IRE/IRF sequence assumes the teacher begins an exchange with talk consisting of an introductory statement with purpose (i.e. to elicit, inform or direct). Students may respond with an answer or action (i.e. replying or accepting the turn's speech act) (Brown & Atkins, 2001). Studies today draw on these sequences (Faruji, 2011; Ghafarpour, 2016) in analysing classroom discourse, however, non-linguistic dimensions of talk need attention (Willis, 1992; Francis & Hunston, as cited in Atkins & Brown, 2001).

As the IRE/IRF sequence focuses largely on teachers' language use and what language features and acts consist of (Atkins & Brown, 2001), the role of students' use can be neglected (Ghafarpour, 2016). Work drawing on this framework (Long & Sato, 1983) allows exploration of teacher questions, for example, *display* questions (those the teacher knows the answer) and *referential* questions (those the teacher wants an unknown response for). Others note referential questions can be used to probe students' thinking (Wu, 2009) and manage behaviour (Walsh, 2006; Faruji, 2011; Ghafarpour, 2016). Diverse studies examine how questions participants ask of each other, of their subject and of life worlds can raise consciousness, and enact values (Molinero, 2005).

Sinclair and Coulthard's work provides tools to begin to understand classroom talk structured by teacher utterances (Atkins & Brown, 2001; Walsh, 2002; Dailey, 2010). Utterances include anything stated by a speaker before other speakers talk (Coulthard, 2013, p.3). Pauses and other boundary markers (i.e. words like right, well, ok, good or now) which distinguish, or interrupt utterances can be studied. However, of importance to this discussion is not the ranking of codes but the exploration of speaker 'talk' (and their framing and focusing moves) (Dervin, 2010). These cues can signal where control and authority are exercised and by whom (Dervin, 2010). Of course, there are subjective, sociocultural, and non-verbal discourses, positionings, and values hidden in talk in lessons (White, 2009). Attention to students' talk, not teachers, can illuminate 'dynamics' engaged.



A rigid systematic approach to IRE/IRF sequences fails to capture the dynamism of social practices in lessons as revised in contemporary work. Moved by White's (2009) work, the researcher re-interprets such framework's teacher-directedness. The sequence's implied asymmetries are not abandoned due to their relevance to this classroom's lesson talk and connections made between pedagogical goals pursued in interactions there. An interdisciplinary approach better illustrates action.

Revisions of lesson sequences (Coulthard, 2013) take greater notice of the diversity of communication acts in lessons, and how students' voices shape sequences and the degree that lesson talk can resemble conversations (Cazden, 2001). The present study goes further by exploring ways in which participant relations, beliefs, motivations, and goals, break 'default' patterns in 'moment-to-moment' exchanges which reveal complex alliances (McGloin, 2016). This study draws on Walsh's (2002) student-led initiation-demonstration-evaluation (SIDE) turns to explore how students contribute to classroom discourse and how analysis of collective talk may broaden opportunities for students to shift and disrupt institutional talk to participate in knowledge construction (Nathan, Kim & Grant, 2009). More work is needed in this area (Ghafarpour, 2016; Nathan, Kim & Grant, 2009; Waring, 2013).

Walsh's (2002, 2006) conversational analysis of classroom discourse aids understanding students' speech acts and interactions telling of 'other' discourses and practices in play. Walsh (2006) examines topic choice, control of content and process, who participates, and the use of cues (etc). He suggests these illuminate types of pedagogy and relations and their language specific and learning oriented goals. Walsh (2006) 'interactional modes' have been used to assist reflection on 'social' practice. This study extends this use to explore macro and micro contexts of the classroom, and how these shape the socio-cultural practices of participants in Spanish.

In specific, Walsh's (2006) managerial; materials; skills and systems; and, classroom context modes, for reflection on 'pedagogical' goals and learning potential are employed hereon. A mode is ... "a classroom micro-context which has a clearly defined pedagogic goal and distinctive interactional features determined largely by a teacher's use of language" (Walsh 2006, p.62). The Managerial Mode is conceptualised as talk seeking to transmit, organise and direct participants and tasks in 'business-like' ways. The Materials Mode is interaction that emphasises materials used. Skills and System Modes link teaching and learner goals to the curriculum. The Classroom Context Mode enables a focus on the life worlds [i.e. "feelings, emotions, experience, attitudes, reactions, personal relationships"] (Ghafarpour, 2016 p.10). Modes are "not static or invariant" and can give insight into (dis)connections between teaching and learning goals and language use (Poorebrahim, Talebinejad, Mazlum, 2015; Ghafarpour, 2016).

This work also notes that one framework can't cope with "rapid, fast-changing and operating on many layers" interactions occurring in lessons (Walsh, 2011, p.129). Ghafarpour's (2016) study, in an Iranian EFL context, concluded that modes are a productive approach to discourse analyses, but that modes, as Walsh (2011, pp.130-135) suggests, can also switch and deviate (a 'mode side sequence'). Whilst Walsh's analyses are comprehensive they do not explain well student-initiated talk. This study's multimodal analysis thus attends to how power is 'negotiated', elusive, and potentially transferred between multiple participants in Spanish lessons, where, as Johnson (as cited in Walsh 2002) argues, 'control' is always exerted via language use and pedagogy.

In sum, this analysis explores talk and texts in action. The 'naturally' occurring texts in the official and unofficial dialogue audible in lessons is explored (Illés & Akcan, 2016). These are necessary for "ethnographic" interpretation (Ghafarpour, 2016). This offers a close reading of data, first, rather than "... 'fit' the data to preconceived categories..." (Walsh, 2002, p.7). While the data may 'speak for themselves' (Sacks, as cited in Walsh 2002), analyses and texts are inevitably a way of re-thinking practice. Observation is a form of constructing knowledge from a position (Bersa, 2008). Positioning is "the discursive process whereby people are located in conversations as observably and subjectively (in)coherent participants in jointly produced storylines (Davies & Harré as cited in Yamakawa, Forman & Ansell, 2005 p.2). Such work examines roles (i.e. teacher, student, learner, or expert) and subjective positioning of speakers and actors (to self-position, position others and position knowledge and authority in spontaneous and structured ways). As in Paulus, Woodside, and Ziegler's (2016) work, a "...concern for being true to the participants' voices" (Paulus, Woodside & Ziegler, 2016, p. 857) is pursued with caution. To view teaching, learning and research as participatory and dialogical, in a PhD, may ignore limitations on participants' positionings in interactions (Mayes, 2010, p.192). Ethnographic work is necessarily mindful of the blurring of others and self, of positionings and genres, and of the value of seeking to be 'truthful' in narratives of experiences and senses yet remaining suspicious of claims to 'speaking for' participants (Richardson, 2000, p.253).

***Lesson excerpts are hereon identified as 'extracts' (to highlight how analysis involves 'breakage')***

The excerpts and data that follow come from the first Spanish lesson recorded during the pre-collaborative intervention phase and from an interview with the Spanish teacher conducted at the time. The researcher had observed lessons for two weeks and gathered classroom materials used to provide depth to the 'thick description' of practice enacted; a bricolage (Geertz, 1994). Here, 'thickness' seeks to enable 'thick interpretation', as discussed by Ponterrotto (2006, p.542). Such interpretation may spring from researcher detail on participants' practices, in ways that spark

reflections on intentions, context, meanings, historicity and consequences (see Geertz, 1973; Denzin, 1989; Ryle 1949). The resulting ‘thick’ multi-modal-text enables insights into the tone of interactions, relations, and practices missing in CP research (Ellsworth, 1989; Lather, 1998; Luke & Gore, 2014; Bybee, 2015). Denzin (1986, p.5) is likely to agree that this thesis and its multiple texts enable ‘thick’ and reflexive interpretations of ‘historical’ ‘biographical’, ‘relational’, ‘situational’, ‘emotional’, ‘motivational’, ‘structural’ and ‘interactive’ ‘everyday world experiences’ in this project.

#### ***The Spanish Teacher Participant’s professional background (Interview 1, 2007)***

The teacher had just under ten years of Spanish and another language’s teaching experience in public schooling. He/she held qualifications from an Australian University and majored in languages. The teacher enjoyed languages commenced in secondary school. He/she recalled this interest stating:

When I was in high school I studied languages [pause] and I really enjoyed it [pause] I was good at it ... therefore when I went to university it was this path that I wanted to follow and basically I got a BA degree [pause]... I studied Spanish [pause] five years at high school and two years at university.

#### ***The Spanish Teacher Participant’s teaching approach and role***

The researcher asked the teacher to discuss his/her approach. She/he highlighted that:

Umm [pause] in the classroom students learn about the language and culture. I think it is important that students learn in a supportive and positive environment and therefore feel secure ... asking and answering any questions they have. My aim is that this would encourage students to enjoy their learning, the subject and to actively participate...

The teacher was asked to discuss his/her view of the role of a Spanish teacher. She/he said:

Umm the role ... would be to share my knowledge and to teach the students about the language and culture, while ... assisting students with lifelong learning, lifelong education.

#### ***The Spanish Teacher Participant’s view of teacher/learner relationships***

The teacher was then asked about her/his relationship with students. She/he said:

It is so important to ... form a positive and respectful relationship with students. This should lead to a very positive learning experience. Students who feel respected and valued in the class will often appreciate the learning experience more.

#### ***The Spanish Teacher views on the Spanish curriculum and CP***

The Spanish teacher discussed the Spanish curriculum (in 2007). He/she said it involved:

...teaching students about a language and culture [so they are] able to communicate .... Australia is a multicultural country and [there's a global focus so therefore students need to know about many facets... [and] have enough knowledge about their subject ....

When the teacher was asked whether she/he had heard of CP, he/she said: "No I haven't."

**The Teacher's Spanish curriculum (plan)**

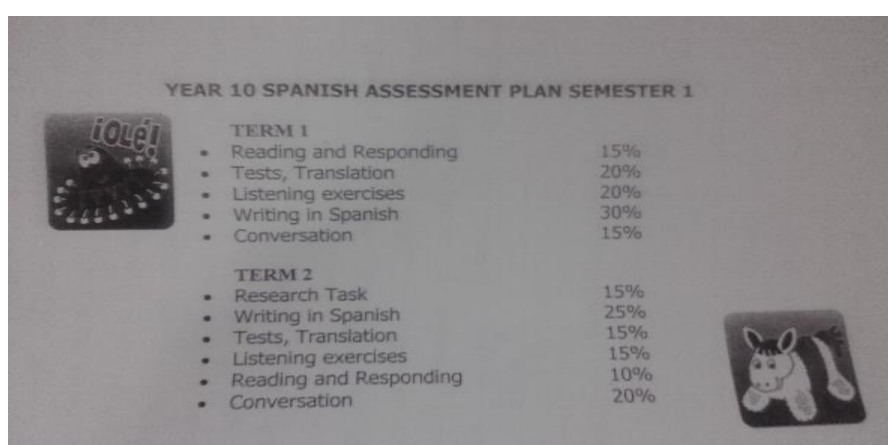
The request for the teacher's outline, if available, in December 2006, produced the following table.

**Table 18: Year 10 Teacher Unit Outline Provided 22 April 2007. Term 2-4 2007**

Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
School	Daily routine	Work
Preterit	Perfect tense	Future Plans
Travel	Environment	EXAM
EXAM	Famous	
Stereotypes	Hispanic	
	People	
	Music	
	Film review	

Students' workbooks provide added insight into the curriculum and assessment plan.

**Image 9: SM# Spanish Student Assessment in Workbook (2007)**



The combined image (Image 9) and plan (Table 18) reveal aspects of the teacher's assessment plan and practices during the pre-collaborative intervention. These offer 'evidence' that assessment is structured around themes and language forms with a task-based and goal orientation (Larsen &

Freeman, 2008). The outlines emphasise learning ‘verb’ forms (i.e. the preterit and future tense), translation (in reading and responding tasks), and skills (on reading, responding, and writing). This equates to 85% of assessment in Term I, and 65% in Term II. The sticker and drawing displays standard Spanish (“Ole” is a term used in Spain to cheer), and stereotypical (i.e. donkey) symbolism. Photographic images of three student workbooks provide further evidence of practice at the time (See Image 10 and Image 11 below).

**Image 10: SS# Conjugación de los Verbos Irregulares E Irregulares [Conjugation of Irregular and Regular verbs] (Student Workbook, Term 1, 2007)**

	EL PRESENTE DE INDICATIVO	EL FUTURO	EL PRETERITO	EL PASADO PRETERITO PERFECTO
viajar (yo)	viajo	viajaré	viaje	he viajado
bailar (ellas)	bailan	bailarán	bailaron	han bailado
vender (tú)	vendes	venderás	vendiste	has vendido
vivir (ella)	vive	vivirá	vivió	ha vivido
escribir (él)	escribe	escribirá	escribió	ha escrito
ser (yo)	soy	seré	fui	he sido
ir (nosotros)	vamos	iremos	fui mos	hemos ido
hacer (vosotros)	hacéis	haceréis	hicisteis	habéis hecho
poder (él)	puede	podrá	podría	ha podido
tener (tú)	tienes	tendrás	tuviste	has tenido
estar (ellos)	están	estarán	estuvieron	han estado

Please learn these irregular forms!

Image 10 illustrates an activity used ‘often’ in GTM. It seeks to teach verb conjugations (irregular and regular forms) and can be used as a resource for memorization. The worksheet is a ‘cloze’ exercise with horizontal (i.e. present, future etc.) and vertical cues (pronouns), and a gap for standard Spanish pronouns (i.e. ‘vosotros’ is used in Spain). Teacher’s feedback values a score (33.5/44) for grammatical accuracy. Fourteen students’ workbooks included verb charts, vocabulary lists and crosswords (*sopa de letras*) (see Image 11) (21 worksheets between January 29 and May 21).

**Image 11: SC# Sopa de letras (Find a word) (Student Workbook, Term 1, 2007)**

**Sopa de letras (Infinitivos)**

Find the following verbs. All the letters are used. Since they all finish with ar, er, ir, it is worth working from e backwards. But there are reflexives too, so work from se backwards as well.

Across

to go ir

to be ser

to give dar

to shave acitar

Down

to have (own) tener

to go up subir

to say decir

to write escribir

to understand comprar

to put atar

to hate poner

to hurt doler

to finish terminar

to take off despegar

to wash lavar

Diagonally right to left

to see ver

Across (backwards)

to read leer

to know saber

to take out sacar

to watch comprar

to win ganar

to fall caer

to reserve reservar

to adore adorar

to cry llorar

Down (backwards)

to open abrir

to have supper cenar

The task above probes students' knowledge of the infinitive and reflexive tenses. As per GTM methods, instructions are in English. Students use 'word parts' to fill gaps and translate verbs. Students' learning is limited to identification of language 'parts', with basic practice with writing (in Spanish) and minimal problem-solving skills (a conclusion made in the context of observations). The instructions confirm these assumptions: *Find the following verbs. All the letters are used. Since they all finish with ar, er, ir, it is worth working from r backwards (etc).* The task misrepresents Spanish language as if it were a translation of English language.

**Other lessons referred to in lesson 1**

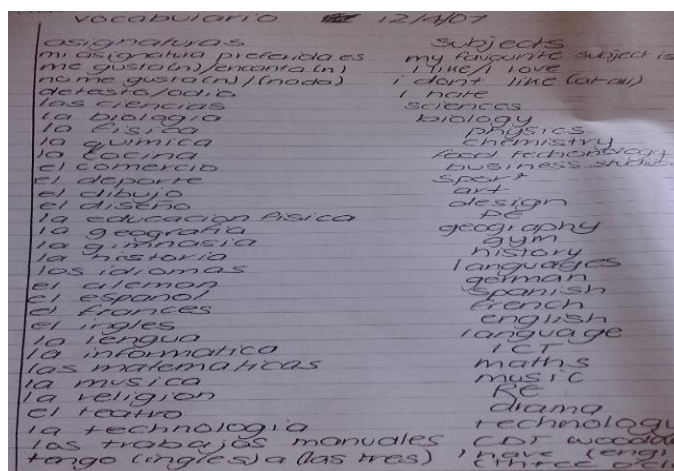
The following three images illustrate the progression of learner focus in three consecutive lessons in student workbooks. A list of verbs (Image 11 shows random verbs i.e. from keeping warm, to getting angry) and English translations are included. Notice the quantity of verbs in one exercise.

**Image 12: SA# Spanish Student's Workbook (Term 1) Los verbos útiles -- Useful Verbs**



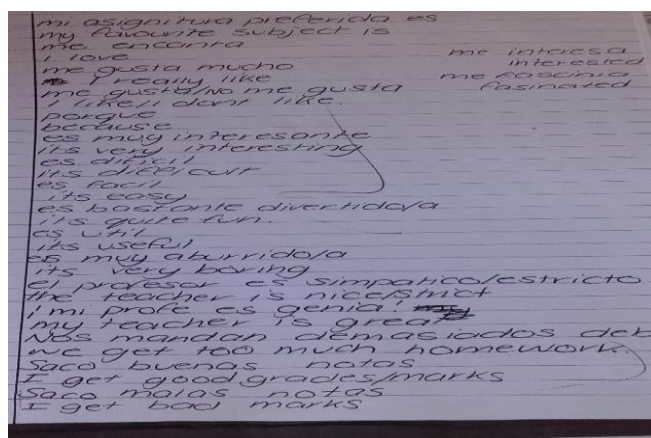
The second worksheet (Image 13) shows a scaffolded focus on language forms and functions. The student has copied a list of vocabulary and expressions. The task is for students to replicate the teacher's sentences. This is known as 'artificial' language use (Graves, 2000). The list of subjects given apply in Australian schools (not to most Spanish schooling contexts).

Image 13: SA# Spanish Workbook – School Subjects in an Australian context (12/4)



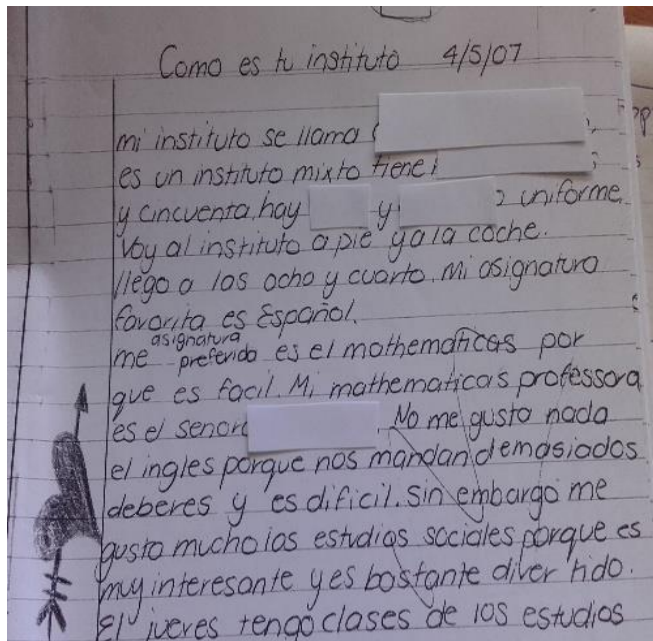
In this third worksheet (Image 14), students copy phrases directly from the teacher’s model to describe schooling. Interestingly, even the student’s production of the target language has gaps. This production involves ‘finding’ language parts (i.e. vocabulary), to imitate the example, instead of reflecting on life, and communication in and of events. The student’s sentence starters are in English.

Image 14: SA# Spanish student workbook notes (no title or date)



The completed example of a students’ text is presented below. The paragraph in Spanish is comprehensible to a bilingual speaker, as the expression is anglicised as occurs often in western contexts (Ardilla, 2005). The translation of an extract of the text (on the right) reveals issues.

Image 15: SA# Spanish Student's final draft (4/5/07)



[translated extract of text]

What's your institute like 4/5/07

my institute's name is [omitted]. it's a mixed [denomination] institute. it has [figures omitted]. There is a [omitted] uniform. I go to the institute on foot and to the car. i arrive at eight fifteen. my favourite subject is Spanish. mine favourite subject is the mathematic because it's easy...

Here the student's work models textbook expectations (Garzon & Hill, 1994). The writing requires no critical and minimal creative language use. While such texts, in isolation of context and participant input, fail to show the dynamism of activity in lessons, the examples of students' reflections on beginning this collaborative project, during the pre-collaborative intervention phase, will broaden this analysis. The journal entries below give a snapshot of student 'motivations' and interests at the time, in English. The next section elaborates on lessons enacted in this phase.

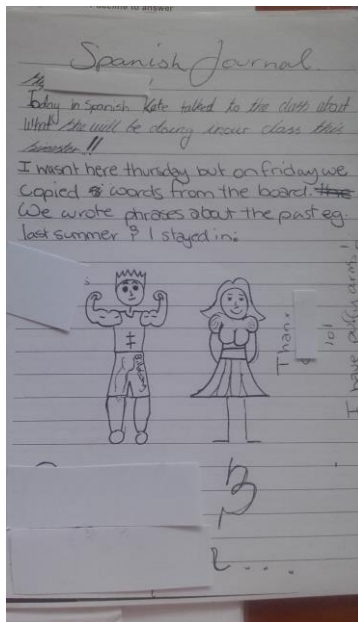


**Images 16-20: Students' first collective journal entries (May 2007)**

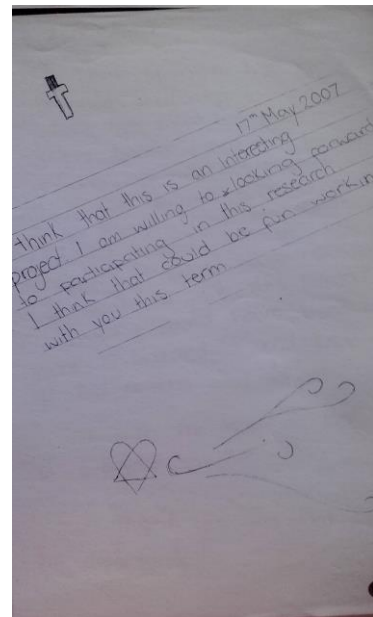
**Image 16: Group 1 Cover**



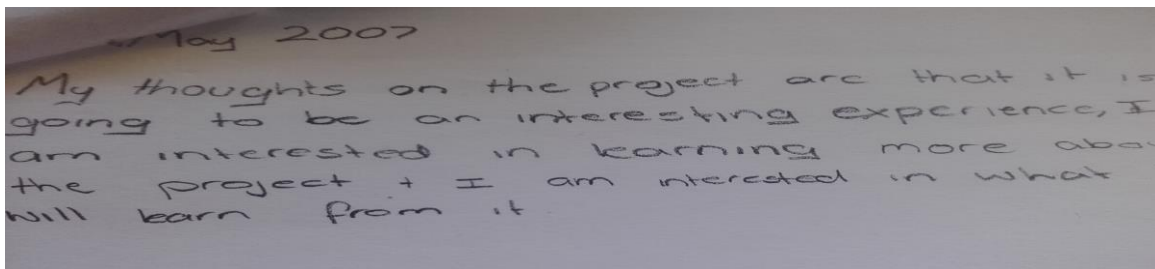
**Image 17: Group 2 entry 1**



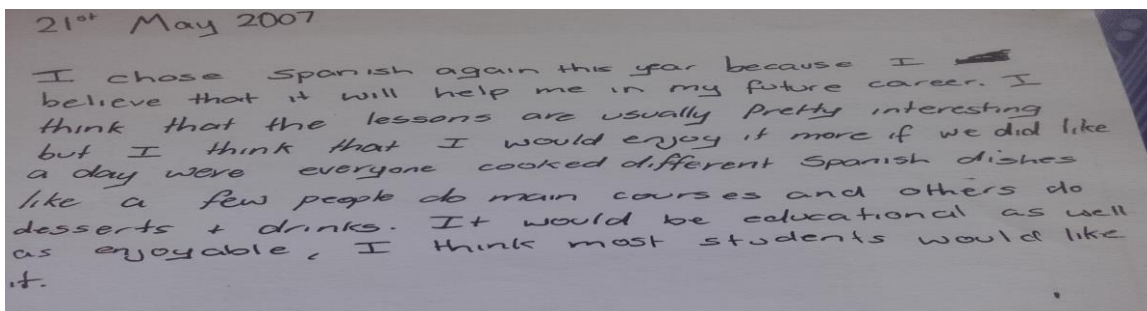
**Image 18: Group 3 entry 1**



**Image 19: Group 4 entry 1**



**Image 20: Group 5 entry 1**



## **Year 10 Spanish lessons**

### **Pre-collaborative-intervention phase transcriptions, texts and artefacts**

#### ***An outline of conventions***

Transcription conventions used in this study were adapted from Mayes (2010). Audio recordings of lessons were transcribed to document audible talk. Inaudible or unintelligible talk is coded (i.e. '<XX>'). Each new speaker turn is given a number in the continuous stream of talk. A colon marks an utterance. A 'T' is used to represent the teacher and an 'S' is used for a student. A student who is identifiable will include a code with a letter (i.e. SC). More than one student speaking is represented (i.e. 'SS'). When there is overlap between speakers two square brackets ([ ]) are used. Obvious short ([pause]) and long (i.e. '[pause pause]') pauses are indexed. A student chatting ('SCH') or several ('SSCH') is also noted. Giggles (@) or laughter (@@) are recorded. Researcher notes provided in square brackets give insight into content, tone, and other events of relevance to the study.

#### **A Year 10 Spanish lesson transcript**

The following extracts belong to week two of observations. It's the first lesson 'taped' and its use may be controversial given advice to eliminate the Hawthorne effect (participants changing behaviour due to observation) (Polkinghorne, 2005). It is the case, however, that thirteen transcripts could be provided during this phase to show that a GTM is in use. There is also evidence throughout the study that participants are aware of the researcher-participant and her processes (None appeared uncomfortable). This break with convention enriches this analysis by showing students' positive dispositions to research and the researcher so early in the study (Gergen & Gergen, 2000).

#### **Spanish teaching and learning enacted under observation**

The following lesson privileges language as code in process and content, rather than 'communicative' aims as highlighted by the teacher's first interview. The teacher's talk models a 'traditional' teaching role consistent with his/her view of "sharing knowledge" (Interview, 2007). Teacher talk controls most turns, topics, and activity. However, students challenge teacher authority, and the 'institutional talk' in play. Nevertheless, students undertake 'typical' student roles. Few temporarily disrupt the teacher's discourse. Two are silent.

The classroom environment feels safe. Participants ask questions, on and off topic, and of each other, with respect, humour, and sarcasm. There are 'rigid' sequences and several interactions show 'busy work'. The following transcript is part of a double lesson before lunch (90") on a Monday. The day and time may impact these teenage participants.

## A Spanish lesson on May 28

[At 11:35 the bell rings. Students begin arriving to the classroom from recess. A steady stream enters the room, moving around desks, clicking chairs, and throwing down bags. Multiple students are in the middle of conversations in English. The teacher is getting ready, looking at desk piles and starts...].

### Extract 1: Lesson opening

1. T: I'll come check in a minute please [talking to a student] Okay people. Can we start the lesson[?] by err finishing off those answers so those questions we were working on last Friday [pause] right [?] This overhead I'll put back up there for you to use as a reference remember [pause] today at the end of the lesson I will be collecting your exercise books to specifically check those answers [pause] Okay [pause] knowing that it will be a conversation which you will do obviously for all of us [pause] okay [pause] can we start by finishing off our answers please [?] and here's our last overhead for us [for students to copy].

[SSCH]

Extract 1 (turn 1, an extended turn) illustrates the lesson's 'opening': an initiation and elicitation involving questions met with silence. There is an (sarcastic) appeal from the teacher requesting permission to start ("can we begin..."). This 'marker' can mask frustration with inattention (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Atkins, 2001). It also pretends to shift agency to students.

The teacher's utterances include several moves, from indirect questioning, to informing and giving polite direction. Turn content shows continuity of learning process ('... last Friday'). The teacher determines work and order ('start by') and goals (to 'finishing off'). The talk shows how lesson activity ('answering' questions), links to individual work (preparing) and task-based learning (conversation) with a predetermined audience ('us') (Larsen & Freeman, 2008).

The first extract (extract 1) provides evidence of Walsh's (2001) mode switching. The teacher initiates talk with a loud voice to detour students' attention away from peers, to a Managerial Mode in English. There is no greeting. The mode/agenda is 'businesslike. There is also a Materials Mode, and a switch back to a Managerial Mode (Walsh, 2001). The latter involves directives about overheads etc. The teacher reminds students of unfinished work (Materials). This is a 'mode-side-sequence' function; a departure from the main mode, rather than a 'switch' in modes (Walsh, 2011). The teacher's code switching in her/his use of nouns ('people') and pronouns shows shifts in positioning and roles; of teacher control or authority (I), group membership (we), individual responsibility (you), collaboration ('us'), and alliances (we/ us). An intriguing joint membership with commitments ('we', 'our') and asymmetries ('you'/'I') indicate 'common good' (us) outcomes being pursued.

### ***Extract 2: Extended lesson ‘opening’***

Extract 2 (continues from Extract1) [shows a direct attempt from the teacher to get the lesson started].

#### **Extract 2:**

[SSCH]

2. T: Excuse me [pause] who can remember what happened on Thursday as well [pause] right we spoke about it briefly Friday as well [pause]
3. SD: We’re going to see a movie [witty response]
4. T: No [pause] [soft SCH]

On the surface, an IRF sequence unfolds in this extract (Mehan, 1979). The teacher’s move elicits information (at turn 2, ‘who can remember’). A student responds quickly (at turn 3, ‘we are going to see a movie’) and the teacher provides feedback (turn 4, ‘no’) (IRF). The feedback values accuracy.

Also, several features of talk here produce meaning beyond an IRF sequence (at turns 2, 3 and 4). The student’s response disrupts the ‘managerial’ discourse and initiates a provocation to the agenda with humour (at turn 4, ‘we are going to see a movie’[?]). The tone of the students’ voice, (noticeable due to familiarity with the speaker) deepens insight into the ‘speech act’. Analysis of ‘language’ alone would not. This highlights what Krassner (1989) and others (Zapavigna, 2012) suggest about seeking meaning beyond language structures in interactions (Walsh, 2006; Walsh, 2011).

A Managerial Mode continues in this extract with several interactional features and markers (at turn 2, ‘excuse me’) to gain attention (‘who can remember’) and direct it (‘right!’) (Ghafarpour, 2016). The visibility/invisibility of participants’ contested beliefs about Spanish teaching and research purpose surface in extract 3. Participants’ negotiate the Managerial, and the Skills and Systems Modes. There is a modified IRE/IRF sequence subverted [continued from extract 2].

#### **Extract 3**

5. T: This Thursday with Kate [research-participant] remember you’ll be um
6. SZ: [<XX>] Oh [!] [as if to signal knowledge of the answer without proceeding to divulge it] [SSCH]
7. T: [<XX>]One-on-one she will ask you a very general question and you need to say as much as you possibly can [pause] in Spanish [pause] about as many different topics as you can [pause] right [pause] so it’s a fairly informal setting [pause] you’ll be starting off talking about yourself maybe your school maybe your family whichever [pause] what you do in your spare time [pause] as much as you can possibly say [pause] is really what she would like to hear [pause pause] She’d like to hear that and learn about them.
8. SS: Do we get graded on that?
9. T: No [pause]

At turn 5 the teacher uses an elicitation to remind students of an activity to be undertaken with the researcher ('remember') and to clarify expected outcomes (Ghafarpour, 2016). A student interjects playfully (at turn 5, an overtly eager 'oh'), but the teacher ignores the act (turn 6). An IRE/IRF sequence is disrupted slightly. The detail of the teacher's explanation of the activity is key.

Unbeknownst to students, the teacher transforms the researcher's expressed intention for the research conversation (at turn 7). The focus 'agreed' was to allow the researcher and a student, one-on-one time, to have an informal conversation in Spanish. The researcher would initiate conversation with: *¿Qué es de tu vida?* (what's up?) to allow students freedom to respond (somewhat 'authentic' but not spontaneous). Students would decide what to say about what is going on in their lives, and could choose whether to prepare or not. The teacher's description of the 'research' task, albeit perhaps unintentionally, distorts the researcher's aims.

Upon close inspection, the teacher's description seems preoccupied with student performance, a Skills and Systems Mode. Teaching goals are linked to language practice here (speaking) (Ghafarpour, 2016). It is possible to suggest that this reconfiguration of the research task by the teacher reveals his/her anxieties about the potential outcome of the conversation.

At turn 7 teacher priorities become 'more' evident. The teacher outlines the parties to be involved, as agreed, however, he/she redirects the intended linguacultural focus toward specific forms (quantifiable) and output ('you need to say as much as you possibly...' and 'about as many different topics...'). The initially vague explanation ('... very general question') may wish to relax students ('fairly informal setting') while then, 'upping the ante' with a request to 'say as much as you possibly can'. An ambiguous structure of topics is offered ('... talking about yourself' ... 'maybe your school maybe your family...'). There is repetition and insistence that students speak a lot ('as much as you can' on 'as many different topics') (some pressure is used). The teacher 'outs' the agenda of the researcher ("is really what she would like... She'd like to hear that...") while softening surveillance. The teacher's disclosure reveals important issues and tensions between the representation of the research tasks and their (un)intended effects. The teacher perhaps unintentionally alerts the students to the dual role (or two faces) of the researcher: to hold a conversation in order to assess 'proficiency'. These turns not only subvert the researcher's disclosed 'aim', they appear to recruit students to an 'artificial' action (an alliance of sorts); an attempt to misrepresent students' 'actual' proficiency. The teacher's attention to the volume of words and topics seems to anticipate that some students may be unable to converse in Spanish, while revealing a 'limited' view of proficiency (in terms of quantity of word use). The teacher may be trying to protect his/her reputation and the integrity of the teaching and learning to date. This is understandable. This moment alerted the researcher to difficulties and tensions in the researcher/teacher roles in the classroom.

A reality of participant observation is that participants, aware of the potential for surveillance, may want to defend their actions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Thus, the teacher's justified fear, is perhaps that, in the absence of an expanded explanation, students will not prepare and may fail. This turn makes the detached observer, present, and the researcher's agenda and roles visible to all.

### *Student engagement/ interest*

[continued stream from extract 3]

Extract 4 includes two turns: a student-initiated referential question (at turn 10, 'what's the question?') and a return to the topic initiated by the teacher.

#### **Extract 4**

10. SM: What's the question?

11. T: It's very general [pause] so in other words you can answer using [pause] whatever you like [pause] okay [pause] right! [pause pause] So [pause] please answer these questions I'll give you until five past twelve at the latest to finish your answers okay [pause] so you've got twenty minutes' maximum and then if you have finished [pause] think you have finished [pause] you may like to come and see me and find out what to do next thanks people [end of turn]

This extract shows the first student elicit in this lesson (at turn 10). It indicates 'academic' interest (or a goal orientation) in the teacher's talk for the first time. The teacher's follow up turn and feedback (at turn 11, 'it's very general...') almost dismisses the turn by quickly elaborating on the research task, insisting on diversity, choice, and topic coverage (at turn 11, 'whatever you like').

There are several issues regarding modes here. The teacher, in a somewhat Managerial Mode, hastily pleases with students to "answer the questions" within strict time limits (at turn 11, 'until five past...'). This reinstates control and focuses student action on task completion. The teacher repeats a focus on time ('at the latest', 'twenty minutes'), a boundary exercising authority to decide what occurs and when. The teacher's use of transitional markers (at turn 11, 'okay' and 'right') indicate discomfort with the slow progression of student activity, and desire for 'quantity'. The teacher anticipates that some students may finish early and has a task ready. Control is exercised and softened (at turn 11, 'if you have finished...think you have finished ...') by not saying what the task is.

After this point the transactional interactions change. A student switches the Managerial Mode in use to a Materials Mode (at turn 12, 'can you put up the...'). The student initiates a request and the tone is not rude but direct. The teacher, perhaps sensing this minor test of authority, invites the student to 'come and borrow...' (at turn 13), effectively repositioning him in his student role (avoiding conflict).

Extract 5 follows and elaborates on the teacher's goal of preserving positive student relations, as stated in his/her interview at the time (Interview, 2007).

### Extract 5

12. SC: Can you put the first sheet up [Teacher's name/identifier omitted]? [The student is referring to another overhead used in Friday's lesson]  
13. T: You can come and borrow it. [end of turn] [Student chatter for several minutes]

In extract 6, the teacher wishes to move students on to a new 'activity'.

### Extract 6

14. T: Right [pause] there are some options on the board [pause] um [pause pause] Excuse me [pause] who has the first sheet which you're not actually using at the moment? [T speaking to a student] When you have finished with it could you please give it to [SN]? [omitted]  
15. SCr: Penis [Male student speaking into the tape recorder]  
16. SS [SCr & SB Giggle]  
17. T: [Interjects] Excuse me [pause] [to group] Can you use this pattern for question seven? And that one is what you want to do in the future [translating from what's on the board in Spanish, to English] plus [pause] for question eight [pause pause] [SSCH] You people are about to step rank because you're all giggling away there obviously not answering those questions [pause] [tone is firm not aggressive] so you have one last chance [Quiet SCH. Inaudible].

In extract 6, turn 14 shows the teacher using a Materials Mode to discuss what students are doing. This focusses students' attention on models (sentences). A Skills and Systems mode switch occurs to signal student skills and actions (at turn 14, 'using' a worksheet; at turn 17, using patterns and 'translating' and not doing what's expected ('answering questions')).

Rather than an IRE/IRF sequence, turn 17, provides several focusing moves for students to attend to 'patterns' ('question seven'), translation ('that one is what you want ...') and more information ('question eight'). The collection of turn references to 'language' content "...produce strings of correct utterances..." [to] "manipulate" the target language (Ghafarpour, 2016, p.8). This is typical of GTMs which promote language as system of formulae.

At turn 15, a student talks into the tape recorder. Neither the teacher nor the researcher notice but students giggle. Interactions emerge which result in disciplinary action (in turn 17). Turn 15, sees SC, a male student, hold a monologue in Spanish with the tape recorder. It is the first time in the lesson that there is spontaneous use of Spanish by a student (or anyone). It occurs 'outside' the official Skills and Systems Mode. The student says a lewd term ('penis') in English 'into' the device, perhaps a

surreptitious affront to the female researcher. The student showed some restraint given cruder terms used for genitalia. His act may also be a test of the researcher's trust, extract 7.

#### Extract 7 (Same student continues)

18. SCr: Spanish is fun [Male student talking closely and playfully into the tape recorder] *hola ¿Cómo estás?* [pause] *muy bien gracias ¿Y tú? ¿Dónde vives* [pause]? *Vivo en* [Suburb omitted] *y tú?* [ translation: hi how are you very good thank you and you? where do you live I live in [omitted] and you? [SS chatter ongoing. SCr laughs loud]

Extract 7 is the first extended turn produced by a student. The tone begins playful (at turn 18, 'Spanish is fun') and switches to a script ('*hi, how are you? Very well thank you and you...*'). The turn is monotone, as if recalling information from memory without taking a breath (a transactional conversation with the self): a performance for the device and researcher. The teacher interjects below.

#### Extract 7 (part 2)

19. T: [to SCr] Okay right people [pause] You are moving now thank you [pause pause] Excuse me [pause] I said if you were off track again you would need to separate [pause] so a couple of people are going to need to move [Tone is more assertive/ louder].
20. SB: [Interjects] We're having a good time in Spanish
21. SJ: That's a good thing!
22. T: Your time is almost up for answering those questions
23. SB: You're gonna be seen as a mean person <XX>[inaudible] [SS moving chairs/clicking chairs]
24. T: [<XX>] [Teacher is speaking quietly to SCr. Inaudible talk][SSCH]
25. S: That is challenging isn't it?
26. S: Boring [loud]
27. S-S [inaudible] [end of turn] [SSCH & inaudible teacher/students talking]

At turn 19, the teacher manages the student's behaviour. However, two students intervene (at turn 20, 21 and 23), mimicking the teacher's directives and creating a new Student-Initiated Managerial Mode. This mode is distinct from the teacher's 'use'. While it includes reminders to the teacher, these are different to the task, time and content reminders given to students.

At turn 23 a student directly addresses the teacher in a personal manner ('you're going to be seen as a mean...'), and in doing so, positions the teacher and researcher in opposition, while repositioning the researcher as a witness or authority. This may indicate the student seeking an alliance with the teacher. This act also expands Walsh's interpretation of teachers' Managerial Modes. Walsh (2006) suggests teachers deploy this mode to manage 'behaviour' (etc.), however, the students' mode is a collective 'mode' with a manipulative tone (a political 'act'). Two students are 'managing' the initial



turns, supporting each other's 'plight' (at turns 20, 21, 23, 24 and 26) and forming a spontaneous alliance. Another student joins in (at turn 25). The alliance is formed to critique behaviour management indirectly through sarcasm (turn 20 'we're having a good time' and turn 21, 'that's a good thing'). Perhaps this indicates confusion of a focus in the study on students' interest being solely about fun. Stating this sounds like telling the teacher to 'calm down' (given the pace and quantity of instructions). While the teacher interjects students' talk (at turn 22, 'your time is almost up'), students regain it (turn 23). Furthermore, while the student disciplined moves desks, another student continues the interaction reminding everyone of his friend's challenging behaviour (at turn 23 and 24). This indicates sarcasm ('challenging isn't it'). The final student turn, a follow up move, is more public resistance and critique (at turn 26, 'boring'). The teacher speaks to the student quietly.

These extracts indicate that students and teacher are developing strategic alliances, pushing in favour and against each other, by using their power and authority. The alliances weave in, out and around the researcher, challenging textbook 'participant observer' invisibility. Some talk keeps teacher-to-student and student-to-student talk private (at turn, 27, and in the constant 'chatter'). This 'out of sight' talk evades the research 'record'.

During observations, the researcher paid considerable attention to teacher/students' 'overt' use of authority, power (control) and resistance, as 'power' sharing (redistribution) was a focus in the study. A deeper understanding of the existing roles and relations in play, and of subtle 'alliances' emerged through an expanded consciousness of the tone of relationships and of people's dispositions over the longer term. This was possible because the researcher observed several lessons prior to beginning this first 'formal' observation. More obvious calls for help (in students' critique), as in the extract below, could go unnoticed in 'observations' without such a context.

### **Extract 8**

28. ST: We get too much homework

29. T: [Interjects] Okay right [pause] listening people [pause] You seriously have five more minutes and we are going to have to move on [pause] so by the end of the lesson I will collect whatever answers you have come up with [pause pause] and in fact [pause] can you now take out your diary [pause] so I will tell you when we will be doing this conversation [. [a debate on the date of the conversation ensues].

This extract shows another student-initiated turn to voice critique. The teacher interrupts (at turn 29, 'okay, right') and switches the students' 'critique mode' to a Skills and Systems mode and then a Managerial mode (at turn 28, 'okay right listening...'). The disruption is strengthened by extensive

directives (at turn 29, ‘you seriously have five...’ ‘...we are going to...’) and goal repetition (at turn 28, ‘by the end of the lesson I ...’). Control lost is restored.

### **Final thoughts on the lesson’s extracts**

The first 20 minutes (approximately) of this lesson show many of the hallmarks of traditional teacher/student exchanges; of teacher-directed teaching; of curriculum centering ‘systematic’ language study, and of absence of ‘cultural’ contexts or of ‘engaged’ student participation in Spanish language use and reflection on their lives. The teacher’s talk dominates ‘all’ talk and determines the student focus (behaviour) and activity (compliance with completion). Most audible student talk is a form of resistance.

The student-led exchanges toward the end of extract 8 enable teacher-student interactions to switch into what Walsh (2006) calls a Classroom Context Mode. This mode enables extended learner talk, less teacher ‘talk’ and student initiated ‘content’ feedback. However, it is short lived (turns 18-29), and is ‘technically’ outside the ‘curriculum’. This illuminates other discourses at play.

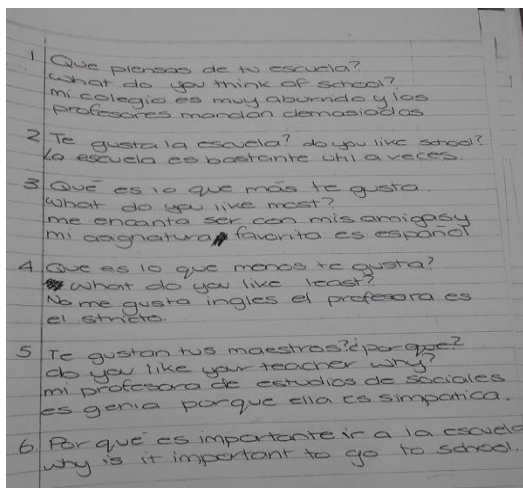
The content’ of students’ cumulative talk (in extracts 1-7) make public the ‘meta’ discourses and labours at work. For instance, the participants’ positioning of the teacher; students, and researcher, as ‘people’ or as workers with multiple roles, and as deviants or as potential allies, and ‘doers’ of good and bad, is interesting. Diverse participants send ‘smoke signals’ (messages) to the researcher to signal ‘oppressive’ practices and roles they wish to change.

The teacher’s attention to the structural discourses of schooling distract him/her from students’ creative, critical, academic, and intrinsic interest-oriented moves, including a student’s use of Spanish. The multiple interactions highlight the complexity of: everyday teaching; student (dis)engagement in activity and assessing student participation, in moments, in a lesson (if participation is largely absent, and resistance is temporary or opaque).

The 8 extracts highlight tensions between participants’ authority. Students’ talk explores the space beyond routines: a consciousness of transformative possibilities. Participant resistance may be a push for the researcher to reveal her allegiance. This reveals participants’ ‘suspicion’ of her.

Finally, one cannot ignore the constant chatter in English. This ‘talk’ is curbed (twelve in total) by the teacher (use of “okay”, “excuse me”, etc.). The ‘few’ (four of 14) engaged students offer one-word responses (at turn 3 and 6) and two referential questions (at turn 8 and 10). One is guided by an instrumental goal orientation (at turn 8, ‘do we get a grade?’) and another by intrinsic interest (at turn 10, ‘what’s the question?’). Sadly, students’ participation is marginal, and their talk indicates limited freedom to ask questions and request activity (i.e. for resources, at turn 12). The image below (Image 20) shows a student’s ‘translated’ answers to the questions used.

## Image 21: SS# Spanish Student's Workbook



### Translation:

1. My school is boring and the teachers are bossy
2. School is quite useful sometimes
3. I love being with my friends and my favourite subject is Spanish
4. I don't like English. The teacher is strict.
5. My social studies teacher is 'awesome' because she is friendly

### The 'main' activity of the lesson

The following extracts provide 'more' detail on the pedagogical/learning theories, practices and relations engaged throughout the May 28 lesson. Similar modes, evidence of teacher-directed Spanish language acquisition focus, and sustained use of instruction and communication in English continues (repetition is avoided due to word count). The extracts continue from extract 8. Extracts 9 to 12 show how participant language use and teaching/learning practice can limit or create opportunities for student-to-teacher, and student-to-student interaction in Spanish. Extract 9 begins at turn 37 with the teacher requesting attention.

### Extract 9

TCH/SSCH (movement)

37. T: Okay right people [pause] Can you stop what you're doing and listen up [pause pause] [SSCH]

38. Excuse me there are three irregular verbs in the past tense and the preterit that I would now like you to write down in your book I'm going to put them on the board now [pause] following that [pause] excuse me [pause] if you're lucky you might have a few more minutes towards the end of the lesson to continue on with these answers [pause] alright [pause] following that I would like you to work on this particular sheet it is something I am going to be giving you a mark for [pause] so obviously it needs to be your best effort [pause] you've got verbs in brackets you've got subject pronouns [pause] you just need to work out [pause] using the past tense [pause] the answer [pause] we had quite a bit of practice last week [pause] particularly last Thursday [pause pause]. Now the catch is that there are some irregular verbs here however [pause] you need to look back in your look before you start I would recommend [pause] check which one of these verbs are irregular and remember that when you come to that certain verb

39. S: <XX>[loud yawn]

40. T: Right while you're doing this please absolutely no talking

41. S [Softly] No talking [pause] why?

42. T: Right [pause] the next piece of work we'll be doing you can work together however [pause] for this one please [pause] it's your own work

[Students talk about the 'no talking' rule, turns 43-47 is omitted, partly inaudible]

50. T: Excuse me I'll say it again [pause] there are irregular verbs on this list [pause] you will need to find out from your book which ones they are and remember that when you come to fill that in [pause] obviously the majority of them are regular [pause] however [pause] last Thursday when I wasn't here for example I asked you to write out three irregular verbs from the *Español Mundial Textbook* [pause] plus on that sheet I handed you one side had the regular verb endings [pause] the second side were irregular and I'm about to write three more irregular verbs on the board now [pause] please [pause] [SCH] for you to write down before you start this sheet [pause pause] so therefore [pause] they should be fairly easily identifiable in your book

51. SCr: Spanish number ten

52. SJ: Are we writing these down now?

53. T: Yes

54. T: Right [pause] there's one thing to remember and that is ummm ir [to go] and ser [to be] are the same in the preterit tense [pause] they're exactly the same [S@ and SCH softly, then silence]

The previous extended 'extract' illustrates how the teacher's discourse dynamically switches between the Managerial (i.e. at turn 37), Material (i.e. at turns 38, 42 and 50) and Skills and Systems (i.e. at turn 38) modes. Of significance is the length of these turns and the quantity of directives (i.e. at turn 37 'can you stop and listen...', at turn 38 [I'd] 'like you to write down ...' etc). During turn 38, the teacher provides strict enumerated instructions and highlights that this work requires students' 'best effort' because it will be marked (an outcome orientation). The teacher's repeated use of 'following that' and the quantity of tasks to complete 'before the end...' magnifies the expectation of 'busy work'. Students are largely quiet: one yawns (at turn 39) and another questions the teacher's request for 'no talking' (at turn 41) and seeks clarification.

Extract 9 provides further evidence for claims regarding an ongoing GTM and instrumental goals (in turns 38 and 50) over the past week (three lessons). The focus has been the preterit tense and practising verb conjugations in gap tasks. The teacher uses 4 Spanish words (at turn 54), for the first time in the lesson: two verbs and the textbook's name (turn 50). As outlined, a GTM approach involves a sequential acquisition of various technical skills (Nunan, 1998), rather than dispositions, awareness and practices to engage in interactional competence (Kramsch as cited in Walsh, 2012)

that demand organic use of Spanish with open-ended dimensions of interculturality (Nunan, 1998; Lo Bianco, 2003; Pieterse, 2004; Dervin, 2010). These possibilities are absent in this lesson.

Extract 10 follows and reveals how limited Spanish use is. It's learning involves locating and organising information. There's no discussion of culture or of language variation. An IRF sequence is used and a student challenges the teacher's disciplinary knowledge.

#### **Extract 10**

62. SJ: How do we found out which is an irregular verb T#? (Teacher's title and name omitted i.e. Mr/Ms/Miss Name]

63. T: Remember I said that is up to you to look into your book [pause] find out which ones they are and then remember also which ones they are

64. S: Oh right

Extract 11 unfolds over the last 30 (approximately) minutes of class (for brevity 5 turns are shown). The in between interactions involve a mix of student/teacher chatter and quiet. The activity enables insights into how the teacher and students participate in a choral exercise. The students mime a verb and their peers guess and conjugate. The students produce one-word responses (in IRE/IRF sequences).

#### **Extract 11**

102. T: Okay people [pause] in case you haven't worked it out [pause] very shortly I'll be giving you a card in which there is a verb and someone will need to say [pause] he or she did whatever it is [pause] you can only use past tense [pause pause] in the past we've used it with the present tense verbs in the present tense [pause] obviously we're learning the past tense the preterit so that's what we're doing to practice [end of turn/ teacher handing out verb cards]

103. T: So if it's an 'ar' verb [pause] what is your ending people?

104 S: 'o'

105. T: 'er'

106. S: <XX> [answers]

107. T: Right [pause] um people there is one trick one however in here which is an irregular verb [pause] you have to choose the correct phrase [pause] SB# [student's name omitted] that's for you [pause] it won't affect your performance however [SS@@]

108. T: Right is yours ready? No showing your card

109. S: How do you find the past tense of it?

110. T: Right remember in the back of your book you have a verb sheet

111. S: Do we say 'I'?

112. T: Or he or she or we you [pause] you don't have one glued in? Right I can get you one in a minute (A student mimes)

113. T: Right someone says he or she did

[Several incorrect transactions to find the verbs 114-129]

130. S: Cantar

131 SN: Canto

132. T: Right! Who's next? [ the activity ends at turn 209 with all students required to mime and guess]

209. T: Well done people we've now not got not long left obviously so raise your hand if you think you need some more time to work on those questions please [pause] ok overwhelmingly majority so definitely you've got say the last ten minutes of this lesson please [pause] to finish them off [pause] obviously there won't be any homework tonight

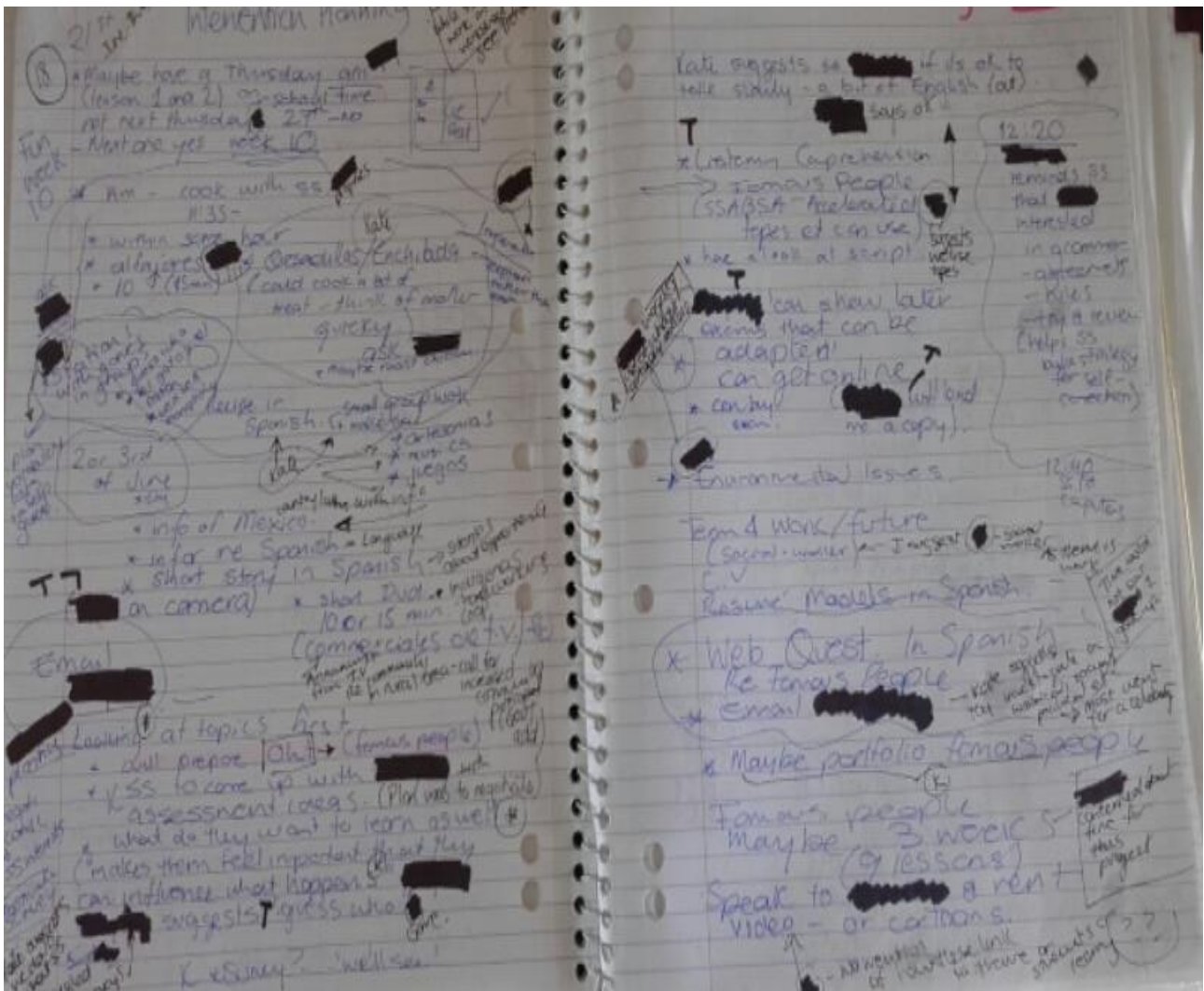
In extract 11, the teacher uses Managerial (at turn 102, teacher directs students etc.) and then Material modes (at turn 110, '...your book') to set up this guided practice activity (Larsen & Freeman, 2008). This is a brief departure, a mode side sequence (Walsh, 2011). There is a limited Classroom Context Mode when students are invited to practice on their own. Walsh (2001) and Ghafarpour (2016) suggest this mode should promote students' eliciting extended turns, formulating rich questions, and actively engaging in deep cultural experiences. However, a rigid IRE sequence is used (i.e. at turns 105-107) which restricts students' learning, to a trial and error mode (for accuracy).

In conclusion, while it is problematic to use one lesson to represent and assess teaching and learning practice, this practice is in keeping with the study's participant approved instrumental design, and the 'social sciences' practice of providing pre-and-post measures (Burns, 2005). The discussion of several extracts provides evidence for claims that teacher and student roles engaged in this lesson are largely 'traditional', however relaxed and contested in moments. Spanish learning involves Spanish 'study', and a focus mostly on isolated parts of language, and an absence of meaningful 'cultural' input (typical of GTM). Various indicators (content and process) contradict the teacher's espoused theory, and suggest, that a 'banking' approach to education is in use. It's defined by largely 'fixed' teacher / student roles and positioning, and one-way transition of 'knowledge' or information, from the teacher to the student. Student learning is thus restricted, in this lesson, to receiving

instructions, identifying aims in English, challenging directives, speaking informally in English to peers, and playfully resisting the teacher's 'pedagogical' goals and task, among other activities.

The following chapter provides a snapshot of Spanish during the collaborative-intervention phase of the study. The same method of analysis is used for consistency and 'fairness'. The image that follows embodies the messiness of dialogue, of collaborations, of focus, of 'real time' planning (on the corner of a now shared teacher/researcher desk) and interests in the collaborative study (Image 21).

**Image 22: Researcher notes taken from the participant teacher and researcher's first meeting at the beginning of the 'collaborative-intervention' (June, 2017)**



## 7. THE COLLABORATIVE INTERVENTION

The word 'collaboration' comes from the Latin word (root), *collaborare*, meaning to 'co' (with) 'labour' work ('work together' (*Merriam Webster Dictionary*, 2017). This should be revised to embody that in collaboration one can also work 'against' (hooks, 1994). This chapter notes the possibilities and constraints of collaborations in this PhD. The 'labour' in collaborative interventions, is one of high-voltage struggles and empowerment, of impositions and freedom seeking by multiple collaborator stakeholders. The written text, is a 'messy' collaboration, of case study participants, and participant supervisors, PhD paradigms and the 'imagined' and material examiners' powers. This chapter speaks to the tremendous challenge of "learning acceptance of difference" and being "rigorously challenged by the longing to connect and join..." [with others whom are] ... "either radically different or hold beliefs and opinions so unlike... [our own or what we are familiar with] "...as to be a source of estrangement and conflict, so much so that only sustained, caring, critical vigilance can ensure continued contact" (hooks, 2013, p.1).

This study negotiated a critical approach to Spanish teaching in collaboration with participants in a Year 10 Spanish classroom. Institutional, disciplinary, individual, and social factors shaping the requirements of PhD research meant that asymmetrical roles were adopted prior to meeting participants and in collaborations with them, with some consistency and consequences.

As per PhD protocol, this 'collaborative' study was designed by the PhD candidate prior to meeting participants. Institutional informed-consent and proposal approval processes demanded this be executed prior to engaging participants and seeking their consent. Participants were excluded from opportunities to design the study as a result.

Also, when the teacher and researcher met on several occasions (between June 21 and December 10, 2007) to negotiate and evaluate the critical approach agreed to as per informed consent, the teacher participant expressed concerns over researcher requests to involve students in negotiation, power sharing, data analysis and attendance to planning meetings, and to invitations for all parties to participate in the research. Joint decisions reached at meetings, not necessarily by 'open' consensus, meant that the researcher was accountable for research, lesson transcription development, (ongoing) data analysis, and pedagogical materials development; the teacher would (continue to) teach and assess students (in this class and four others, in two language fields) and, students would continue to engage in Spanish learning, as per Term 1 (and in seven subject areas at school). Thus, from this



study's inception, participants in the case study were not 'equal' in this PhD. This is a key framing device in an otherwise 'dialogical' undertaking. In addition, it must be said that the teacher outlined work, health problems and institutional reasons for multiple, sudden, and challenging departures from negotiations. Most importantly perhaps, as hooks (1994, p.36) states, it is important to "take into consideration the fears teachers [and researchers may] have when asked to shift their paradigms." Finally, the researcher also believes the teacher was committed to the cultural immersion and motivational aims of this study, rather than to aspects of enabling student voice and empowerment, a position made clear at ongoing meetings.

## Meetings

At the first joint meeting, the teacher outlined the need to provide students with a cultural experience (i.e. discussing contemporary celebrities, food, a fiesta, music and providing games and fun activities in Spanish) (Meeting 1, June 21, 2007) (Image 21, above). The teacher volunteered to look for vocabulary lists, worksheets on the imperative tense, and to develop overhead transparencies with expressions for themes and the mid-term exam. The teacher used existing resources (a Year 10 folder) and the researcher made her own (self-funded).

The researcher and teacher participants always handled sensitive moments in meetings with ethical care. The researcher suggested topics be examined critically (i.e. examining images of beauty, stereotypes, etc.). The teacher reminded the researcher that teaching high school students is different to teaching beginner undergraduates (the researcher's role). The teacher argued that Year 10 is preparation for SACE (to support a focus on 'language' forms). Intense discussions indicated mismatches in beliefs about education and curriculum 'obligations' and interests in Spanish learning.

The researcher argued for enabling students' communicative and critical capacities in Spanish and offered to write cue cards in Spanish for the teacher (with greetings/ expressions used by the teacher). The researcher expressed disappointment with students' exclusion from decision-making. The teacher argued this would be difficult, as students would not manage power well and conflict could occur in other classes. The teacher believed data/ feedback would see students' voices heard.

Fulfilling and uncomfortable moments in ~~collaboration~~ gave participants insights into the demands, pressures, and contradictions of each other's work. Navigating these 'together', to the end, created respect, deepened trust, and improved dialogue. However, tensions persisted throughout the study as all participants valued and understood the 'Freirean' inspired framework in different terms given 'personal' identification with this practice and diverse interpretations of 'dialogue' and what it means to be 'critically' engaged in learning. This became most obvious during the first week of interventions when the teacher asked the researcher to produce a 'guide' on CP (readings provided

were perceived by the teacher to be time consuming and confusing). Diverse interpretations of what it means to be critical were evident in multiple participant (i.e. students and supervisors) stances.

The following lesson, enacted in the month of September (the 10<sup>th</sup>), months before collaboration was to end, highlights the issues in research and teaching practice at the time of the collaborative intervention phase. The analyses highlight tensions in responding to the study's original affirmative experimental research question: *will a critical approach to Spanish have a positive impact on Spanish students' motivation, proficiency and voice?* The positivist standpoint and methodology was questioned and challenged, by participants (and in the writing up of the thesis).

A final interview and focus group in 2007/2008 (the next chapter), and the lesson that follows, provide evidence for difficult and transformative 'changes' and 'progress' enabled in the enactment of a critical pedagogy in Spanish in this classroom. Researcher claims are 'justified' in the views of participants, however, as Denzin and Lincoln (2005) and others suggest (Benett, 2011; Polkinghorne, 2007), who is to know the reasons for transformation with certainty?

#### **Monday September 10, 2007 (double lesson)**

[At 11:35am the bell rings. Students eventually arrive. There are several absentees. The first minutes of the lesson are inaudible. A student accidentally placed her jumper (clothing) on the audio device].

This first extract provides evidence for more than one extended IRE/F sequence. The activity's aim is to have students conjugate verbs in a 'choral drill' (Nunan, 1998). At turn 1, a student provides feedback in Spanish (blurred due to sound problem impacting turns 1-7).

#### **Extract 1 [SCH]**

1. SCr: Muy bien exelente
2. T: This one is just actually[<XX>]
3. SM: It's not much[pause] it's a screen of silicon powder and a battery
4. T: Err hola [pause] buenos días
5. SCr: Buenos días
6. T: Hola
7. Ss: Holaaaa
8. T: Necesito siete voluntarios [pause] por favor[pause]
9. SNa: Seven[pause] that's a lot
10. T: Siete personas por favor
11. Ss: Siete
12. DSy: That's like a whole class
13. SNa: Seven per ou <XX>
14. S: I don't know

15. T: Right[pause] seven people please
16. SNa: Is it good or bad?
17. T: It's good laughs [pause] but seven or us
18. SNa: Ohhhhhhhhh [exaggerated]
19. T: Right [pause] necesito seis voluntarios [pause] seis personas [SSCH] [teacher handing out verb cards]
20. SNa: But that's gonna be so easy that one
21. T: Well you can swap if you wish
22. SNa: No [pause] that one's easy [pause] I like it
23. T: Actually you might work out what it is
24. T: Emmm [extended] necesito cuatro personas por favor
25. SNa: Four people
26. SDy: I'll do it

Turn 4 sees the teacher greeting students in Spanish with a student responding also, at turn 5, in Spanish. The teacher is reciprocated by multiple students (at turn 6 and 7). There's also a personal exchange between a student and the teacher about science (the students' lifeworld). Some things are different in this lesson's opening (different to those on Monday May 28<sup>th</sup>).

At turn 8, the teacher elicits a request for volunteers in Spanish, in a focusing move and a student responds quickly, engaging the teachers elicit. The pace of the lesson is upbeat. There are several participants engaged (5 out of 11 present), multiple volunteers. It takes only a few transactional turns (four in total) to enable the teacher's goal (by 19 and 26). A Materials Mode is evident given this practice involves a verb game. There is brief banter (joking) between participants (at turns 9 to 12, and 16 to 17). The tone of the lesson is positive but also feels productive.

It is difficult to categorise the modes and side sequences in Extract 1, as there is a transaction in modes and language (code) switching, from English to Spanish to English. In sum, after the teacher's framing move and request (at turn 19, 'right necesito voluntarios...') (*I need volunteers*) (a Managerial Mode), when he/she is moving from desk to desk and handing out cards (a Materials Mode) requesting a mime, a student initiates 'content feedback', a Context Mode (at turn 20 and 22) to share his opinion of the verb he receives (in English). The student's response suggests he is interested in being challenged (a focus on 'learning' rather than 'form'). The teacher offers a chance for him to 'swap' cards (to re-negotiate materials) but he declines. As stated by the teacher, at the first interview, students do appear to feel safe in this classroom, as in the first lesson analysed in the previous chapter. Students are free to ask (referential questions at turn 15), critique (at turn 9 and 20) and make 'minor' decisions (at turn 22, 'no its easy I like it') to shape how the activity runs (without resistance). Extract 2 elaborates on the warm up activity of the lesson in extract 1 and elaborates on the critical practices 'emerging', in struggle, with the teacher's (default) preferred approach.

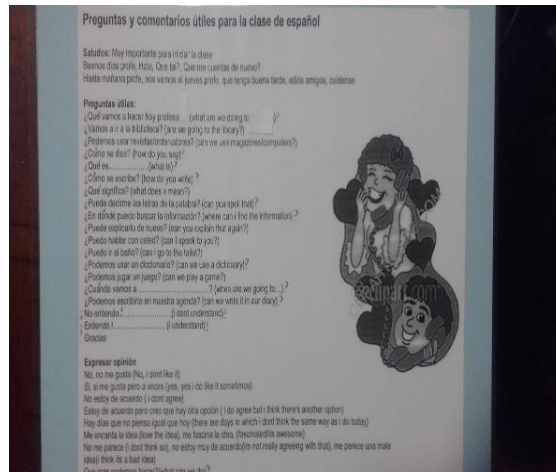
## Extract 2

35. T: Ok[pause] people[pause] Umm[pause] excuse me[pause] SM# name [pause] right you're going to see some performances[pause] I want you to say he or she has done something[pause] so revision of the perfect tense[pause] remembering what Umm what happen on Thursday[pause] right we have a test so this is some practice of what he or she has done someone needs to tell us so these are either verbs we have seen before or that we should be able to work out. Ok[pause] SCr# name[omitted] [pause] oh[pause] hint[pause] some of the verbs are irregular
36. SNa: Hey SJ# name [omitted]
37. SJ: Yeah?
38. SNa: Do you wanna do this one?
39. SJ: No
40. T: Shh right[pause] you can swap if you wish[pause] oh I know why you're<XX>
41. SNa: Just take a look at it
42. T: Ok SCr# name [omitted]
43. SCr: Ahem hem hem [pause]
44. T: Exactly [pause] ¿cómo se dice en español?  
[Student mimes something]
45. T: Ss# [name omitted]
46. St: Err[pause] abrir
47. T: Abrir is to open
48. St: Abrido
49. T: Irregular [?]
50. SM: Aburrido
51. St: Abierto
52. T: ¿Que es Umm <XX> ?
53. SCr: Can I say it? Abrir la puerta
54. T: Gracias [pause]muy bien. SDy# name [pause] por favour [to turn 119 (25" approx..)].

At turn 35, the teacher struggles to gain students' attention (i.e. okay, excuse me). A Managerial Mode is evident as the teacher informs the students of the agenda. The mode quickly switches, in the same turn, to a Skills and Systems Mode ('I want you to say he or she') and then to the Managerial mode (i.e. reminders). The goal of the extended teacher turn is to transmit information (directives). This highlights an interesting negotiation between students and teacher (at turns 36-39) and a request for a student to use Spanish (at turn 44). This shows little disruption to pre-collaborative IRE/IRF sequences. However, when the teacher invites students to explore questions in Spanish, by referring students to a resource card stuck on their table (See Image 23) students are actually 'using' relevant expressions made for them (by the researcher, days earlier). These are culturally and 'classroom' relevant. The students actively guess mimes until the teacher provides feedback. Students produce

verbs in Spanish, unprompted (at turn 54), an indication of students' motivations or choice of language, and of willingness to participate.

**Image 23: Preguntas y Expresiones Útiles**



Extract 3 begins at turn 123 with the teacher's framing move ('excuse me'), prior to employing a Materials Mode ('reference sheets') in Spanish to inform students of the goal of the lesson ('expresa tu opinión') (to express opinion) and of the topic's importance to students' lives.

**Extract 3**

123.T: Excuse me people so these are some reference sheets. So[pause] expresa tu opinión is err a very important information for you[pause] different ways in which you can agree or what you think about an idea[pause] and we will be using some of these [pause] definitely this week [pause] probably even today [pause] at the moment it's a reference sheet for you however [pause] mi opinion del medio ambiente es muy importante [*your opinion of the environment is very important*]

124.SM: My opinion of the environment [translating the title on the worksheet]

125.T: Mmm [extended]

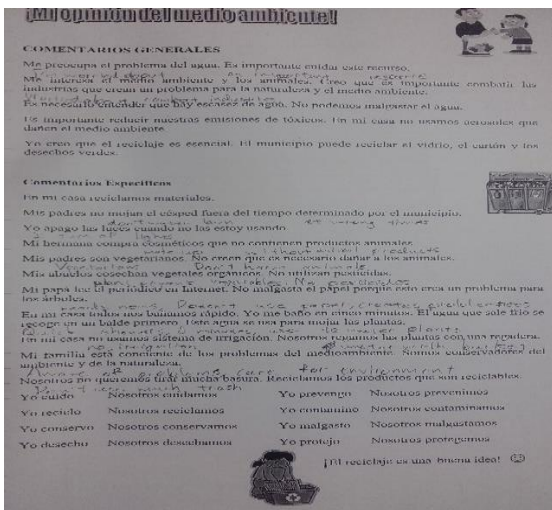
126.SDy: So is it yours?

127.T: Err [pause] people in general [pause] right [pause] here are some options[pause] SN# [name omitted] [pause] surely you're going to be asked to [pause] write down or to talk about Umm your feelings about the environment and some of the things that you may well do in your household in support of the environment [pause] these are some examples [pause] so while we read through them together [pause] if you wish [pause] offcourse [pause] you can make some notes in English on the sheet but we will go through it Umm in a minute [pause] can we all glue in the sheet now please? [SSCH]

The extract sees the teacher invite students in English to a 'critical inquiry'; an exploration of multiple and personal perspectives (at turn 123, 'different ways in which you can agree or what you

think...'). The teacher moves to a Materials Mode (at turn 123, 'a reference sheet') and then to a Students' Voice Mode in Spanish (*mi opinion of the environment is very important*), reinforcing students' voice. There are several mode-switching and mode side sequences. However, more important is the overt invitation to students to "activate" intimate, personal, affective, and socio-cognitive "schemata" (Ghafarpour, 2016) to reflect on their personal actions on their world (at turn 123, 'some of the things that you may do in your household in support of your environment...'). This is a positive expansion of earlier (Walsh 2001) pre-collaborative conceptualisations of a Classroom Context Mode. This blends critical learning (examining multiple avenues and socially/environmentally just practices) with a Student Voice Mode (students reflect on language to learn more about the world/self/family). The repeated message here is for students' to ('need to') form a conscious opinion. The teacher introduces another Classroom Context Mode to motivate students to think about their feelings and thoughts on the matter and then switches to a Skills Mode (at turn 127, 'you're going to be asked' to talk/write...). The image below is the worksheet being used. It complements and expands 'inquiry'.

**Image 24: Mi opinión del medio ambiente / My opinion of the environment (Student Workbook, 2007) (and translated summary):**



Translation:

- I'm concerned about the water issue. It's important to take care of this resource.
- I'm interested in the environment and in animals. I think it is important to 'fight' industries that create problems for nature and the environment etc.

The worksheet's theme and content raise students' consciousness about the environment and their participation in its protection, in Spanish. It promotes reflections on the issue and its relationship to lives in the 'Australian' context (the previously quoted textbook is European). Beneath the examples are eight verbs in the first person that relate directly to the topic (I take care, preserve, etc.). These language 'parts' are a scaffold for the students 'authentic' reflections on their family's practices (which they'll investigate). Participants read, translate and 'unpack' the text.

Extract 5 shows shifts away from IRE/IRF sequences (to revise tense) and codes. Spanish and English are the medium of communication and instruction (and shift). However, Spanish comes first. The classroom ‘sounds’ alive. If only audio could be included without impacting anonymity.

#### **Extract 5**

186.SCr: Que hay ...de agua [pause] no podemos malgastar el agua

187.T: Em [pause] muy bien [pause] so it’s necessary it’s important to what? To understand that there is

188.SCr: [] not much water [pause]

189.T: Right [pause] exactly a lack of water [pause] so what do you think the next part is saying? No podemos? What

190.St: Can we slow down a bit?

191.SBa: Where are we reading?

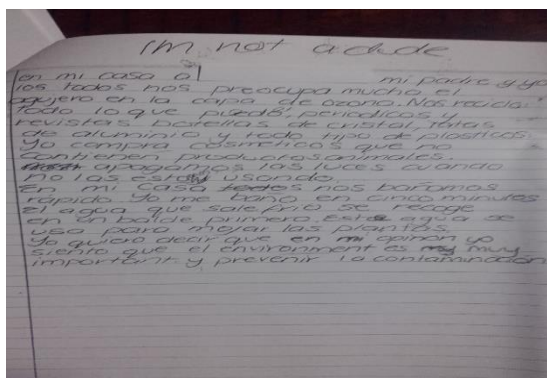
192.T: So, it’s necessary to understand that there is a lack of water...

[Extract 4 is omitted due to word count requirements (it develops between turns 158-171)].

In extract five, participants continue to examine the language and ideas on the environment. A typical initiation-response turn-taking sequence is used. Student chatter is minimal. Students are showing situational interest (Hidi, 1990) in making meaning while taking notes which is difficult for some. Two students’ referential questions at turn 190 (‘can we slow down a bit’) and at 191 (‘where are we reading’) signal interest (academic and or intrinsic interest) in the process and topic being undertaken (Zimmerman, as cited in Bandura 1995 p. 204). These are positive signs of ‘critical’ engagement and of interested performance (Pintrich, 2003).

The researcher believes the Spanish teacher’s work with the Spanish students in this lesson better meets the teacher’s initial ‘expressed’ methodology. At the interview, the teacher outlined that language and culture are important and could enable “lifelong learning” (Interview 1, 2007). This lesson illustrates the teacher and students’ developing a critical lens on the environment through dialogue in Spanish and English (as Image 17 shows). While asymmetrical institutional roles remain, at times untouched, the students volunteer voices, they work things out in Spanish; aloud, alone and with partners, and they ask questions on their own initiative and interest. The following task also illustrates student interest in a ‘task’ orientation (Askill-Williams, 2000, p.6) (translation included).

**Image 25: SA#'s Environmental practices at home (in Spanish)**



... at my place my father and I are concerned about the ozone layer. We recycle ...everything I can, newspapers and magazines of glass, aluminium cans, all kinds of plastics. I buy cosmetics that don't contain animal products. We turn off lights when I'm not using them. At home we shower quickly etc (cold water is collected in a bucket during the shower) etc.

A visible mutual dialogue and engagement with the language, culture, and content of the lesson, is evident in the above text extract. The teacher's scaffolding of the link between the personal and the social/environmental is consolidated with a coherent and challenging homework task that invites students to speak to family members, engage in open inquiry and write about what they reflect on, with others, to support the environment. Image 25 shows part of the completed task. It sees the student outline what she and her father do for the ozone layer. The student meaningfully draws from vocabulary taught to construct this personal text. But most importantly to the researcher, this student has initiated a critical dialogue with her father on a topic and practice in which 'the family' is engaged. It indicates the teacher's dialogical and critical approach to Spanish linguaculture has created meaningful connections between students' lives, homes, and learning. It is, in the researcher's view, that teaching in this manner enables a rich and nuanced exchange between academic and life wor(1)ds.

### **Negotiations during the collaborative intervention**

The collaborative-intervention's aim was to create a space to privilege participants' (students, teacher, and researcher) dialogue, negotiations (curriculum/teaching/learning), critical inquiries and decision-making with the 'aim' of transforming lesson dynamics informed by the actual participants' voices and data. The project enabled participants, to varying degrees, to converse and negotiate aspects of the curriculum and research activity. In various and contentious ways, student/teacher/researcher views and feedback shaped aspects of the study. Collaborations were 'where possible' informed by students' responses to surveys and journal feedback. The teacher and researcher met regularly, for brief conversations, and for two extended meetings, without student representation. Students held one student meeting.



When the teacher and researcher participants met, they discussed lesson transcripts (emailed), student proficiency records, and qualitative and quantitative data. They briefly discussed critical theories, but mostly focussed on curriculum planning, ideas for intervention, incremental use of Spanish and connections between the curriculum, and students' lives, motivations, voices.

The PhD's official methods and methodology focus at the time of introductions to participants and the study did not allow time to hold deep conversations about beliefs, passions, and commitments in education. Participants' histories, philosophies, and reasons for engaging in Spanish, were barely discussed, after informed consent had been granted. This meant that hidden and 'private' knowledges and beliefs 'tested' participant dialogue in moment to moment interactions throughout the study.

### *The enacted 'critical' approach*

The critical approach enacted in this study was driven by several (explicit and covert) aims and assumptions. It aimed to enact an alternative approach to 'banking education' (Freire, 1979) in Spanish teaching and learning. The 'alternative' critical approach would enable (1) the use of Spanish in meaningful ways in lessons, more than the deconstruction of language; texts and discourse, (as expected) (2) a focus on students' motivations, voice and proficiency, in teacher and student dialogue in Spanish, while viewing the interrelationship "...between particular contexts and broader frameworks that inform, shape and give meaning..." (Smyth, 2001).

### *A framework for analysis of student proficiency*

For this study, the researcher combined Guerrero and Del Vecchio's (1996) Bilingual Syntax Measure (BSM I and II) developed to measure Spanish proficiency and Collis and Biggs (1979) SOLO (Structure of the Observed Learning Outcome) Level Descriptors, to qualitatively assess students' spoken language use. The tools help interpret how students answered the colloquial expression ¿Qué es de tu vida? ('what's up?') to understand the 'complexity' of understanding of structure and language use in a semi-authentic socio-cultural context (it became more authentic over time).

Students found the conversation question to be fun. It was chosen to enhance students' communicative and intercultural awareness. By holding this conversation, over several occasions (between 3 and 4 times), and as per their initiative, students became more aware of the 'cultural' dimensions of the exchange and how 'scripted' talk learnt off by heart was 'artificial'. It was anticipated that one-on-one feedback, increased use of Spanish in lessons and greater exposure to personal use of language, would impact students' spoken proficiency and their awareness of the socio-cultural content. The researcher's invitation to students to converse about their lives was an initiative to bridge the 'academic' sphere of Spanish language learning with the 'authentic' and personal.

The researcher adapted Guerrero & Del Vecchio's (1996) as it allows qualitative insight into spoken proficiency. It categorises speakers in broad terms, as *hablante bajo* (low level speaker) *hablante limitado* (limited speaker) *hablante semi-competente* (semi competent speaker) *hablante fluido* (fluent speaker) (Guerrero & Del Vecchio 1996). The 'broad' categories (regardless of 'deficit' undertones of students' existing capitals and literacies) aid understanding how students:

- Interact with the researcher
- Identify strategies or action plans in their speech when they were 'stuck'
- Reflect on actions
- Critically evaluate events.

In addition, drawing on Guerrero and Del Vecchio's structural focus on language use, a 'quantitative' analysis, allowed systematically 'assessing' the conversation, in terms of:

- Average sentence length
- Total number of phrases used
- Total number of words
- Total number of different words
- Use of socio-cultural information
- Level of complexity of grammatical structures.

Collis and Briggs (1979, p.16) SOLO Level Descriptors were used to verify the analysis of students observed socio-cognitive performance, to conclude if they'd achieved:

- Pre-structural level (doesn't answer the question or understand it)
- Uni-structural (limited idea, some focus of relevant data)
- Multi-structural (relevant statements with no clear links, explanations, or relationships)
- Relational (answer is appropriate and includes key ideas that relate to all the relevant detail including explanations and attempts to link)
- Extended abstract (uses abstract principles to explain relationships and make critical/creative links).

The combined tools provide rich and technical insights into students' production of language and culture in context.

### **Students first conversation in Spanish**

During the first conversation on May 1<sup>st</sup>, several students were absent which meant that not all students completed the activity as planned. On the day, students left the Spanish classroom to meet

the researcher in a small room to avoid ‘outside’ interruptions and allow students to converse with the researcher without an audience. The researcher used a tape recorder and spent a moment encouraging the often-nervous students to ‘not worry’. The researcher clarified that the exercise was not a test, would not be graded and would be used as a ‘base measure’ to monitor ‘improvement’ over time. Most students followed the teacher’s instruction to prepare to “say as much” ... and “... many different topics” (as instructed on May 28).

The researcher told students that this first conversation was a way of seeing where they were at. After the conversation, the researcher congratulated and thanked each student. She provided verbal feedback using a rubric (See Appendix E). Post-lesson, students’ responses were transcribed and shared with them, at the next lesson. The teacher was given a copy of the original feedback.

The following are complete extracts of three students’ first conversations chosen to illustrate the most ‘proficient’ performance (extract 1), the average performance (extract 2) and the ‘least’ proficient performance (extract 3) enacted on day 1. Unfortunately, neither student engaged in ‘conversation’, technically and culturally speaking.

### *Extract 1*

Student 1: SBr

R: Hola SBr# ¿Cómo estás? ¿Qué es de tu vida?

S: Me llamo SB# [student’s name] vivo en [suburb] pero vivía en [another suburb] mis padres se llaman [mum’s name] y [dad’s name] tengo una pera [pronunciation issue] que se llama Nadia y tengo una gata se llama Hayley en mi tiempo libre mi [wrong article] gusta ver la [error] televisión me gusta ir al cine con mis amigos y salir con mis amigos [pause] mis asignaturas preferidas es [plural required] el drama [article isn’t needed in either subject] el inglés y la matemáticas no me gusta [verb form] las ciencias es [plural required] muy aburrida mi favorito color [pronunciation] es verde este verde [points to Green] mi gusta el pasta y pizza y mi [not a reflexive] gusta chocolate [pause pause] si [ random ] mi deporte favorito este [error] lucha libre mi favoritas películas es Eye for an Eye. Mi favoritas actores es [pause] Sally Field, Goldie Horn, Denzel Wahsington y Forest <XX> [pause] Mi [plural] favorito [plural] programas de televisión es Medium, Nerds, Supernatural y <XX> [pause] Mi colegio que se llama [school name [pause] Mi clase es mai corto? [engages researcher to seek clarification]

R: That’s short

SB: Grande [self corrects] me gusta [teacher's title including gender omitted] de español me gusta leer y escribir me gusta navegar or el internet ok [ends]

Extract 1 [translation given to capture the 'essence' of what the speaker is communicating in English]

R: Hi SB# [student's name] how are you? What's up? [similar to 'hey, how's it going?]

SB: My name is [students' name] I live in [suburb] but I lived in [suburb] my parents are [mum's name] and [dad's name] I have a pear [student says *pera* but means *perro* which is dog. This requires rolling the tongue to produce the 'r' in Spanish] that is called Nadia and I have a cat she is called Hayley in my free time to me like see the television I like going to the cinema with my friends and go out with my friends [pause] mi favourite subjects are the drama, the English and the mathematics [error with articles] I don't like the sciences it very boring [grammar of two verbs] my favourite colour is green this green to me like the pasta [error with gender or article] and pizza and to me like chocolate [pause] pause] My favourite sports [error] to be wrestling mi favourites [pause] mi favourite programs [self-corrects gender] are [lists programs in English] my favourite movies are [lists programs in English] [pause [my school's name is [school name] Mi class is short [error] big I like the Spanish teacher. I like reading and writing. I like surfing around the internet [pause/ends].

### *Analysis of extract 1*

Student one was nervous and asked to start the conversation again due to a 'mental blank'. However, once he began speaking and introducing himself he adopted relevant enunciation strategies while showing that he was speaking from 'memory'. There were few pauses in his extended turn and limited interaction with the researcher. Based on Collis & Biggs (1979) framework the student did not answer the greeting or the turn to converse and is thus pre-structural (shows a lack of understanding of the question or difficulty in applying the structure). The students' talk resembles an introduction (as in student profiles in textbook 'introductions').

The student introduces himself, where he's lived, his family and pets and then his diverse likes and favourite subjects, colours, movies, and artists. He talks about past times and food. The variety of topics, while personal, do not answer the question. It does indicate a surface knowledge of related topics (in conversations interactions are not list exchanges). The exchange allows the researcher to learn something about the student and thus, a personal connection is established, though it may be considered to be outside the expected conversational 'structure'.

In terms of the students' structure, the student's talk is reliant on using and repeating several familiar 'structures'. He says several terms repeatedly ('me gusta', *I like*; 'se llama', *his* and *her name*

is) and reports on his favourites, six times (repeating 'mi favorito'). However, he uses some complex structures. He says I live in [suburb] but I lived in [suburb], a complex sentence with past and present tense to provide comparison and contrast. He also uses reflexive verbs ('me llamo', *my name is*) and key phrases ('navegar el internet', *to navigate the web*). The 'repetitive' use of phrases increases the total number of words he uses to 165, however, the number of different words is low (78). Also, the level of complexity is within the *hablante limitado* (limited) range. He relies on the present tense taught in the Year 8 Curriculum (a focus two-years prior).

According to Guerrero and Del Vechio's bilingual measure, this student shows limited oral proficiency. He communicates his ideas, with good pronunciation and shows some confidence. However, there are issues with articles, grammar, and nouns. It is the researcher's view, that the student performed in accordance with the teacher's instructions (language used is somewhat decontextualized and thus problematic) but makes a positive connection with the researcher. The following students' extracts recorded also that day illustrate similar strategies and complexity, with greater error and limited vocabulary and grammatical complexity.

#### **Extract 2:**

Student 2: SJ

R: Hola SJ# ¿Cómo estás? ¿Qué es de tu vida?

S: Mi nombre es [J# student's name] mi cumpleaños ayer mi color favorito es morado tengo una hermana vivo en [suburb] soy de Inglaterra tengo una hermana se llama M#[name] mi padre se llama D# [name] mi madre se llama J#[name] [pause] Tengo un perro [pause] se llama Paddy [pause] Mi colegio es grande con muchos estudiantes [pause]. Mi asignatura preferido asignatura preferida es la música. Si tocar la guitarra en mi tiempo libre mi gusta tocar la guitarra, salir con amigos fiesta si mi comer favorito es pollo futbol australiano me gusta tocar futbol australiano ¿Qué tal?

R: [] Muy bien gracias

S:[]That's it!

Extract 2 [translation]

R: Hi SJ# [student's name] how are you? What's up?

S: My name is SJ# [student's name] my birthday yesterday my favourite colour is purple I have a sister I live in [suburb] I'm from England I have a sister her name is M#[sister's name] my dad's

name is D#[dad's name] my mum's name is J# [mum's name]I have a dog its name is Paddy [pause] my school is short? [asks for clarification] big with lots of students [pause] mi favourite subject [error in gender] [repeats and self-corrects] favourite subject is the music [error with article in Spanish] yes to play the guitar in my free time to me like to play the guitar to go out with my friends party yes to me eat favourite is chicken Australian football I like touching Australian football. How are you?

R: [] Very well thank you

S: [] That's it

Student two while quite nervous had memorised his introduction well and discussed a variety of topics using short sentence structure. He uses the present tense and reflexive verbs to introduce himself and his family. He is strategic in that he too uses structures repeatedly. His script is very close to the textbook; however, he's filled in the gaps with personal detail including an important life event (his birthday), and a hobby he's passionate about (the guitar). Collis and Biggs (1979) SOLO descriptors would class this student's talk as pre-structural as he does not respond to the greeting or the question. However, using Gerrero and Del Vecchio's framework (1996), the student shifts between limited to semi-competent talk, in his use of socio-cultural information to engage the researcher, however briefly, at the very end ('how are you?') ('¿Qué tal?'). This is a popular greeting and even though speakers are unlikely to end suddenly on an introduction with this expression, it signals developing awareness of socio-cultural information.

The student uses 96 words and 65 different words. He shows some understanding of the dynamics of conversation, while mixing the genre of introductions with that of conversation. However, the 'unnatural' speed at which his extended turn, prior to the first pause occurs, highlights 'recall', rather than more 'engaged' interaction (of a social, rather than 'academic' nature). The identification of limited strategies (and one self-correction) and the level of complexity of grammatical structures suggests this student is *hablante limitado* (limited speaker).

### Extract 3

Student 3: SA

The third student said she was a bit nervous but was happy to have a go (to try).

R: Hola SA# ¿Cómo estás? ¿Qué es de tu vida?

SA: Me llamo SA# [student's name] [pause] mi cumpleaños es diciembre [pause] Me gusta escuchar música [pause pause pause pause] Me gusta escribir [pause] No me gusta [pause] [unfinished sentence] me gusta frio me gusta mi colegio mi favorito asignaturas es inglés e español e el arte e pintar mi amigos [lists four Friends names] mi familia es mi madre, mi padre, cinco hermanos e tres hermanas [end]

This student's brief introduction follows the 'introduction genre'. However, most of her brief sentences are grammatically correct, with two minor errors with gender (*favorito*) and verbs ('son' instead of 'es'), and several errors in the use of the sound 'e' instead of 'y' (to mean 'and') in terms of pronunciation. Using Collis & Biggs descriptors, the student does not address: the greeting or the question. Using Guerrero and Del Vecchio's framework it is possible to state that the average length of the students' sentences is within pre-structural (formulaic) levels (no phrases used). She uses a total of 54 words and 33 different words. A basic level of complexity and minimal interaction with the researcher is employed.

In summary, during the pre-collaborative intervention, all 15 students attempted this first conversation. Some had requested to use cue cards and when encouraged by the researcher not to read them, they could not reproduce sentences. At the time, the researcher felt conflicted about asking students not to use the cards they had chosen to prepare and wished to use, however, all students were informed prior to the day, that these would not be allowed as this would never occur in a conversation. The following extract illustrates a student's efforts without his card (who asked to later do it again):

Student 4

Extract 4

R: Hola SZ# [student's name] ¿Qué es de tu vida?

S: Mi cumpleaños el 17 de marzo [pause pause] Te gusto jugar [pause] mi favorito mi padres llama es [mum's name] y [dad's name]...

[Translation S: Mi birthday March 17 [pause pause] to you like play [wrong pronoun and verb] mi favourite [sentence incomplete] my parents [verb conjugation incomplete]

The student is unable to construct sentences or meaning here. While his overall response (the full transcript) included 51 words, 42 of these were repeated. Guerrero & Del Vecchio would understand this student to be *hablante bajo* (low level speaker), while Collis & Biggs would assess his 'output' (with no interaction) as pre-structural (limited understanding and no clear structure).

The Spanish teacher's reflections on the researcher's feedback to students was that it was good that the students tried. The teacher was very encouraging but also felt the tools did not value the 'effort' students had put in. The researcher believed that the standards expected prior were not productive in enabling students' language use for communication or intercultural purposes.

### ***Teacher and researcher reflections on the collaborative study during the study***

The teacher's reflections in journals and at the final interview indicate his/her apprehension, subtle cynicism, and reluctance to adopt some alternative ideas and initiatives in this study. The teacher's journal entry focuses on the 'activities' engaged in class and on students' positive responses, or their effort or their 'enjoyment'. The following extracts of the teacher (italicised) and researcher journals, indicate some of the different perspectives on the interpretation of the first planning meeting. The teacher presents the researcher's work as one that focusses on the students and she/he seems interested but also apprehensive about the workload of the project. The teacher succinctly and firmly declares he/she has agency: 'ultimately' ... his/her decision to participate (a subtle threat perhaps).

### ***Teacher Journal 1 (extract from entry 1)***

*I met with Kate to discuss her ideas/plans for working with a Yr 10 class. It sounds really interesting, but also fairly time consuming, however, ultimately I decided it was definitely something I wanted to be involved in...."*

The researcher's first journal entry describes what she did in the meeting to provide the teacher with background insights into Year 9 teacher and student preparatory study in 2006. The researcher is reflexive and critical of her ability to be 'clear' and 'resist' providing a 'method'. She exhibits anxiety and concern about giving a negative impression. The entry (contrary to the teachers) reveals that she feels she has little power. The researcher notes the 'actions' from the meeting in a business-like manner ('Managerial Mode'). The entry was to be read by the teacher and so could put 'on the record' agreements made, to monitor these (while also providing 'subtle' pressure).

### ***Researcher Journal 1 (extract entry 1)***

[teacher's name] and I discussed the project. I drew a concept map to illustrate what I've done so far from my PhD proposal to interviews and questionnaire... I found it difficult to articulate clearly what I would like us to do ... I didn't want [teacher's name] to feel like I was going to impose... and I wanted [her/him] to know that what I really wanted ... is to co-construct the pedagogy... [teacher's



name] mentioned that [he/she] would send me [her/his] schedule & an outline of topics for [term] 1 and [term 2]. We agreed on meeting again... and to meet the students....”

#### **Teacher Journal second entry (n.d)**

*Students have already had their first conversation with Kate.... It was probably more of an introduction about themselves, not quite what she wanted, so of course we have to work on this. Kate has organised a conversation for the students to hear as a model. They really enjoyed listening to it. It obviously describes a conversation about what's happening lately [in the Year 10 class].*

The teacher's journal includes reflections on the researcher's expectations of conversations but does not elaborate on his/her own thoughts. The teacher notes that the collective (him/her and students) 'must' work on this, a note showing commitment (and alliances). The teacher also reflects positively on a conversation organised by the researcher and students' responses. Again, the teacher's opinion is not shared. To provide a contrast, the researcher's journal entry, prior to the collaborative intervention, is presented below. As time passed, the researcher could not help but see that a consistent theme in the teacher's journals was to avoid declaring 'personal assessments'. The researcher's journal entries illustrate early, her appeal for critical reflexivity, but also her despair over the inconsistency between some of the teacher's theoretical hopes, or negotiated plans and practices realised. In this despair, the researcher, contrary to her Freirean inspired commitment to dialogue, uses power hierarchically. As bell hooks notes, 'we' were both, in the moment-to-moment exchanges, resisting to comprehend or accept some of our most significant differences: "our theory was" perhaps ...” more progressive and inclusive in its vision than our everyday practice.” (hooks, 2013, p.2).

#### **Researcher Journal (May 31<sup>st</sup>)**

...I have noticed some quite clear routines in place in [teacher's name] class. I guess I'm already thinking about some suggestions, but I need to learn more about the context before jumping to conclusions. However, my preliminary views are that:

- a variety of teaching strategies could be incorporated
- More Spanish in use would be great could take place in teacher student interaction
- [teacher's name] speaks well but so far has read to ss [students] once over two weeks & 98% of instruction is in English
- Ss can ask [teacher's name] in Spanish ...

I think [teacher's name] has a very positive and respectful classroom environment and that's really important as I've seen various classrooms in which this isn't the case...”

The researcher's journal positions herself as an authority and judge, and in doing so, positions the teacher and students as the 'objects' of evaluation. The researcher writes a moderate critique of classroom dynamics and pedagogical approaches. Several of the dot points, may be read as suggestions, others as conclusions. Not surprisingly, the researcher is foregrounding the exact pedagogical approach that the study is seeking to promote. Given this journal was shared with the teacher, the researchers' words reveal her attempt to influence the teacher's philosophy and practice while softening the critique with a positive evaluation of the classroom environment.

Several encounters in journals illustrated some of the tensions and confusions shared between the teacher and researcher. There were positive and supportive reflections in journals, however, highlighting the challenges enables greater insights into the difficulty and challenges of seeking to dialogue and collaborate in institutions of formal learning.

### **The breakdown(s) in dialogue and collaboration**

It is important to analyse the 'breakdowns' in collaboration and dialogue as thoroughly and as accessibly as we might catalogue and promote the 'more' positive outcomes of research. In other words, this analysis does not exclude the 'mess' and confusion from collaborative learning endeavours.

Sanitised accounts in qualitative handbooks did not teach the researcher how dialogue may eventuate and be difficult. Tidy and linear research narratives read did not make public how collaborative researchers (participants) navigate tensions, confusion, contradictions, and difficulties in humanizing and 'contextualised' ways. Research reports detached of personal failings or limitations 'mask' how participants' positionings are shifting, and can be hidden or political, and how learning and knowledge evolve and expand (for all parties involved including supervisors). While the researcher has provided evidence in her own writing of her shifting positioning, and her unintentional objectification of participants, other participants' journals and transcripts illustrate shifts in understanding, and objectification, and of positioning. While emails with 'original' supervisors indicated their understanding was challenged by participant practices and data, this data is not shared due to an absence of their 'informed consent'. This should be considered in future research.

The participants' final journal entries highlight frustrations and blame. They highlight how the practitioner and writer, must 'choose' how to represent or omit the complex data. The texts show participants position each other and oppose each other. The journals seek limitations in the 'wor(l)ds' of participants, not in the broader structures shaping these. The analysis provides deeper insight into the tone and experiences of collaboration and how pedagogy and research produce and transform practices in collaboration. The backstory is this 'ethnographic' account.

### ***Teacher Journal (n.d)***

*“Our conversations are starting to take place. It has been a slow process-making sure all students have done it. We’re encouraging students to speak with detail in Spanish more as that is the goal. It is obvious who doesn’t lots of homework and puts in lots of effort...students have performed in the exam about how I expected. They had a clear understanding of what to expect as we spent a reasonable amount of time revising and describing what the exam consists of. How well students performed again reflects their level of homework/ commitment too. There was no excuse for students not doing well in the grammar section for example as they knew about this and we practiced lots!”*

Here the teacher’s journal does not declare explicitly his/her disillusionment with students ‘effort’ (‘students performed about how I expected’), however, the entry reveals a ‘negative’ result. The teacher points the finger at students’ “effort” and lack of ‘homework’ preparation. Again, it avoids critique. To softly ‘force the teacher’s hand’, on one occasion, the researcher wrote the teacher the following note in their shared journals. The researcher was concerned for her supervisor’s requests for clear ‘evaluative’ and ‘sophisticated’ detail in the teacher’s journals. The researcher wrote:

*“Dear [teacher’s name],  
Thank you for sharing your journal. It is a very personal reflection & I appreciate your comments. I would like to suggest if you could please examine the pros and also the cons, so that we can be more critical of all aspects across time. Thank you for your input.”*

### ***Turning points***

One of the turning points in the collaboration was on July 29. It was the first day after term break. The second term had been very positive on various ‘pedagogy’ and ‘research’ fronts. The teacher and researcher’s journal exchanges about that day are telling. The researcher wrote:

Back after semester. SS were happy to be back. [Students’ name] impressed me with her use of questions in Spanish. BUT lesson one they were told they would go to the computer room...they didn’t do much... I think that the first day of a semester -should be as much of a bang as the last...the approach in my view has reduced motivation and I think this because [students name]..is distracted with [4 student names], [students name] and [students name] hadn’t prepared...I’m a bit confused... on Thursday and Friday [teacher’s name] added a few more sentences in Spanish and asked me to design questions in Spanish => that was great! .I think the plan we’ve designed is a great start & I hope [teacher’s name] does go ahead with her/his suggestions to:

Monday- negotiate curriculum with students

Help them get on with it in meaningful ways

Do roster with news. I have been doing everything that [teacher's name] has asked me to do and I hope we can continue to jointly construct the project ...I'd feel disappointed if come Monday I'd see the routine once more."

The teacher then wrote the researcher a note to respond to the journal stating:

*"Dear Kate,*

*I'm sorry you felt like that but I definitely did want to continue working with you..."*

These extracts simplify the possibilities and struggles between the teacher, researcher, and students trying to negotiate competing agendas collaboratively. These two participants struggle with moving away from their "circles of certainty" and competing hopes (Freire, 1979 p. 21). Given the researcher and teacher had different goals to achieve, in their distinct practices and roles, it is probably not surprising that their collaborative efforts resulted in as much struggle as it did success. However, the 'anti-dialogical' manner in which the researcher indirectly prescribes the teacher's actions, reminding her/him of the social contract, with a softened 'managerial' tone, is a confronting contradiction (a reversal of roles, undermining her participatory aims).

### **Meetings in August and September**

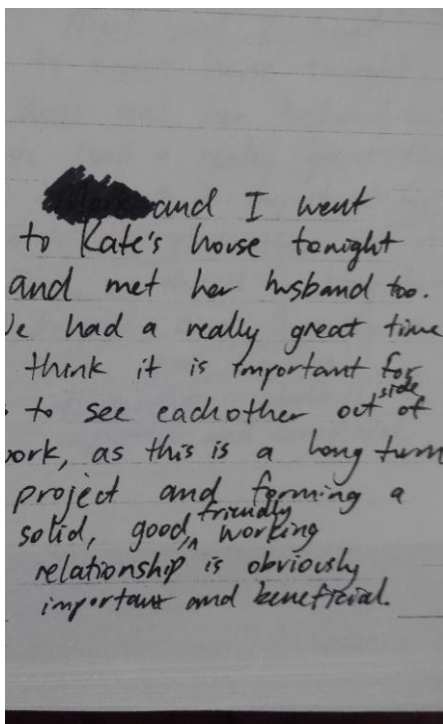
The teacher and researcher's subsequent meetings revealed that participants took notice of different things from the archive: the transcripts, surveys, journals, and conversations, as per meeting 1. 'We' often tentatively discussed challenges, differences, or tensions by indirectly pointing to student effort, performance, and accountability, or to teacher workload and lack of support for PD or research preparation time. These were valid reasons. However, the researcher could not always understand 'how' it was that what was collaboratively planned, and agreed to, with resources designed by the researcher with a tight but timely turnover, weren't consistently facilitated by the teacher. The teacher's perspective on this was often suggestive that the students were not giving their best effort, were disorganised, or needed behaviour management. In a desperate attempt to support the teacher's PD challenges, the researcher negotiated with her supervisor to provide a letter for the school's principal acknowledging the teacher's 16 hours of meetings (PD) (in DECS teachers were required to engage in 37.5 hours). Despite this, inconsistencies continued, however, with the greater level of

support and the more open and mutual feedback, relationships seemed stronger, in and out of the classroom. It is the researcher's view that the teacher felt that the researcher had delivered on a key issue to support his/her existing workload by lobbying 'the university' for a form of recognition for his/her work in the project. This was a turning point and inspired new events.

### ***Informal Teacher/Researcher social outings***

The Spanish teacher and researcher met outside the school to have a coffee and discuss the project, a spontaneous development in collaboration, initiated by the teacher. The researcher also invited the teacher and students to a Latin American event organised in the community. Two students attended the family friendly event with friends. The teacher also invited the researcher and her (then) husband for dinner and the researcher reciprocated. The following is a photograph of the teacher's post-it-note on one of these social outings. She/he comments on the professional gains of these.

### **Image 26: Teacher's journal entry**



When the home and classroom spaces had somewhat collapsed, participants seemed to become more open to dialogue. For example, when two students requested the researcher attend some of the events they were going to participate in as part of their learning at school, the teacher encouraged the researcher to attend. One of the students invited the researcher to her final Rock Eisteddfod (dance competition) rehearsals. Another invited the researcher to see his band perform at a school assembly. The teacher also requested the researcher's feedback on a presentation for school staff on *Languages in the School*. These examples reveal that predetermined 'rigid' boundaries defining roles can become meaningfully negotiated in collaboration, with

participants, and driven by informal consent. These were 'positive' developments, on participant terms. They enabled 'reciprocal' care. Institutions should trust their stakeholders.

Despite the differences in particular between the Spanish teacher and researcher, the researcher believes these became esteemed colleagues. But this was nevertheless an uneasy relationship. Towards the end of collaborations, 'we' more openly spoke about each other's workplaces, careers,

and personal interests, and tensions with supervisors, principals, colleagues, and language coordinators. However, when the researcher's audio tape was on, 'our' dialogue changed.

### *Discussing the Spanish students' interests: surveys and journals*

Student surveys and journals invited the teacher and the researcher to think of things to do (with curriculum; content and process, and relationships) that students would find interesting, relevant to their emergent proficiencies (and understandings) and potentially empowering. At the time of the first collaborative meeting, the teacher and researcher had read the first survey (qualitative and quantitative) results. The teacher mentioned he'd/she'd had a quick look. The researcher had read them closely, highlighting students' responses. The discussion that ensued included reflections on how many of the students' interests, feedback and requests were clear and reasonable, as well as very critical. As the following data will show, these illustrated high expectations of Spanish language learning and teaching. There was a 'dominant' expectation from the students that learning Spanish must be entertaining, fun, sensory-rich, enjoyable and in many ways, linked to cultural sites outside the school environment, and community (as per Year 9 Student Surveys in 2006/7). Some of the requests made by students challenge learning and funding in any public institution of formal learning.

### *The interests of students in this Year 10 Spanish class (survey 2)*

In response to the survey question: "What parts of learning Spanish are interesting to you?", the students wrote the following statements. As the sample is small, all statements are presented. The eleven responses show diversity in views. Modification is made to avoid repetition.

#### **What parts of learning Spanish interest Year 10 Spanish students (2007)?**

"The ... culture and traditions" (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

"Knowing that once the studying and interaction of helping each other out as a class is over I can speak another language" (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

"I like learning about the Spanish culture. Also learning to say and write new words. I find culture very interesting and different." (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

"The culture, being able to see how they live and how they speak in relation to Australia. Knowing that you will be able to speak another language overseas." (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

"When we do the word search and then have to say a sentence about one of those words. I enjoy cooking their foods and learning about their culture by doing skits or plays involving how they would do something." (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

"I enjoy putting it to a practical use like learning about food, cooking, going on field trips, projects, having interesting speakers come in + watching movies." (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“culture, history, basic spoken language, food, lifestyle because they are most fun when learning” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“learning to understand how foreign people talk. Learning the history of foreign countries. Learning to have a conversation with someone who speaks Spanish. Watching films in Spanish”. (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“Spanish is most interesting when you feel like you are achieving. I would call myself a second rate student because I cannot get a hold of everything or seem to do well enough to get an A. I could see myself achieve in Spanish and I see it as something to use in the future then it would give you the desires to do so. Also when you begin to understand and see connections between words.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“It’s fun when we do something different. I enjoy Spanish just not when we are just translating and writing out pages of words that we’ll forget in 10 minutes, looking words up in the dictionary in year 10 that’s all there is so nothing at the moment interests me”. (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

In summary, the students discuss their intrinsic and extrinsic interests: what they value, enjoy, desire, or expect from learning Spanish. Some students have instrumental goals (‘connections between word’), see ‘differences’ between us and them (attributions) and have utilitarian goals (to ‘get As’ or ‘speak overseas’). One student acknowledges the social dimension of learning and its role in her ‘achievement’ (a values orientation). Another is reflexive and critical of his performance (‘second rate’ and linking future relevance to interest). Student ‘interest’, in students’ terms, is far more than a socio-cognitive-affective construct, as this study’s early literature suggests. Here, students’ link their interests to other complex social practices such as learning about the ‘other’, their ‘lifestyles’, ‘traditions’, and ‘differences’ in the way ‘they’ are different (ethnocentric reflections). The interests do not appear to be merely intrinsic or situational but illustrate an intimate desire to connect with ‘others’ (a type of ‘goal’ orientation and ‘value’), but also, to be entertained by them (the exotic other, as in Said’s work).

Students’ interests are obviously linked to ‘affect’; enjoyment and fun and can be negatively affected when challenged or when perceived relevance to future is weak. Students associate interest with what is ‘novel’. One student states that after the work of being a student, and the service of helping each other in the process, is achieved, being able to speak Spanish fluently is a positive goal. There is a sense of solidarity between students here.

Other students find the ‘parts’ of language forms interesting, using the skills of writing and saying words in word searches. The interests in this small class are unique, diverse, and theirs. The interests express a desire to live and ‘embody’ culture. Other local research in languages and Spanish (in multiple intelligences for instance) has found similar findings on students’ motivations in language learning (Curnow & Kohler, 2007; Lopez, 2000).

Students' survey responses express an overwhelming interest in culture more than language. Most responses discuss 'culture', however, in terms that mirror 'colonial' anthropological interests: in what is 'foreign', other ('they') and 'different' to 'Australian' culture and lifestyles, rather than on 'people's' commonalities, as in other studies (Beresford, 2012). Students talk about an interest in 'their' lifestyles, how 'they' speak, speaking 'with' them, and even roleplaying 'their' ways of speaking and doing. The researcher, a native Australian-Uruguayan Spanish speaker, can't help but feel that on some level students interest in knowledge (i.e. history, traditions, and lifestyle) and skills 'development' (watching movies, speaking, cooking, and observing the 'other' and roleplaying how 'they' would speak) reveals a 'racialised' interest in experiencing and communicating with the 'other', as an 'outsider' and 'tourist', rather 'insider' or 'intercultural' interlocutor.

From students' responses it appears that several intercultural goals are sought. Students want to engage with 'other' Spanish speakers including those overseas, to finish a worksheet, to get an 'A', to speak 'another language', to 'use word's, 'say sentences', make 'connections' between words, and put their knowledge to 'practical' use. The goals are ethnocentric, instrumental, pragmatic, and inspiring.

The 'traditional' assumption that language is a 'code' and a 'system' also seems prevalent in students' responses (arguably connected to students' schooling experiences, and the discourses used in policy and practices in education). The findings are remarkably similar to those of the students in Year 9 in this study. However, the diverse tourist, communicative and intercultural impulses, may in fact be precursors to a deeper affiliation with cultures and understandings of 'diversity' and 'multiculturalism' which have been debated for decades in Australia (Lo Bianco, 1990; 2004).

### **What topics interest Year 10 Spanish students “most” in this class?**

The following table summarises the topics the students noted that interest them the 'most'.

**Table 19: The topics that interest Year 10 students most**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Tally</b>
Food	9
Culture	8
History	6
Learning to speak	6
Travel	5



Language forms	5
Lifestyle	4
Excursions	3
Skills	3
Festivals / dance/ celebrations	2
Cities/famous place	2
Films or media	2
Traditions	2
Use Spanish to get to places overseas	1
Nothing	1
Music	1
Weather/ body	1
Technology	1

Similar to this study's findings in Year 9, the topics that most interest students in this Year 10 classroom reinforce two key issues. Students seek those interests that facilitate the pleasurable experience of culture, as consumers ('food'), as anthropologists (the exotic other's culture and history), but also as competent tourists (that can speak with other Speakers, including speakers overseas, to 'get' to places (accomplish goals) and use the language (showing ability and task orientations). The responses also indicate that they are pleasure seekers (seeking travel, excursions, festivals, etc) as well as knowledge seekers (of lifestyles, history, etc), more than seekers of 'intercultural' communication. These are situational interests. Students also 'trivialise' culture, in a sense, while seeking 'sensations' (Bauman & Tester, 2002). (a 'conservative' western lens). While student's interests are, after all, diverse, individual, utopian, and socially constructed, it's exciting to see students' imaginaries anticipate breaching the borders of the classroom.

***What topics do not interest Year 10 Spanish students?***

The students' survey asked them to reflect on the topics that they are not interested in Spanish. The following table summarises students' responses and tallies their popularity.

**Table 20: Topics Year 10 Spanish students are not interested in**

Topic	Tally
Skills (listening, writing, copying)	5
Clothing	3
School	2
Sports	2
Textbook work	2
Grammar	2
Months	2
Routines / repetitive work	2
Likes and dislikes	1
“Everything we’ve done”	1
“Open to anything taught in Spanish”	1
Homework	1
Comprehension	1
Currency	1
Government	1
Culture	1
Weather	1
Tests	1
Time	1
Numbers	1

The students’ survey responses focus most on aspects of teaching delivery. Most critique topics (i.e. clothing), skills (i.e. macro skills) and learning language forms (i.e. grammar). There is disinterest in passive ‘skills’ (i.e. listening), ‘drills’ (i.e. copying) and ‘busy work’ (repetitive tasks). The reflections provide further evidence for a language as code focus in use. In conclusion, the Year 9 (90) and Year 10 (14) students in this study are overwhelmingly critical of GTMs in use or experienced in learning Spanish, across five schools (104 students in total).

The students’ topics show a disinterest in ‘classroom’ learning or ‘study’ practices in their everyday world (i.e. school, routines). Two students reflect critically on their experiences: one is very critical of ‘everything’ experienced thus far, however, another is ‘open’ to learning anything on the condition it is in Spanish. Students’ frustrations are noticeable.

### **What does not interest students in this Year 10 class in terms of ‘learning’ Spanish?**

The Year 10 Spanish students answered this question stating:

“I don’t like listening to Spanish, and then writing about what was said. I find it boring.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“remembering everything.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“tences, introduction letters, weather”. (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“Sometimes I find it hard if we are given a whole bunch of things to read that are in Spanish. When I’m using the dictionary for ages trying to figure out what it says, I get a bit frustrated.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“trying to remember changes in a word like for feminine or present tense etc.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“I don’t like is the sheets where it’s a true or false answer from a picture. I find it boring & pointless doing work from the text book.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“Worksheets I think are very boring, they don’t really interest me because to me it feels like pointless writing”. (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“Learning all the past, present & future tense does not interest me because I find it difficult to remember all of the different forms.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

[tenses etc.] I think if there was a more fun way of doing this kind of learning I would like it more.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“Copying out lists of words that aren’t always used in common speech.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“Writing words of the board. Handwritten classwork as its hard and confusing. Reading Spanish text as it’s hard to understand”. (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“Spanish is incredibly boring when you are writing down words off the board or an overhead. Doing the same exercises in text books”. (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“Having to read a text in Spanish and translate it in order to answer the questions. I understand that it is a good method of learning and understanding the language but we do it so much it gets tedious at times.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“writing down lists of endless vocabulary words, doing multiple word-finds.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

These responses show students are clearly critical of ‘busy work’. Most talk about boredom arising from ‘copying words’ off the board, copying ‘lists of endless vocabulary’, reading to write, looking

up words to translate and finding little satisfaction in the process or content in use. Students describe these practices as ‘boring’, ‘pointless’, ‘tedious’, ‘confusing’ and ‘frustrating’, as well as repetitive. One student states that there should be a way to learn Spanish that is fun, while another notes that while ‘translation’ may be important for learning and understanding, it can be ‘tedious’. Students believe the ‘difficult’ dimension of learning Spanish is recall.

***What do the students believe Spanish teachers can do to make learning Spanish more interesting?***

The Year 10 Spanish students provided a variety of ideas for teachers so that they could make Spanish more interesting in their view. According to the students in this class, Spanish teachers can:

“...make it more fun, make it into a game, stop giving huge assignments, lighten up a bit and make it more fun!” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“...are able to work through the tasks as a class.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

[can] “...be more creative, and use different ways to teach.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“...make it more hands on...” “...instead of just telling us about the culture show us...” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“...make things more cultural like excursions or learning more about the country instead of just language” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“...let us cook some traditional Spanish food sometimes, have us do conversations or skits / plays.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“...have more field trips, cook Spanish food, have in interesting speakers, having Spanish conversations with other students.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“I think Spanish teachers should actually talk to us in Spanish so we get to know words and how they’re spoken.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“Let us watch more movies in Spanish so we get to hear more of the language and songs in Spanish to help us. ... Less written book work and more speaking. More eating Spanish foods”. (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“...make it more practical. I would like to be putting the Spanish I’m learning into practice.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

[plan] “... more Spanish related games” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

“...encourage more group activity, hands-on activity. Use the home-ec centre to make Spanish foods ... or give a group a set amount of ‘money’ to plan a trip to Spain.” (Year 10 Spanish student, Survey 1, 2007).

Students' provide Year 10 Spanish teachers with a range of strategies and feedback. The suggestions show that students believe teachers do have control (power and authority) and agency over the curriculum and can modify their practices. This is very positive. A major focus here is that teachers need to be more 'creative' and allow more 'hands-on' cultural practices. Students call for 'exciting' methodologies and collaborative approaches (i.e. working together). A student asks that teachers demonstrate culture (not just 'tell') and another requests that teachers speak in Spanish. Other students seek the material 'cultural' experience (i.e. trips) while others seek more intercultural, interpersonal and social networking encounters.

Students' surveys make recommendations for activities (i.e. using movies to teach, less bookwork, more speaking etc), to make learning more fun (i.e. via games) and to put what's learnt into practice. Students suggest changes to teacher styles or positioning (i.e. to 'lighten-up'). Some students wish to avoid some of the challenges of learning Spanish. Learning a language and developing communicative and intercultural competence is challenging. It appears that few students examine this or have these longer-term goals.

Finally, during the pre-collaborative intervention stage, the students were asked what they felt they could do to make Spanish more interesting? The following summarises their responses.

**What do the Year 10 Spanish students believe they can do to make learning Spanish more interesting?**

- Be accountable for my interests
- Make a better contribution to class
- Inform the teacher of what I'd like to know or do
- No response (3 students)
- Tell the teacher 'exactly' what I want to learn
- Practice with friends after school
- Not do what the teacher says and "learn Spanish another way"
- Make work colourful and exciting
- Make suggestions/be enthusiastic
- Help teacher with ideas
- Make book colourful/use games
- Come in a sombrero
- Be honest and tell the teacher how to and make suggestions

It is interesting to note how students position themselves with considerable agency in relation to their learning. Some students adopt the ‘good student’ role and say that they need to be ‘accountable’, ‘contribute’ to the class and be active. Some seek ‘superficial’ changes (i.e. make work colourful), are perhaps cynical of what they can do (‘wear a sombrero’), or seek ‘more’ meaningful encounters (i.e. converse with friends in Spanish). However, most responses recognise that they have a ‘voice’. Two students see that the changes would imply a role shift in the traditional ‘student’ role, to one of ‘co-collaborator’ (making suggestions) and co-learner (informing) and taking authority (telling, the teacher). This illustrates that some students, already aspire to share power and share their voices with teachers. One student’s response is highly critical, going as far as suggesting that his approach should entail ‘doing’ the opposite of what the teacher suggests. Students’ surveys and the focus group shed more light on the diversity of student understandings of roles and agency.

### **Students’ voices**

The survey on ‘motivation’ asked students to rate themselves along a scale (from 1 to 6) whether they agreed (1 strongly agreed) or disagreed (6 strongly disagreed) with the statements:

- Spanish teachers ask me what I am interested in learning (item 11)
- I can make an impact on the way things are run in the Spanish class (item 14)
- I feel free to express my opinions in Spanish classes (item 18)
- My teacher strongly believes that he or she must control the way I do my work (item 19)

The results of these survey items ‘gathered’ prior to collaborations illustrated a mix of views (percentages with three decimal spaces are shown).

### **Spanish teachers ask Spanish students what they’re interested in?**

In response to item 11, most students were undecided (60%) or disagreed (33.3%) with the view that Spanish teachers ask them what they’re interested in learning. Only one student rated ‘strong agreement’ with this item.

### **Spanish students feel somewhat free to express their opinions in Spanish classes**

In response to item 14, results were overwhelmingly positive with 66.6% of students agreeing with this statement. 26.6% of these students were in ‘strong agreement’ with this view. There were also undecided students (33.3%).

### **Students are unsure or disagree that they can impact on how things are run in Spanish class**

In response to item 18, results were not clear. Most students were undecided (46.6%) and the remaining groups disagreed or agreed, an 'equal' split (each at 26.6%).

### **Spanish students do not reach consensus on whether teacher's must control their work**

In response to item 19, results revealed three subgroups of thinking. The majority (46.6%) disagreed that their teacher controlled their work (one 'strongly disagreed'). 33.3% were undecided and 20% agreed (two strongly agree) with the statement.

### **Summary of key survey items on student voice**

In summary, most students are undecided about being consulted by their teachers, but seem to feel free to express their opinions in Spanish lessons. Students seem less able to see themselves as capable of making an impact on how things are run in class (most undecided). Finally, most students were either undecided or disagreed that teachers wanted to control their work.

From students' surveys, journals, participation in lessons, and their final focus group discussion with the researcher, it is possible to draw broad and specific conclusions to address the remaining key questions set out in this study. Pending in the analysis thus far, are students' reflections, and teacher and students' personal evaluations of 'key factors' impacting Spanish learning in this community.

The following discussion provides a summary of students and teachers' comments on Spanish teaching and learning at the beginning and end of collaboration. It is not possible to provide more than a 'snapshot' of the ongoing collaborative efforts in this classroom community.

### ***What key factors do participants perceive to impact on learning and teaching in Spanish (both positive and negative)?***

The Spanish students, teacher and researcher discussed various pedagogical, social, and systemic factors that impact on learning and teaching in Spanish in the SA public school context. There are instances throughout the study which highlight the 'rigidity' and 'fluidity' of each other's perceptions of each other's roles and positionings. The researcher believes, as Pratt suggests, that more is being negotiated in these 'education' focussed encounters between teacher, student, and researcher. It is possible to apply Pratt's (1992, p.6) 'contact zone' as a framework through which to 'conceptualise' (think about or map intellectually) how teacher, students and researcher navigate their encounters and relations, taking up different cross-cultural standpoints and negotiating meaning in powerful, coercive, and contested ways.

Of key interest to this Freirean analysis, in the final chapter, is how teacher, student and researcher positioning and relations, enabled and negated ‘dialogue’ and ‘praxis’. The analyses pay close attention to the ongoing negotiation of meaning, power-sharing, practice, and critical inquiry into Spanish linguaculture learning in the long-term, short-term, and moment-to-moment encounters in collaboration in spite of multiple important differences in perspectives and commitments.



## 8. THE POST-COLLABORATIVE INTERVENTION: PARTICIPANTS' DIALOGUE, CRITIQUE, AND FEEDBACK

### Checkpoint crossings: looking back at the journey

Participants were consulted in informal, differential, and systematic ways in this project which pursued participant 'dialogue' within a Year 10 Spanish classroom community. The broad aims of collaboration were to learn from participants' perspectives and practices, and with them, from ongoing dialogue, feedback and data. It was anticipated that this would allow gaining some insight into participants' ongoing reflections and perspectives on the enactment of a CP; however, unexpected insights on participant life worlds, beliefs and 'complex' alliances emerged.

The researcher was somewhat aware of the challenges and contradictions in the study, from the outset, in the use of a Freirean approach to dialogue within the largely prescriptive boundaries enacted in the PhD and the instrumental study. In the Freirean tradition, 'dialogue' with participants is a core part of situated 'praxis'; seeking "...reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" with participants (Freire, 1979, p.33). However, the researcher worked closely not only with and for the classroom's participants (Freire, 1979, p.30) but also with and for the PhD's key stakeholders (i.e. With supervisors, Social and Behavioural Research committees, DECD, etc.). Aspects of her practices were problematic and 'anti-dialogical', given the conflicting positionings and alliances she (and other participants) performed (Freire, 1970, p. 99-101), in an "adherencia" (*adherence*) to the status quo (Freire, 1970, p.35).

The Freirean 'canon' would critique this study's failure to 'radically' transform the oppressive features of this PhD research, and of the deep-seated aspects of banking methods used in Spanish pedagogy and research practice in this project. It is believed that Freire would understand the approach used with participants. In praxis, participants were able to build, in spite of many differences, disagreements and reservations, of each other's' praxis. As Freire himself declares, "Existir humanamente es 'pronunciar' el mundo, es transformarlo" (To exist humanely is to pronounce the world, to transform it). Participants' complex voices and wor(l)ds forced the researcher to create a text which could reflexively embody the 'messiness', hybridity and struggles to dialogue. This 'doing' transformed her.

## POST-COLLABORATIVE STUDY

The post collaborative phase of this study was conducted between the months of December 2007 and March 2008. The Year 10 Spanish teacher helped the researcher keep in contact with the students who were in Year 11. Some students had continued with their study of Spanish and some had ceased it. The students' *new* Spanish teacher helped set up a time to meet. The teacher participant and the researcher met in late December in 2007. Participant journal entries, and the final interviews and focus group, aid this discussion of the process of 'looking back on the collaborative journey with participants'.

### **Final Interview (December 13, 2007)**

As per the first interview, the researcher sent the interview questions to the Spanish teacher prior to the day of the interview. The following extracts illuminate aspects of the dialogue and practices enacted in this interview and the wider study. They reveal that participants were not always able to dialogue or be 'solidary' with each other (Freire, 1979, p.27). Indeed, the final interview was a 'sad shock' to the researcher participant, in the moment, as the teacher and researcher had been increasingly open to each other and had gradually enabled offering each other professional and personal support and critique with reflexive empathy for months in and outside the classroom. The interview is polite and guarded. The researcher's frustration is palpable.

#### *The final interview with the Spanish teacher*

As per interview 1, the researcher commenced the interview reminding the teacher that his/her information would remain confidential, and that she/he could withdraw from the study at any time. She thanked the participant for his/her contributions since 2006 and for his/her time in the final interview.

#### *On collaboration/negotiation*

##### **Extract 1: Teacher/Researcher Interview**

R: [Noise] sorry [pause] so I was wondering what your opinion was of what we've done together this semester?

T: Umm [pause] ...I suppose the program so to speak [pause] has been positive and worthwhile [pause] umm so of course [pause] ... some of the things we've done this semester I think are obviously important [giggles] [pause] Umm the topics we've looked at have been quite important um not only

in terms of learning about them but um like realistic life experiences that they can use in the future. ... an emphasis on Spanish [pause] Spanish learning [pause] Spanish speaking [pause] Spanish um understanding listening umm all of those things [pause pause] helping them to create you know or helping them to progress in their learning [pause] so of course that's all important [end of response].

Listening to the researcher's high intonation and then hearing the teacher's guarded response, and how he/she becomes increasingly hesitant as if to choose every word with great care highlights the need for research to incorporate visual and 'audio' data, as much as possible, to convey 'more' of the tone of conversations and interactions (a complete revision on anonymity would be required, and I believe participants should be appropriately compensated, on their terms, for their labour, if desired).

In this case, it is evident that the teacher's extended turn, incorporates numerous pauses, within what is otherwise a very succinct response. Listening to the audio shows a stark contrast with the researcher's attempt to be friendly and positive in her opening question to elicit relaxed feedback. There are several tentative strategies used by the teacher, for instance, her/his use of hedging (i.e. 'some' of the things, 'quite' important) and filler words ('Um'). This detail can highlight that 'some' things worked well and 'some' may have not, however, detail is thin which is problematic in terms of what is expected of research writing (and supervisors' requests for precision and sophisticated analyses). While it is difficult to pinpoint 'asymmetrical' positioning in this interaction, it is not a relaxed exchange. However, given the tensions and silences discussed, the 'gaps' in this analysis would most likely not have been aided by further consultation with the teacher post member-check.

### *On the critical approach*

The researcher's second question to the teacher sought to invite her/him to elaborate on her/his view on the critical approach she/he implemented.

### **Extract 2: Teacher/Researcher Interview [continued]**

R: Excellent [pause] thank you [pause] and what's your view of the critical approach that you've implemented this semester?

T: Uhum Umm So again I suppose the topic's focussing on umm the environment and work umm are really important topics for the students to analyse I guess how [pause] their approach and what they think of each one [pause pause] Um and again [pause] speaking and Spanish learning all of those sorts of things [pause] so as much as possible I suppose encouraging them to communicate [pause]...I guess I have said it all [giggles] Um yeah [pause] but overall I feel that the students have got a lot of value from what we've been working on for the most part [end of turn]

Here, the researcher's first turn is unusually optimistic ('excellent'), as a response to the teacher's 'bland' answer. This indicates, again, the researcher's attempt to be encouraging (affirming), however, it somewhat magnifies contrasts in tone and perspective between the two speakers. At the time of the interview, the researcher recalls feeling very nervous and uncomfortable by the teacher's responses and body language (arms crossed). At the time of analysis, it is apparent to the researcher that her own words are an artificial ('false charity') to avoid confrontation. While not stated, thus far, both speakers seem to be talking at cross purposes.

There are interesting speech dynamics occurring. The researcher's question to the teacher shifts somewhat abruptly from what was 'collaboratively' achieved, a discourse of 'together-ness', to what the teacher ('you') achieved. This signals the researcher positioning herself as the investigator, and authority, to request the teacher assess in public his/her work. While the authority of the researcher is not denied in research practice (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008), this indicates use of 'power over' (Freire, 1996). It is a big shift.

Asymmetrical positionings complicate dialogue in interview settings in education (Simoncini, Laser & Rocco, 2014), in particular, when participants hold 'markedly' different perspectives (Horn & Little 2010). The researcher's turn shifts the focus from collaboration, to 'results'. However, the teacher's response 'deflects' this positioning and topic, for a moment (Benali Taouis, 2015) to focus instead on the topics analysed (i.e. the environment and work) in lessons, and the goal to increase Spanish use (i.e. speaking and learning). He/she effectively shifts positioning and focus to students, on what 'they' do (students), and then, effectively away from herself/himself ('for the students to analyse') before returning and concluding her/his answer with a collaborative positioning. The participant suggests that what was achieved was 'as much as is possible' a result of teacher and student work. The response deflects responsibility to some and is silent on researcher involvement (as per the nature of the question).

### **On dialogue**

Extract two highlights participants' messy (indirect, direct, and confusing) speech acts. The researcher emphasises the words 'your view' in the research question (what's your view of the critical approach ...'), an attempt to reveal that 'other' views are possible (i.e. her own). From the content of the teacher's response, it is difficult to know with any 'precision' the substantive detail of what the teacher believes is critical or what the teacher believes was 'achieved' or of 'benefit'. The teacher's response makes 'vague', or covert, and thus ambiguous references to topics that students analysed and how this provided value. However, the teacher's repeated use of tentative language, and brevity, magnifies the unsaid limits (i.e. 'I suppose', 'for the most part', I guess). It can be perceived as an

'evasive', somewhat confusing and inaccessible response. The differential interaction may be a result of participants' inexperience in engaging in interviews, or in 'reflexive' practices, as neither participant is able to turn the lack of flow or dialogue or the depth issues around. Similarly, in the following extract, when the teacher is asked about his/her opinion of "using dialogue in Spanish", the teacher performs detours and states:

### **Extract 3**

T: Uhum ahh obviously [pause] ah important [giggles] um yeah so we're trying [pause] we've been working on building their dialogue and um increasing their confidence in being able to speak and understand Spanish [pause] so that's an important part of getting there I suppose [end of turn].

In extract three the teacher giggles in a way which could indicate nervousness. This was not the first time this occurred. However, it is not clear on this occasion if the teacher is unsure of what to say or is finding it hard to articulate his/her understanding of dialogue or whether she/he does not wish to make substantive statements that could reveal knowledge or misunderstandings on tape. This confusion is important as participants have engaged each other and worked closely for 16 months at that point in time.

In this section, the researcher believes the teacher is referring to 'speech' in Spanish (not in a Freirean sense). The teacher talks about how the class is speaking more (quantity) and that this is all for meeting an 'outcome' (for the research 'record'), a destination ('getting there'). The confusion sensed earlier is building. At the time, the researcher recalls feeling disbelief about how conversations, debates, and modelling, had not been helpful in clarifying critical understandings of dialogue. Theorist's discussions of dialogue had offered little aid. Regardless of this, the researcher was most surprised at how the participant-researcher relationship openness enacted to date, was nowhere to be seen.

Difficult issues in the interview indicate several tensions but ultimately that the study's design and participants openness to change and 'dialogue' were limited. Had the focus of the study been 'dialogue', as was the original plan in 2004/5, a more meaningful investment of energy, discussion, and reflection 'on action' (Schön, 1987) in this field with participants may have enabled redistributed ownership (and agency). The following extracts, continue from the earlier extract, hint at more of tensions, while revealing the researcher's inability to enable a richer dialogue with the teacher during the interview.

#### **Extract 4**

R: Excellent thank you [pause] Umm how do you see that Spanish countries' cultures for example were represented in your approach?

T: Uhm [pause] sure um I suppose there were quite a few things that we did learn about different cultures [pause] Ummmm [extended pause] Probably more along a separate issue. Like we might of learnt about it but perhaps not always related to the topic

R: Right [pause] so perhaps not integrated you mean?

T: Right! A little bit [pause] sure but I think there are other interesting aspects that um work well maybe for a lesson or two as well that's important maybe to break away from where we are heading and do something a little bit different or a little fun occasionally [end of turn]

Extract four shows the researcher seeking further clarification, by paraphrasing from the teacher's response, in a way that re-classifies the teacher's meanings. Although the researcher does this by using hedging and by rephrasing the teacher's response ('not integrated you mean?') as a question, the interaction has a context which links to earlier debates between participants where the contextualisation of learning and teaching had been discussed. The exchange is awkward; however, it is the first time the teacher provides an extended turn with little hesitance in speaking up for his/her view that culture is an 'extra' dimension in language classes and that it is a positive thing to draw on for entertainment and enjoyment purposes. The teacher indirectly acknowledges alternative ways of doing this, not without highlighting that the 'other' approach is also valid. The teacher's response is non-confrontational. This interaction highlights that participants are seeking an avenue to disagree. The interview begins to sound more like a discussion, rather than a 'transactional' encounter (where pressure is painfully squeezed out as in a pimple by force).

#### **Power sharing**

The teacher and researcher discuss the teacher's definition of power sharing, over the course of one question. For the sake of brevity, several excerpts (5-9) of the interview are summarised, at the risk that any 'fragmentation' of ongoing discussion is perspectival (and decontextualized).

#### **Extract 5**

The teacher highlights that:

“it’s really good to ...involve the students in ...where they wanna go what they wanna do I mean they need to understand that there are certain amount of things that you have to they have to learn about and they have to do whether it’s something that they are interested in or not sometimes these things do happen....For example um learning quite a bit of grammar might be something they don’t see as important or not so interesting but it is in fact extremely useful for them to be able to communicate”.

The teacher later elaborates that there are some issues which impact on a teacher’s capacity to share power. He/ she explained that:

**Extract 6**

“even though you would like to negotiate with the students and perhaps get a feel for what they would like to do and try to include it if possible you’re not always going to suit everyone”.

He/she concluded on this that after all:

**Extract 7**

“people learn in different ways and have different things they like...”.

She/he then added an example to further elaborate. The example provided by the teacher, however, would seem to illustrate ‘choice’ rather than negotiation of power, or power sharing.

**Extract 8**

“You can’t’ always please everyone but I suppose you can do the best you can for example um the idea of the role plays they were keen to do a role play so I organised a script for them to do they seemed quite happy...but then when it came to the actual presentation... they didn’t bring their script...they weren’t ready...they didn’t follow through”.

This exchange inspired the researcher to ask the teacher whether Year 10 students are ‘ready’ to participate in power sharing, and the teacher’s response to this was:

**Extract 9**

“that’s a really good question [pause]. If I had to decide either way not really... some of them ... absolutely and some of them maybe not because at fourteen...some of them aren’t all that mature.”

Presenting here several extracts of the teacher's responses, from sections 5-9, is a strategy to bring together several ideas she perceives to highlight the teacher's ideas on 'power sharing'. It is the researcher's attempt to make connections and provide depth or detail, not originally provided by the participant. This may be a controversial way of 'piecing' together parts of a puzzle. However, as per Cresswell (2009) and Rivas (2012) approaches to 'thematic' coding, it is the researcher's task to make meaning from data.

In summary, these extracts indicate that the Spanish teacher somewhat conflates 'giving' choices with sharing power. He/she blames students 'immaturity', rather than students' having meaningful experiences in or understandings of 'power sharing', possibly enabled in this study's teaching and research practices which could have better prepared students to take up and use power (given they rarely 'ask' or 'demand' it prior to the collaborative study).

The teacher associates an attempt to allow students to choose from four teacher-selected textbook roleplays with a greater level of autonomy of choice, in which, as students had suggested, they wanted to design a 'play' (theatrical performance) from scratch; developing a script and characters all in Spanish. In practice, the teacher did not wish to take up the researcher's offers to support students with this plan due to the teacher's concerns about time and testing (the researcher believed test preparation should occur at home). In sum, the teacher holds, on the surface, a practical approach to power-sharing, which highlights that it is an extra ('a good thing') but not core business and that students must simply do as they're told, at times, whether 'they are interested or not'. This is described as inevitable (these things do happen). The teacher's response supports the status quo, while blaming the students when sharing was not achieved (not 'following through').

### **Empowerment**

Finally, the researcher invited the teacher to discuss his/her view of empowerment and whether he/she believes that either the students or him/herself felt to some extent empowered by participating in the project. The teacher defined empowerment as:

#### **Extract 10**

"in general um being given the information or the structures to them um be able to show a bit of initiative or to go ahead and do something yourself".

On the issue of student and teacher empowerment the teacher said,



### **Extract 11**

“I would have to say yes [to student empowerment] and for this sort of a program um it really we’ve talked about this before but I really do think it suits those student who um are really studious who are good students who are strong students to start with...the more they learn the more they focus in...the more confident they become in listening and speaking and eh all of those things but for the weaker students or the less able students...might find it a bit of a struggle or a bit of a challenge to understand everything that’s happening. I think that can have a turn off effect. Depends on how serious the students are and how willing of their own time you know they are to put in and also if they feel safe enough I suppose to take a guess or to have a go because some students might be quite happy to do written work but when it comes to spoken work, you know, to to to talk, then they might not feel so confident ...they might not you know not quite get it right.”

For the researcher, extract 11 shows the teacher’s ‘developmental’ assumptions about students, the ‘traditional’ view that students are smart or are not. Also, the teacher appears to be speaking up for students who (perhaps similar to him/herself) prefer to write and learn what is safe rather than take risks and potentially ‘fail’ (‘get it wrong’). The teacher discloses his/her view that a CP ‘suits’ the gifted and talented [For ‘good students’ ...]. The comment does not consider different ways of learning, different dispositions and or interests. The teacher has fashioned the classroom and its pedagogy in his/her image. In some way, the teacher connects ‘empowerment’ with ‘acquisition’ of skills or understanding, a type of academic achievement. The teacher’s definition of empowerment and the teacher’s explanation appear to be at odds. The teacher’s response does not address how students can take “initiative” and do things by ‘themselves’, but explains that students ‘natural’ abilities or discipline, and whether they feel safe, impact on the ‘accuracy’ of their actions.

### **Teacher empowerment and reflexivity**

The researcher then asked the teacher whether he/she felt in some way empowered by the experience of collaboration, as this aspect of the researcher’s original question, was not addressed in the teacher’s response. This probing is problematic.

### **Extract 12**

R: And for you?

T: And for me? Umm

K: Empowerment?

T: Yep [pause] umm [high pitch] it's not something I really think about I suppose but at the same time I think it has been really good to focus in exactly in what the students are eh doing and to um you know, can't think of the right word [giggle] to to really ..construct constructively think about what's happening how they're learning, what they've learnt and all of those things... in more detail than we will perhaps usually have time to do...it's been a big focus for looking at every aspect and maybe that wouldn't happen as much in all other classes... but being involved in it has also made me think about [pause] you know my other classes for example the year eights you know...how the kids how the students can learn more and learn better [pause pause]

R: So, do you feel empowered by that process or? ,XX>

T: Well I guess I'm saying that [pause] yes

R: Oh ok [pause] I wasn't sure whether you were <XX>

T: Sure, um well well yes, I suppose the fact that um I think it's been a fairly a fairly successful year and ...I am thinking about how I could use some of the information or some of the knowledge for other classes would seem to me that yes

R: Thank you

This extract reveals how the teacher, in a roundabout way, talks about the impact of collaboration on his/her 'empowerment'. The teacher does not declare that this is something he/she expects or thinks about. In fact, the teacher highlights that 'most classes', or teachers, would not invest so much time in evaluating the impact of pedagogy on learning. The teacher's initial response avoids responding to the question. However, the researcher's desire to have the teacher reveal his/her beliefs sees the researcher probe further (perhaps too much). The teacher's reluctance to provide these insights is challenging the researcher's need for 'certainties'. Research is generally about 'clarity', 'explication' and 'definitive' responses. The teacher attempts to hold back, sidestep, or evade, and this unsettles the 'research' focus. The teacher may have felt surveyed, judged, dissected, and critiqued, but seems to surrender, (Well I guess I'm saying that). The researcher was confused, and desperate, but also felt 'betrayed' by the teacher's hesitance to be more clearly critical, more frankly open to reflexivity and to explore the possibilities and tensions and contradictions, as was the case when the audio recording was off. The researcher's despair and relief are evident in her final response; 'thank you' (comes across as if she'd said 'phew').

## **Motivation**

In discussing some of the challenges and highlights of motivation the teacher often discussed students' ability and the importance of topic choice. Extract 13 continues to illustrate a resistance to name the achievements and limitations of the project in concrete 'adjectival' terms. The teacher places accountability for learning completely with the students (in 'what they're doing') and is satisfied (or settles) if they seem 'fairly' motivated. However, if students are not 'motivated' the teacher seems to assume a deficit view of student ability and believes that 'managing' their behaviour makes 'the' difference. These theories are in keeping with the teacher's approach to 'off task' behaviour, as illustrated in lessons analysed, and in the extracts that follow.

### **Extract 13**

"Overall I'd say that some students are fairly interested in what they are doing um most students are fairly motivated...there are a couple of course who I think um it has to do with their knowledge and their ability where maybe the motivation hasn't quite been so high...but I think given a push or being told to um...how they can improve makes a difference."

Later in the interview the teacher and researcher begin to unpack the 'critical' dimensions of the approach. They discuss the 'curriculum' and agree that the 'new' approach made links between the curriculum and lives of students. The teacher elaborated on this, in the extract 14:

### **Extract 14**

T: Sure, right and perhaps I suppose if they feel that what they're learning is worthwhile and important then of course that could change their opinion [about ceasing their studies] as well um with the two main topics we looked at which was the environment obviously that's a really important issue in where we live at the moment we looked at water and um recycling and those are really important things...

## **Proficiency**

The researcher asked the teacher to elaborate on his/her thoughts of students' proficiency at the beginning and end of the year. The question is problematic and probing, and puts the teacher in a considerably challenging situation, to assess how his/her work played out prior to the intervention. The teacher's response reveals other issues. It is the researcher's view that the teacher misleads the 'audience', but the researcher does not challenge this.

### **Extract 15**

T: Sure [pause] well you would hope that everyone involved in [giggles] your subject improves obviously...I think they have to have improved pretty well from where we started and um and since then their knowledge has really become quite a lot more they've learnt um the past well the preterit tense the past tense um this year they've learnt the future

R: Do you think they can apply that knowledge [pause] those points in grammar in a basic conversation for example?

T: Ummmm, some students yes and again it depends on how dedicated the students are...I mean to learn about it to do a test or a couple of tests or a couple of assessment pieces and to do well in it is one thing but I suppose to use it down the track is another...but again I think that's very much reflected on the motivation, motivation partly but the type of students they are where sometimes students have are really good um [pause] they like the subject they think you know but when it actually comes to doing the hard work you know it doesn't always happen.

Several issues can be raised about this exchange. In summary, the teacher seems cynical suggesting that it is 'hope' or chance that engages students and allows them to learn. While she/he reluctantly admits that the students have improved, she/he notes this is due to their motivation and effort, and to the cumulative effect of learning over a year. However, in stating this the teacher inadvertently erases his/her contribution, and that of the students (and researcher). The teacher also notes that students can be motivated and yet be unwilling to do the 'hard work' (i.e. studying for tests). The onus for learning and motivation is placed on students again (an abrupt shift back and forth on other issues raised in this interview). The teacher's comments also illustrate his/her preference for transmission of the language code (i.e. preterit tense, etc.) and of quantity ('lots'). The teacher highlights that being able to use and meaningfully apply language was not a core goal of the critical approach advocated, but an 'extra' (to use it down the track is another).

### **On reflection**

The researcher asked the teacher about how 'we' also looked at reflection' in the study. The teacher's response, as follows, touches on the use of community journals but also on how students started to reflect on their learning but struggled to know what to reflect on. It is important to note here that while some students may have eventually arrived at a point of 'consciousness' themselves, it was not without the Spanish teacher and researcher providing ongoing ideas and examples of what they could

reflect on in their journals. Here, the Freirean ideal that students arrive themselves at a deeper consciousness (Freire, 1979) is contested. Students' reflections were positive, creative and critical, but mostly illustrated other interests, needs, and imperatives, not necessarily aligned (and needn't be) with a 'research' focus.

**Extract 16:**

R: What is your opinion of how they engaged with that component of reflection?

T: Uhum Umm well in their diary entries um they did reflect but not always with a reason of why...I think they started to do that but certainly not to begin with... I guess that how they feel they went was really important so I guess they would know themselves in a particular task or in their conversations [the reflection process] ... "can make them feel really good about themselves or maybe not so good like they should have done better...one really good thing I think is that with a couple of the students with their conversations...weren't quite happy with it and then, they themselves, instigated you know and said can we please do it again so that was really good so they realised themselves."

Extract 16 illustrates that the teacher valued seeing students benefit from their reflection about their learning. This inspired some to have higher expectations of themselves and to understand what to improve in their performance, in concrete terms (i.e. in conversations). This also inspired some to have agency, and initiate opportunities to have another opportunity to perform 'better'. That these students' (two) requests, on separate occasions (to re-do their conversation with the researcher), would not be 'counted' in terms of grades, or in terms of the 'research focus', would miss the spontaneous manner in which students' intrinsic interest in the task and their metacognition on their learning, may fall outside the prescribed 'theory' of motivation, reflection and learning.

**On a critical and banking approach to Spanish language teaching and on 'change'**

Toward the end of the interview with the Spanish teacher, the researcher asked her/him to elaborate on his/her overall view of a critical approach.

**Extract 17:**

R: Excellent. Thank you. So [pause] if someone who didn't know anything about a critical approach asked you what would you tell them it's all about?

T: Uhum [pause] a couple of things I suppose focussing on in the target language as much as possible ...looking at I suppose looking at whatever is important for them in their life so not just what they're

learning in class but whatever skills they do learn they can use in their future as well [pause] Umm and maybe knowing what their strengths are what their weaknesses are and I suppose on what they would like to do as well and taking all of that sort of into consideration, so not one thing necessarily eh a combination of factors.

R: Did you notice any difference to your actual teaching in class?

T: Uhum well of course the most obvious [giggle] one [both giggle] right is um encouraging them to speak more Spanish therefore that means that I have to do the same um...

R: Did you notice any difference in the students' response?

T: In general, I'd say the students were fairly enthusiastic and when they um it doesn't matter whether I suppose it was me who was speaking to them in Spanish ...or perhaps they were listening to something...they really seemed quite pleased with themselves when they could understand exactly what it was that was being said[pause] so they got a bit of a buzz out of you know knowing what was happening

R: So, what do you think happened from the students' perspective and this is just an imagination kind of question

T: ... Maybe the fact that they realised that...their voice was being heard that through their surveys and through their journals that whatever they wrote we would actually had a look at ...or analysed and took that into account as much as possible so perhaps they um thought well really they could make a difference...they could nego they could negotiate a little bit to a small degree about um an input about what they would like to learn pretty well so yeah so I mean that that's really positive

In extract 17, the teacher indirectly indicates that the critical approach used in the study demanded he/she use more Spanish than what he/she was using, and that there were barriers to this. He/she does not elaborate. The teacher also discusses that curriculum practices were linked to students' lives beyond the classroom and of relevance to their future (an expectation beyond the official curriculum). The teacher also states that the approach allowed students to understand their individual strengths, hopes and weaknesses. The teacher detected a change in terms of students 'enthusiasm' and self-efficacy (or confidence) or pride as they felt a 'buzz' from seeing that they could understand Spanish speakers and they seemed 'pleased' with themselves for this. When the researcher asked the teacher to step into students' shoes for a moment, he/she stated that students' 'realised' their voices were

valued. He/she elaborated little on this, stating that students may have felt that they had made an impact via their surveys and journals, but that this was ‘to a small degree’.

It was confusing to the researcher to hear that the teacher would downplay students’ voices and their impact on teaching and learning during the interview. When reading this extract, it became obvious to the researcher that many of the positive claims that the teacher would make, would be softened almost immediately with statements that would reduce their impact (i.e. by saying, ‘as much as possible’, ‘they could negotiate a little bit, etc.). Similarly, at the time of writing up this thesis, the researcher became very mindful of the impact of her writing and her representation of participants. It may be that the teacher is concerned about this. It would be obvious to the reader, that much of this detail would not exist without the researcher’s increase in probing. Other conditions and positionings could aid this. These dynamics illuminate the possibility of ‘sabotage’ in collaborations.

In spite of some of the mixed messaging provided by the Spanish teacher and researcher, at the conclusion of the interview the teacher notes that she/he would recommend similar approaches to teachers, with the proviso that ‘everyone’ [a direct message to teachers and researchers] be mindful of ‘everyone’s proficiency and the need to cater for ‘all’ students. The teacher wished to emphasise the following when asked what else he/she would like to say that had not been covered yet:

#### **Extract 18**

T: Like I said the biggest strength is that the students who are dedicated who are motivated who are really serious about learning the language then they really go far [pause] ... I mean it it’s something that I definitely would recommend people to at least give it a go sure but yeah the only thing would be just keep in your mind that I suppose the levels of everyone and trying to cater for all of the students as much as possible”

R: In implementing a critical approach do you see limitations apart from those that you mentioned like time?

T: Yep... I guess it putting together the curriculum right in the fact that the no textbook no work no nothing I mean you’re starting from scratch but now that I you know but once I suppose you’ve done it for a year you’ve got a lot of information so you’ve got somewhere to start for the next year ... So I suppose time could be a limit... for example, at the start of term four having a year 12 class it was just crazy every single minute of my spare time was um with them...there were times when I had one student who came to see me every morning... it’s just really hectic...”

R: But my assumption of a critical approach is that if you have it all done [pause] because you're considering the students' needs that is or might not be probably what's used

T: Mmmm

R: Do you know what I mean?

T: [] Uhum sure

R: [] If you if you construct it with your students

T: [] Ye

R: Then it would require constant research on behalf of the teacher with each individual group

T: Mmm Sure

....

T: But also I've mentioned the core grammar or the core pieces of work you have to do so really I mean that is that is non-negotiable. That is prepared once then you've got it you know again...so sure I take into account what you're saying but um I guess that is as you go along...you find out what they might like to do...that takes some planning but the bulk of the planning [is] grammar [and planned ahead]

The previous three extracts highlight several issues and the researcher's view that language teaching, in its 'banking' education form, seems to have a strong hold in the teacher's reflections on pedagogy, but also, that research practice itself emulates this 'ideology'. The teacher discussed the need for a "ready-to-wear" approach, a 'core' curriculum, organised by the teacher (be it from worksheets gathered over the years, or be it from those developed by this researcher) (Freire, 1979, p.57). In such learning, the curriculum prescribes knowledge and positions participants as 'receivers' of that knowledge. The scope of students is then restricted to "receiving, filing, and storing" knowledge transmitted (Freire, 1979, p.53), in this case, by a teacher and a researcher. Toward the end of the teacher's interview she/he discussed what a good foundation is for students. This illustrates a banking approach is necessary, for students' learning, in the teacher's standpoint.

### **On 'Banking' methods**

#### **Extract 19**



“That they have somewhere in either their knowledge or in their bookwork or that they really understand some of the rules particularly to do with the verbs that they understand how to form and maybe if they can’t remember then at least they know a place where they can go back and check and that’s with anything we do [pause] lists of words [pause] anything if they’ve got their book fairly well organised if they know that we’ve done it they can remember that they’ve done it and they know where to find it then I think that’s a useful tool...

The teacher appears to explain that a good foundation is about good memorisation and organisation. Keeping an archive ordered is key. The book as well as what the student memorises is seen to be ‘knowledge’. It is important to know the ‘code’ of language, the forms, and the verbs and if they don’t remember they know how to ‘find’ the right answers. Language learning is about ‘accuracy’ and structure. Language teaching becomes an ‘act of depositing’ (Freire, 1979, p.53). The role of the teacher follows as one of transmitting the skill of copying down the archive into books, of passing on the knowledge and filling students and their books with knowledge (the ‘manual’ and ‘intellectual’ labours required of Spanish students in this class are further displayed).

The researcher then asks the teacher, “if other teachers were to use a critical approach what would you recommend to get them started?”. This question is problematic and could highlight the researcher’s own ‘developmental’ view of a CP. It also positions the teacher as a guide for future teachers. The teacher’s response notes other matters to consider:

T: ... I guess to take into account their interests and think of some fun things... a different way of doing things ... making it a little more challenging then perhaps it would be I suppose think of some creative ways to get the message across rather than just the standard way perhaps of doing it you know [giggles]

The discussion at the conclusion of the interview returned to ‘whether the approach did demand a different kind of thinking and planning’ after all. The researcher asked the teacher about ‘whether she/he felt the researcher had impacted on the dynamics of the classroom’.

T: ...possibly I guess it depends on the type of students in the class and who the actual who the researcher actually is whereas as I’ve already said I mean this class is a small class they’re really good students um they got on really well with with you so therefore I don’t think it was an issue I think that the fact that you were there is really what they expected that you were there if you weren’t there it was like where are you? Sort of thing

R/T: [giggles]

T: But it became I think it became the norm do you know like they just they knew that you would be here they knew you were another person that they could ask for assistance and therefore they were quite happy with that...I don't think it made a difference here ...maybe initially when they were at first aware of it but the fact that they would still say some little things to each other and occasionally get off task and that sort of thing I think they were comfortable.

The teacher's reflections on the critical approach suggest it diversified the curriculum, and unfortunately, not much more than that. There is an interesting fluidity and messiness in how she/he represents the researcher's role. The teacher describes the contribution in a positive way; though there is an erasure of the researcher as intruder/judge/collaborator as well as a privileging of the researchers as collaborator/insider/ally) (Saldívar Hull, 2000, p.36). Students' words also speak of the researcher's contributions, in similar and different ways, as follows.

### **Students' final reflections on the study**

To ask students about what they felt, thought, and reflected upon, about this project, they were invited throughout this project, to complete surveys, engage in journal writing, engage in conversations with the researcher and to attend a focus group in early 2008. The following section summarises the results of the surveys, journals, and conversations. It is argued that the bricolage of perspectives, provide a multidimensional insight into students' complex voices and assessments.

#### **Students' Motivations**

At the end of Term four, the survey of students' motivations was applied with 11 students in attendance. Minor changes to the survey were made and negotiated with the teacher to avoid having students write about general experiences and focus instead on their current classroom activity and experiences over the period of the study. Most of the survey items used with Year 9 students remain.

#### **Do you think learning Spanish in this class this term was interesting?**

Nine students in this class selected that what they'd learnt was interesting (81%). Only two (18.1%) believed it was 'somewhat' interesting (none said 'no'). The two would not continue in Year 11.

#### **What parts of learning Spanish in this class have been interesting and have not been interesting to you (please give examples)?**

In the interest of brevity, the following two tables summarise Spanish students' interests at the end of the study. In the survey these were separate items, as per tables below.

**Table 21: What’s interesting to Year10 students about learning Spanish in this class**

Interesting	Tally
Learning about cultures	2
Personal writing	2
Learning about the environmental issues in a Spanish speaking context	2
Dancing salsa	2
The news assignment	2
Learning about jobs	2
Doing Spanish research	1
The entire new curriculum	1
Everything! I’ve improved my Spanish so much and I’m proud of my achievement	1
Using more Spanish in class	1
Learning about celebrities	1
Learning language that I used in my speaking	1
Cooking quesadillas	1

There is a qualitative difference in how students describe their interests in this classroom. There is a greater description of the intellectually personalised process (writing process and research), greater emphasis on the contextualised and personal language use (writing about the self and learning about the environment), and some awareness of ‘topic’ in context of the Spanish speaking world (in the Australian and Mexican context). Three students’ responses, elaborate on their reflections here:

*“I think that learning about the disaster in the Spanish speaking world opened my eyes in the sense of there are things happening all over the world not just in Australia [regarding the environment] ...”*

*“The entire curriculum has made a change for the better. In particular we now use Spanish far more in class.”*

*“Everything! This year Spanish has been the best it’s ever been! We have one of the best classes! I feel I have improved so much (a lot of emphasis on improved!) and I’m proud of what I’ve achieved and that is what has been interesting to me.*

In summary, Spanish students’ interests, as per the table, and in the expanded qualitative responses, broaden the ‘mainstream’ ‘socio-cognitive’ construct of interest, with its links to Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development, of learning with a mentor in one’s language. Interest, in the current sense, considers, the students’ personal and ‘embodied’ experience of learning and researching Spanish with their Spanish teacher and a teacher who is a ‘native’ Speaker, in an alternative collaborative way, and in which students’ learn from each other’s’ teachings (i.e. projects, news reporting, job experience, etc.) and the politics of institutional and cultural discourses.

Students’ talk about big ideas (‘all over the world’, ‘the entire curriculum’, ‘everything’) with links made by them between micro and macro international contexts. Students’ references to feelings and values (i.e. pride) in ‘change’ to curriculum, include hands-on (i.e. cooking, research) as well as intellectual, practical and kinaesthetic engagement (i.e. researching, dancing, etc.). These show ‘consciousness’ of connections with an outside world (news, environments, culture etc) with the personal (i.e. ‘awakenings’), and the intercultural (common environment issues) (i.e. Mexico).

**Table 22: What’s NOT interesting to students about learning Spanish in this class**

Not Interesting	Tally
Tenses	4
Nothing	3
Verb endings	2
CV (did in work Ed before) writing	2
Memorising endings	1
Listening/responding	1
Writing down words	1
Vocabulary	1

As in the Year 9 results, most students, 81.8% of responses, are disinterested in tenses, verb endings, words and vocabulary and the skills used to work with these 'language forms' (i.e. writing and memorising endings). Three students believe they are 'necessary'.

**What do you think your Spanish teacher could have done to make learning Spanish more interesting this term?**

The students provided a range of ideas, advice, encouragement, and critique in this item. They say:

"We could learn things ... in groups ... we should have to present something to you in group on what we learnt and be graded" (Student Surveys, 2007)

"I think the Spanish this semester was VERY good =)" (Student Surveys, 2007)

"...more activities to make what we were learning more interesting." (Student Surveys, 2007)

"...a few more hands on activities, such as working in groups and possibly more excursions." (Student Surveys, 2007)

"I think [gender omitted] could have shown us more examples of how the Spanish live instead of just teaching us new words" (Student Surveys, 2007)

"Spend more time...on tenses... and ways to remember them..." (Student Surveys, 2007)

"More lessons because if you miss like 5 days Spanish you forget a lot" (Student Surveys, 2007)

"... [teacher's name] should have given us the verb ending cards long ago." (Student Surveys, 2007)

"I don't think [gender] could have done much else. I believe [gender] has tried incredibly hard to make Spanish more enjoyable and succeed!" (Student Surveys, 2007)

"few more games that could help us learn the verbs or whatever we're learning at the time" (Student Surveys, 2007)

"I think more visual interactive hand-on type of activities..." (Student Surveys, 2007)

Students suggested the teacher use more hands-on, collaborative and 'integrated' activities. They value the A4 sized card the researcher designed. Students recommended use of games for learning, strategies for memorising, and modelling rather than talking about culture. Two students congratulated their teacher (one acknowledged the teacher's hard work).

### **What could you have done?**

As per the pre-collaborative intervention, students were asked what they felt they could have done this semester to make learning Spanish more interesting. Student reflexivity did not seem more ‘sophisticated’ than in the first survey in spite of their journal writing and increased teacher/researcher probing for ‘critical’ questioning. The students wrote they could have:

- Paid more attention (2)
- Participated more (2)
- Focussed more
- Tried harder
- Taken stuff in more
- Tried harder/learnt quicker/learnt more
- Bought Spanish movies in Spanish with subtitles in English
- Studied more
- Improved my effort
- Shared my knowledge more
- Kept improving. Seeing huge improvements and will keep it up.

Most students believe that Spanish could be more interesting if they ‘do’ something themselves. Their reflections embody the ‘ideal’ student in the ‘banking’ model. Only one student believes that independent study might help with interest. Whereas two students show positive self-efficacy in their responses. Students suggest that they’re improving and perhaps need to share their knowledge than do much more differently. Interestingly, the students positioning of themselves, mirrors the teacher’s positioning of them. The teacher repeatedly told students to pay ‘more’ attention and put in more effort to succeed (participants’ attitudes mask inequities in education, in their inequitable positioning in practice, and in differential access to students’ cultural capitals in schooling and in research).

### **What were the topics of ‘interest’ that the Spanish students suggested to the teacher/researcher via journals and surveys?**

Students were asked to list the activities, ideas, plans, processes, and projects they suggested throughout collaboration in various texts. In summary, they highlight:

- Plays (5)
- Dance (6)
- Food (4)

- Music (3)
- Cooking (3)
- Excursions (2)
- Games (2)
- Cultural things (2)
- More activities (1)
- Modern Culture (1)
- Less focus on vocab lists (1)
- Use Spanish in class (1)
- Group discussions (1)
- Movies (1)
- Celebration (1)
- Learning about countries (1)
- Tourism with funding (1)
- More listening (1)
- More verb forms (1)

**Do Spanish students believe it is beneficial to make suggestions on how to make Spanish more interesting?**

Students final surveys asked them to provide feedback, critique, and recommendations for collaborations. The overwhelming majority (90%) of students stated that this process was beneficial. One student stated that there were pros and cons in the process because “What [he likes] is not what others [students] like”. Most students described the process as beneficial to teacher knowledge, awareness and practice, and to students’ enjoyment, learning, voice and will. The students discussed the benefits for teacher understanding of learner thinking (2), teacher knowledge of student enjoyment (1), teachers doing what students want (1) and teacher knowledge of student preferences. One student reflected on the benefit to ‘collective voice’. Another student stated that students having a ‘say’ in what they learn is beneficial. Others wrote that learning what they want to know (1) and learning in fun ways that don’t feel like learning is beneficial. A student described the process as ‘nice’ and that it was ‘interesting to have a say. Another concluded that the process of giving their teacher access to their ideas “has worked very well”. Finally, one student stated that this process made learning in Spanish completely different to learning in any other subject. He said it “was interesting and beneficial -Spanish was different from other lessons which made it more fun and better to go to”.

### Section 3: Student Survey

#### Reflections for the future

The Spanish students' surveys asked students to reflect on whether they would continue to study Spanish into the future. The following table summarises students' responses to the question: do you believe that you will continue learning Spanish till year 12 (as in Year 9). The first and final surveys undertaken are tabled. The table identifies the first survey as T1 and the final as T3. There is a minor decrease in the percentage of students' continuing their studies into Year 11.

**Table 23: Students decisions about continuing with Spanish to Year 12**

	T1 (15)	T3 (11)
Yes	10	7
No	2	4
Not sure	3	0
Total % of Yes	66.6%	63.3%

A summary of reasons for decisions is provided below. The focus group discussion expands this.

Students who are 'not' continuing with their Spanish studies into Year 12 explained that:

- I don't have enough lessons and other subjects are more important to my future
- I don't have enough room on my timetable otherwise I would have
- I wish I could...If I did it would conflict with my educational aspirations (will continue after)
- As much as I enjoy it ...can't fit it in (will continue in my own time).

Students who believe they will continue into Year 12 wrote:

- I'm good at it...I'm interested in culture/ travel and the study tour
- It's fun, a break from normal lessons, a challenge and helps TER points and future study
- I like having a talent others don't and learning about 'their' culture
- It's awesome to speak a beautiful language. If next year is like this year it'll be interesting.
- Good for future studies. I like its cultures. For travel purposes
- I want to speak it. Do study tour



- As my confidence in my ability to learn and converse has increased I dropped biology for Spanish.

Spanish students' reasons for studying Spanish in Year 9 and 10 vary in some ways and are similar in others. Several students see Spanish learning as an achievement of a goal. It can be for instrumental reasons (i.e. for future studies, TER points), for pleasure or interest (i.e. to speak it, for travel) or enjoyment (i.e., break from normal lessons). Other students reflect on their self-efficacy ('ability'). Some students express an intrinsic interest in the culture and the challenge. While the very survey students completed over the course of the year (as well as the teaching that year) has provided students with an alternative way of thinking about their learning in Spanish, contrary to the dominant mindset that suggests a language in school is merely an area of study and of economic, intellectual and job utility, students' don't usually perceive it can help them learn more about themselves and their world, and most importantly, to learn ways to make an impact on society. There are also political interests shaping students' decisions to study Spanish. Students are strategic in thinking that it can help with work, with TER points, with 'a break' from the norm etc. When one reviews Spanish students' decisions to study or cease their study, political, rather than 'intrinsic' interests appear to be dominant.

#### **Students final thoughts on collaboration in the survey**

Of the 11 Spanish students who completed the final survey, nine provided the teacher and researcher with positive feedback (two did not). These reflections are shared in full.

#### **Students were asked to please make any other comments they considered important:**

"You have done a fantastic job Kate an [teacher's name]!!! I have really enjoyed Spanish since you've been here and I've seen myself improve a lot. Thank you so much=) [and two stickers with Spanish words saying '¡lo hiciste!' and 'increible', meaning 'you did it! And 'incredible) (Spanish student survey 2007).

"I think this classroom and the environment in the class has helped me enjoy Spanish more, rather than a boring unmotivational room. And I think [teacher's name] a great teacher and having Kate has been more motivational." (Spanish student survey, 2007).

"I really did enjoy Spanish this term + am very excited to be doing it next year. Honestly before I started year 10 Spanish I was losing any interest in it, but now I think it's very fun. =) (Spanish student survey, 2007)

“I want to say thank-you to Kate for all she has done. gracias” (Spanish student survey, 2007)

“I really enjoyed this year of Spanish. I am grateful for you teaching me”. (Spanish student survey, 2007)

“Kate you will be missed. It would be great to have you come back next year” [big smiley face] => [another ‘¡Lo hiciste!’ sticker] (Spanish student survey, 2007)

It has been great to have you in my class Kate! You have made Spanish so much fun!” (Spanish student survey, 2007)

The final two students made a series of recommendations they consider important:

“To learn about all Spanish speaking countries.” (Spanish student survey, 2007).

“...one of the best things for continuing Spanish in senior school would be to have Spanish as an optional class that can be attended once or twice a week during empty study blocks on the senior timetable. It’s a wild idea but it would be glorious if it were possible.” [by a student who said ‘no’ to continuing in Year 12] “To learn about all Spanish speaking countries.” (Spanish student survey, 2007).

### **Focus Group reflections on learning Spanish and on collaborations in the study**

The teacher and researcher set up the focus group with Spanish students, however, there was only a half hour available for the meeting as students had other commitments. Some of the students’ responses emerge from the researcher’s ‘loaded’ questions. Not all student’s by in uncritically.

The focus group was held on March 6 in 2008. The students hadn’t seen the researcher since December and when they came to the room they provided her with a very warm welcome. There were seven of the nine (two absent) students who had continued with Spanish in attendance. They were all excited to see her and they started telling her about many things on their minds. The researcher was equally happy to see them and hear about who had to drop Spanish, who had left the school and what was going on in their new Spanish class. Approximately ten minutes of the half hour had been spontaneously dedicated to catching up. The researcher felt ‘guilty’ about telling the students “okay guys, we better get started, is that okay? [...It’s great to <XX> and I’m sorry to hear that some people part of the family has not continued with Spanish”.]

The focus group discussion then quickly focussed on four students who had to give up Spanish due to timetable clashes and one student who did not want to learn Spanish anymore. The researcher

then began with the first question. Throughout the discussion the researcher does not challenge students' ideas or probe deeply into some of their contradictions, and in so doing, privileges a focus on 'outcomes' of methodologies on learning and performance. However, it is the students who remind the researcher that far more was possible, in regard to the class' collective identity and the environments' action upon the 'voices' of students in it.

### Extract 1:

- R: Wow[pause] and you guys stuck in[pause] that's great
  - SNa: Yeah I changed everything
  - R: Okay [pause] the first question is if you think about the start of last year [pause] in Spanish class [pause] and the end [pause] of the year [pause] in Spanish [pause] how would you say [pause] you were as a speaker at the beginning of last year in comparison to the end
  - SD: I'd say[pause] err do we[pause] [begin talking]
  - R: Yeah
  - SD: I'd say at the beginning of last year I was pretty average and then I was I got [corrects himself] I thought I was hell good and now I realise I was crap
- [SS@@ loud]
- SD: Soo [extended] I've still gotten better [pause] but I can still improve
  - R: [repeats what SD says till hell good]...but now you've changed your mind? and what do you think's made you change your mind?
  - SD: I know more words now I didn't [pause] like [pause] *joder*
- [SS@@]
- SD: Stuff like that and I know how to say sentences better and stuff
  - R: Great. and you St# [students' name]?
  - St: Yeah [pause] I've probably got better sentence structure and with like the endings [pause] like the *a* [pause] *amos* and that sort of stuff [pause] I can put that in a sentence now and work a sentence better [pause] I feel more confident
  - R: So, you think you feel more confident now than at the beginning of last year?
  - St: Definitely
  - R: Excellent [pause] Sc# [student's name]?
  - SC: Yeah I think I got like heaps better and stuff and I think my pronunciation is improving a lot [pause] like [pause] I didn't know I was good enough and I think I've improved lots (<XX>) [pause] hell good
  - R: Excellent [pause] SB#?
  - SB: Umm [pause] err [pause] I think at the start of last year I knew lots of words and stuff but I didn't know how to put it into a sentence (<XX>) kind of stuff [pause] I could say something with words but it just didn't make sense but yeah [pause] I thought at the end of the year I was ok
  - R: Great

- SkA: Um my pronunciation's gotten better [pause] cos I think I'm more confident that I know what to say and I'm trying to revise [pause] like we're having that conversation with [New Spanish Teacher's Name] [pause] I thought I was going to be completely hopeless [pause] at the start of last year I probably wouldn't be able to know anything or use any words and now [pause] it's just yeah [pause] [New Spanish Teacher's Name] pushes us more

Most of the students' reflections on collaborations in this project, except two, discuss positive improvement in their verbal proficiency (following extract). Students use a 'language as code' discourse (above) to examine their 'progress' or lack thereof, referring to their ability to produce language forms (words, sentence structures and pronunciation) and meaning. This reveals how these students have internalised the teacher's 'script' (Groundwater-Smith, 2001). Students critically reflect on their inability to make sense of language during the beginning of the year. They suggest that knowledge of 'words' and 'quantity' of words known was insufficient. One student elaborates saying that now she knows what she's saying and is more confident. As the discussion developed students begin to engage critically with their experiences as learners, to decode how teacher's teaching and personality, shaped their experiences (Freire, 1979). Two students express feelings of frustration about a loss of confidence and language, an awareness made possible through experiencing a new teacher (who is a native speaker of Spanish).

### **Not everyone has improved from our collaborations, given their knowledge of current possibilities**

#### **Extract 2 (Continued from 1)**

42. R: Okay [pause] SA# [student's name]

43. SA: Well I feel like crap [pause] cos I feel that I've gone down  
(Ss @@)

44. SN: Me too

45. SA: Umm [pause]

46. R: This year do you mean? or

47. Sa: [<XX>} And the end of last year [pause] yeah [pause] I don't remember anything and I can't put any sentences together [pause] I can't read it and pronounce all the words that I want to pronounce and I'm like leee

48. R: What do you think might be a reason or a few reasons for that?

49. Sa: I didn't try hard enough [pause] I don't know

50. R: Cos last semester [pause] I guess [pause] I remember starting the lesson and you'd be *hola* [title] Kate [pause] *hola* [title and teacher's name] [pause] *¿cómo estas?*

51. Sa: Yeah [pause] I know the basics but not like these guys [pause] like [SD# name] will sit there and say all these sentences and stuff [pause] and I'll be like what are you saying?

52. R: So, you think you've lost a bit of?

53. SA: Yeah
54. R: Confidence?
55. Sa: Yeah [pause] I think [pause] the brain space has gone and filled up with something else
56. R: And SN# [student's name]? How did you feel about the end of semester last year in comparison to the start?
57. SN: With more confidence
58. R: You had more confidence?
59. Sn: Just not very cool [seems a bit sad]
60. R: Remember you had a bit of a break too ... then it will be like last year when you were chatting online in msn  
(SSCH)

The two students in extract 2 discuss a loss of confidence and proficiency. One of the students felt more confident at the end of collaboration, however, another highlights that in comparison to her peer's she has difficulty recalling 'words', using these and appropriate 'pronunciation'. The other student felt more confident at the end of collaborations and is less confident now. More about the context for this loss of confidence is revealed as the discussion advances. While both perceive 'unjust' circumstances in their final analysis, they believe it is they themselves who have failed. A major concern in the focus group discussion is the 'new' Year 11 teacher.

In extract 3 the researcher learns that students' self-perception of proficiency is aligned with 'accuracy'. They talk about how having a new teacher impacts their self-evaluation. They discuss how different teaching styles and personalities have influenced their proficiency, learning, attitude, activity, and engagement. Some students approve of the new 'strict' [tough love] teacher's approach and feel his/her feedback is necessary, while others reminisce regarding their Year 10 teacher's [the collaborating teacher] 'laid back' ways. Others critique the teacher's approach as being 'slack'. A debate ensues as to whether she/he was a good teacher. It is not possible to 'fit' the entire exchange here, so several extracts are shown highlighting the 'tips of the iceberg'.

### **Students reflect on collaboration and debate tensions**

#### **Extract 3**

107. SSt: I think we all got more involved last year and because we became so close it became easier and we got more confident [pause] like I wouldn't have wanted to talk in front of everyone at the start of the year but towards the end of [pause] it didn't bother me that much [pause] cos I was more confident with everyone else
108. SNa: I think how we had the class last year was good because everyone was fine with each other [pause] now it's even less [pause] we've sort of [pause] split up again
109. SD: It's like two groups
110. SA: And [teacher's title]

111. SD: <XX> It's them and us
112. SA: And [teacher's title and name] thinks that we're kind of dumb
113. R: What do you mean?
114. SA: Like [pause] he assumes we don't [pause] we're not gonna [pause] we don't try hard and what we wanna do is talk you know and that's not about it [pause] cos if that's what we wanna do then we wouldn't pick the lesson
115. SNa: I wouldn't have changed law to do this
116. SD: Yeah [pause] I changed law as well
117. R: You both changed law to do Spanish?
118. SNa: Yeah
119. SD: And now I wanna do law
120. SNa: Yeah
- [@@] giggles
121. R: You can take it up later
122. SBa: I can see the difference in personalities with [Year 10 teacher] and [Year 11 teacher] [Year 10 teacher] was about positive reinforcement and confidence and [Year 11 teacher] is like [pause] you're not trying hard enough
123. SA: Yeah [pause] he gives us (whispers)  
[SSCH]
124. SSt: But I think [Year 11 teacher] is a better teacher
125. SC: I reckon he pushes us a lot more  
[SSCH]
126. SC: And like I'm a lot more confident now  
[SSCH]
127. SA: He gives us criticism
128. SSt: I like that
129. SCa: I feel like
130. SSt: Actually challenged
131. SCa: That I'm learning
132. SSt: Yeah
133. ste: He'll give us a task and he'll give us honest criticism and [Year 10 teacher] was like [pause] nice about it
134. SSt: Yeah
135. SNa: Yeah [pause] he wants us to do well [pause] whereas [Year 10 teacher] you could say [pause] [gender omitted] cared [pause] but like [pause] not as much [pause] he's like saying [pause] you must know this if you wanna pass [pause]

#### Extract 4

139. R: So, you're saying that there's a difference in the teaching approach that they use?
140. SSt: Yeah
141. R: As well as the personality I guess [pause] of each

142. SSt: Yeah
143. R: But also about the feedback [pause] that they're providing you is quite different
144. SSt: Yeah
145. SA: I think the big thing about their teaching approach is like [pause] every teacher goes about it a different way and it confuses the hell out of me [pause] personally [pause] like
146. R: But you were mentioning that you feel more challenged?
147. SA: Yeah [pause] yeah [pause]
148. R: But the feedback I guess
149. SA: Yeah [head down and looking a little upset]
150. SNa: Beyond what you know
151. R: Makes it harder to [pause] I guess maintain?
152. SA: <XX> Motivation to try and get better because you feel he's gonna be going no it's not good enough then why bother
153. ST: Yeah
154. SD: Yeah [pause] [Year 11 teacher's name] expects you to do the work and like [Year 11 teacher's name] you could put it off for a month
- [SS@@]

Extracts three and four highlight students concerns at present. There's been a change in 'teacher' and this has some questioning what they achieved the year prior. Students begin debating the teachers' teaching and approaches to feedback. One student proposes that the current teacher's tough love approach and his/her use of 'critical' feedback allows them to learn (challenges them). One student argues in favour of 'standardised' approaches to teaching, whereas another student finds the Year 11 teacher's approach subverts motivation. Students suggest the Year 10 teacher's (in the study) expectations were not very high or ineffective ('you could put it off for a month').

### ***On collaboration***

Extract 5 is chosen to illustrate students' views of collaboration. The researcher politely detoured the conversation at turn 229. The discussion evolves to a point where students examine how the researcher impacted on their learning and the classroom environment. They become critical of the teaching during the pre-collaborative intervention. There is a sense here that the contrasting teaching approaches has 'thrust' upon the students a deeper questioning of their knowledge. There's an expanding consciousness of the role of teachers in learning.

### **Extract 5**

229. R: Now if you remember [pause] do you remember anything about the first couple of weeks of year ten [pause] when I wasn't actually in the picture at all [pause] what was Spanish like then?
230. SA & SD: [at the same time] Slack

231. SD: It wasn't Spanish it was just us talking  
 232. SSt: Yeah  
 233. R: And how did that make you feel?  
 234. SNa: We're not doing anything [pause] we're not learning anything [pause] we're just  
 235. SSt: Like [pause] it was a catch-up lesson I probably  
 236. SNaa: <XX> We're wasting our time  
 237. SA: I wanted a lesson to motivate me to work harder and it didn't, so I slacked  
 238. SBa: I think that [pause] if you do stuff that it's a little bit easy [pause] you're just like  
 239. SSt: Yeah [pause] we got it done and then we talked [pause]  
 240. SB: We'd be really good and really good and then you'd get ...[inaudible] and this year  
 [pause] like you can't and it's like

....

[ongoing]

244. SSt: But when you came in and like [Year 10 Spanish teacher's name] and yourself started talking in Spanish [pause] that helped I reckon  
 245. SD: Yeah  
 246. SNa: Yeah  
 247. SSt: Definitely  
 248. SD: Speaking in the language

Later in the discussion students elaborate on other aspects of collaboration. For instance, they talk about a more diverse approach to culture, that privileged multiple Spanish speaking countries rather than one. They suggest that learning began when 'collaboration' commenced and that prior to that they weren't engaged ('wasting time'). One student suggested that there was 'more' confidence and 'interest'. The discussion highlights that some topics (i.e. history) are well received by some and not all. Finally, students discuss their enjoyment of hands-on activities, like dancing undertaken. One student said the enthusiastic way of the researcher inspired them to 'feel' good (and 'smile').

#### **Extract 6**

275. R: So [pause] back to what you were saying earlier [pause] you noticed that you were using more Spanish after we started to work together [pause] what else did you notice that was different to the first couple of weeks when we weren't working together?  
 276. SNa: There was a lot more confidence in stuff [pause] we actually started to learn stuff [pause] we actually started to become interested [pause] rather than just sitting there wasting time talking  
 277. SCa: I reckon we learnt a lot more about the culture [pause] not just of Spain but like all the other countries [pause]  
 278. SNa: I mean learning all about that history and crap  
 279. SCa: That's what I like  
 280. R: Good [pause] SB# [ student's name]?[SKt# student's name]?



281. SBa: I liked the experiences [pause] like the hands-on stuff that we did [pause] like  
 282. SSt: The dancing  
 283. SBa: Even when you taught us to dance you were like [pause] you made all our faces be more exciting and happy and stuff

### Student Voice

In Extract 7 students discuss whether they felt they had a ‘say’ in collaboration. The majority state that they did and that this was a meaningful change. They felt that ‘we’ acted on what they’d suggested. The researcher asks them about whether they felt they should have more power over decision making, however, they believe only an ‘extent’ of it is preferable (as they’d do it hell).

306. R: Do you believe your voice or opinion was counted last semester?  
 307. SNa: Yep  
 308. SD: Yep  
 309. SCa: Yep  
 310. SSt: Yep  
 311. R: SKt [student’s name]?  
 312. Skt: Yep  
 313. R: How?  
 314. SNa: Cos we talked  
 315. SA: I think when you asked us [pause] like you both asked us at the same time what we thought about Spanish and then we told you [pause] things changed  
 316. SNa: Things actually changed [pause] as we said [pause] we gave our opinion  
 317. SSt: Yeah  
 318. SCa: And the stuff that we wanted to do [pause] like we went to the restaurant [pause] and we like wanted to dance and we did  
 319. SNa: But I missed out on the dancing  
 320. SD: Same here  
 321. R: Would you have liked to be able to have more decision-making power?  
 322. SSt: To an extent  
 323. SD: Yeah [pause] cos we’d go over do it hell  
 [@@]  
 ...  
 329. R: So, in what ways do you think it’s realistic to have more control [pause] to share the control with the teacher  
 330. SNa: To share the control [pause] not to just have all of it  
 331. SA: I think they should ask if we’re interested in learning about this topic and if we’re not [pause] then just stick it [pause]  
 332. SNa: Yeah [pause] if we’re interested in learning something then we’re obviously gonna pay more attention to try to learn  
 333. STe: Yeah

334. SD: In year ten they should have it so like there's two things you could choose from doing [pause] like [pause] one more hands on and one more [pause] like [pause] writing...

### **Concluding thoughts**

Extract 8 and 9 include excerpts that sum up a beautiful and challenging dimension of collaboration. The students and researcher developed a very positive bond, but the researcher and the teacher did not. In hindsight, the researcher believes she may have neglected bonding with the Spanish teacher, and underestimated the very real fear the teacher may have felt at being under surveillance and monitored by a native Spanish speaker. At the time, the researcher felt a greater empathy for students because of how determined the teacher was about not wishing to negotiate curriculum or power, with students. It would seem that the teacher's position would trigger the researcher's own experiences of not having a voice as a student. She forgot that, as Freire states, "If education is dialogical, it is clear that the role of the teacher is important, whatever the situation." (Freire, 2007, p.111). The two extracts that follow triggered this reflexivity.

### **Extract 8**

489. R: So would it be right [pause] well [pause] it sounds like last year was the first time you felt feedback was ok?

490. SNa: Yeah

491. R: To be given to the teacher and that it wouldn't create conflict

492. SNa: Yeah but it was under the circumstances that you were there

...

495. R: So right now [pause] you wouldn't feel the confidence to give the teacher feedback?

496. SSt: Nope

497. SNa: No

498.

### **Extract 9**

557. R: We should actually move back but I do want to ask you is there anything else that you haven't said so far and I haven't asked about that you'd like to say?

558. SA: Please come back

559. ST: Thank you for what you did

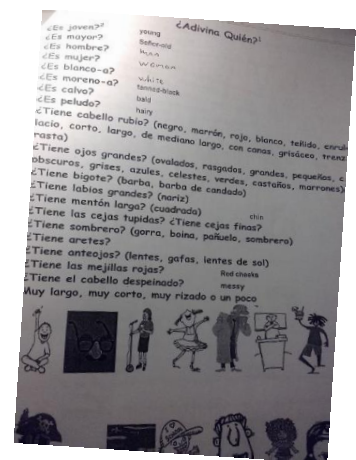
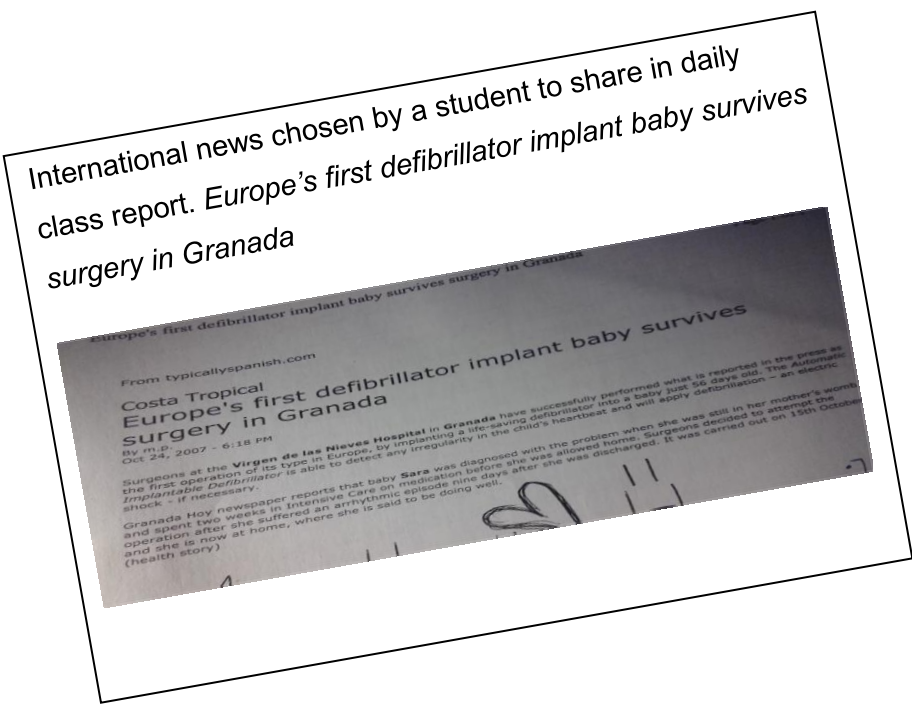
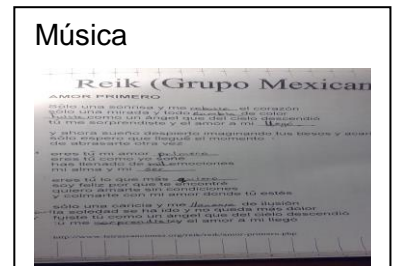
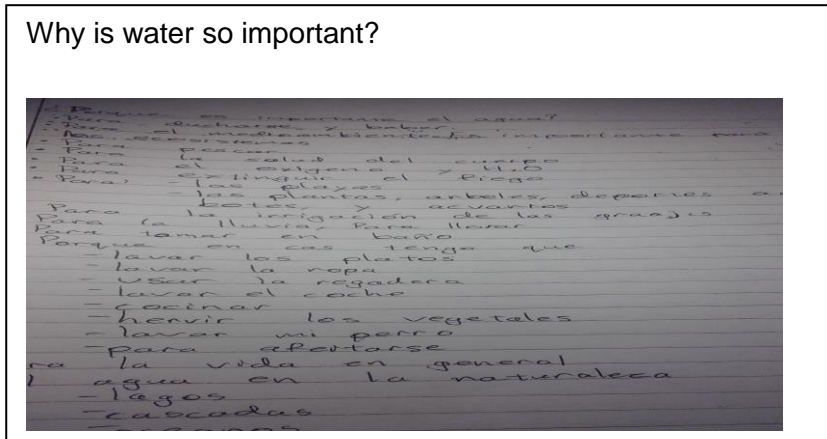
560. R: Thank you

561. SD: I'd say [pause] that teachers leave a big impact in lessons [pause] having a Spanish teacher is a lot better than having someone who speaks [Year 10 teacher's other main language]

562. SNa: Someone that's fluent in it

- 563. SD: Yes [pause] and that has the accent
- 564. SA: Yeah
- 565. SNa: I loved having [another Spanish teacher's name] as a relief
- 566. SD: Like [Year 10 teacher's name] was a good teacher but we didn't learn anything and this one [pause] he's an average teacher but we're learning hell more [pause] he's a good teacher
- 567. SNa: He actually cares about how you achieve though
- 568. SD: But it's hard
- 569. SA: I think he shows caring as if we were his own kids and he wants the best for us [@@]
  
- 570. SNa: I wanted to drop Spanish though
- 571. R: I'm glad you didn't
- 572. SNa: I want to drop it still
- 573. R: We'd better go back [end of conversation]

**Image 27: A Collage of Spanish Students' workbooks during 2007**



## **Concluding reflections on the collaborative project.**

I argue that Freire's 'banking model' of education was not only alive and not always (un)contested in this study: in its pedagogy and research practices. I argue that a more holistic response to work with, not for, participants, in such an apprenticeship would have potentially enabled more critical and dialogical possibilities in this PhD research, as others have discovered (Pio et al., 2014).

It must be acknowledged, however, that where human relations are at work and negotiated, *ningún zapato se amolda a todo pie sino que cada pie amolda su zapato caminando* (*no one sized shoe will fit all feet but each foot will mould its shoe through walking*) and there are no guarantees. In fact, consensus itself is problematic and may reflect dominant privilege, and its most pernicious and hidden power/knowledge systems which uphold the status quo (Foucault, 1980). The hierarchical and raced ways of distributing goods (cultural and economic) may shape the best consensus-friendly intentions (Bhabha, 2004). On this, in the Anglo-American context, Picower and Mayorga (2015, p.5) state, and I quote:

*On a basic level, schools and school systems have served as a site to meet the state's need for the development of individual members of its society. Whether the goal was educating individuals to participate in a democracy or to align with a particular social class, the focus of the school has been on producing people who fit the social order*

As stated, in the Australian context, white dominance is achieved, in symbolic and material terms, over people of diverse cultural backgrounds and colours (Picower & Mayorga, 2015). Frankenberg (1993) argues that such racialized ways run deep to inform the contours of 'everyday' lives, and in this way, are omnipresent, as well as pervasive and elusive (Ravenscroft, 2011). This is somewhat evident in how culture is constructed or invisible in the Spanish language classroom, and in the research practices enacted in the field with participants (including supervisors, in this study). More work in this field is necessary and invaluable.

### **This PhD's official discourses, modes, and landscapes.**

As Vass (2012, p. 176) suggests, the political and educational discourses in circulation in Australia in education often fail to reflect on "the racialized underpinnings of the Australian educational setting". This lens was outside the realm of observation and experience of the researcher at the time of the case study's design, in 2005, however, it became a recurring theme in this study's literature review and in participants' voices in this study. These indicated strongly that a 'monolingual mindset' and narrow views of Spanish speakers and Spanish languages and cultures, is a hindrance to

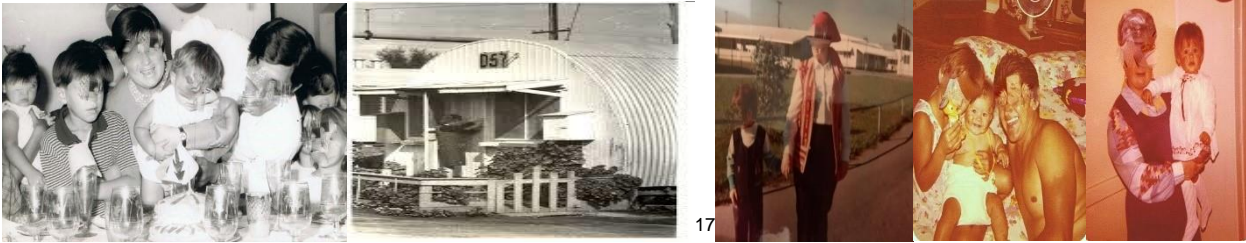
inclusivity and equity and dialogue, and reflexivity, in Spanish language curriculum in schools (and in two cases to teacher wellbeing), and in Spanish language research practice in academia. This new understanding challenged the researcher to break with her critical/socio-cognitive lens, in order to listen to her heart and body, to embody a new hybrid mestiza standpoint. Hybridity and interdisciplinarity have not openly been privileged practices in PhDs, in Australia to date. I am proud to contribute one.

If collaborative PhD research is to be examined within its racialized landscape, from the perspective of a marginalised woman of Australian-Uruguayan heritage, it must address another elephant in the room which Vass (2012) critiques at length in examining gaps between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous students' education in Australia. To do this, PhD's must consider 'race' and 'power relations' as core dimensions of research theory, research practice and research performance. In addition, PhD's need to consider the hierarchies and class dynamics enacted in research practice in PhDs, as they can exclude the multiple voices engaged in research, from the production and benefits of the thesis and its award. Few universities worldwide allow 'joint PhDs', and in Australia, 'red tape' and funding restrictions seem to prevent access to allowing students to engage in research and receive supervision in two universities and countries with multiple supervisors (Rowbotham, 2010; States News Service, 2013). The tradition of the PhD is clear, as so called 'joint PhDs', as the 'standard' PhD, is an individualist activity. Two people can't be awarded a PhD for the same project, in Australia, it would seem. Could this be different?

As it stands, a key challenge for 'ethnographic' approaches, in the context of an intent to collaborate, is that they may subvert avenues to openly negotiate personal, trust-building, and dialogical relationships through the use of participant observation and the challenges of working within institutional borderlands. Favouring more secretive and differential technical and discipline-focused understandings of participants, to protect institutions from legal reprisals, among other ideologies, enacts a social distance between participants while concealing aspects of the focus of observation (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1989). This undermines participants' active engagement in collaboration (Freire, 1970; 1992). Here Tannoch-Bland's (1998, p.37) words bring to light how researchers may inherit a licence to ignore their use of power and how this can obscure inequities: "these undesirable privileges confer power without conferring moral strength" despite best intentions to co-collaborate and contribute to lives and knowledge. With this in mind, one must reflect on one's inheritance, interpellation and journey in struggle through specific borderlands; through raced, gendered and classed spaces, relations, and intersectional practices imbued with ambitiously individualist, 'elitist', prescriptive, and 'narrowly' academic ideals, as in this research field. Wadham (2011, p.192), reflecting on racialised 'fields', may rightly consider my interpellation into 'academia',

as a process of insertion into ‘masculinist’ constructions or perhaps, of participation in a ‘bounded community of citizens conceived as belonging to a highly specific [white Australia] national ideal.’ Perceiving this to be very real, as Anzaldúa notes (Moraga & Anzaldua, 2015, p.xxviii), I believe, at some point, “we are each responsible for what happens down our street...”, and so, we must “stand our ground...” and let the force of our being penetrate the other with gentleness”, perseverance and love. While interpellation and heritage matter, so do passionate struggle and re-imagining.

# Bricolage: The mestiza journey



Montevideo, Uruguay, to Gepps Cross, Pennington Hostel in SA, 1971-1973



Familial, institutional, racial, religious, class, gender, and academic framings to date



<sup>17</sup> Nissen hut (second image), Gepps Cross Hostel (from SA History.com).

## **CARTA A QUIENES LUCHAN POR DIALOGAR / LETTER TO THOSE WHO 'FIGHT' FOR DIALOGUE**

Queridos Participantes,

I hope this letter finds you all muy bien (very well). I've been needing to say something to you for a long time, but I simply hadn't found the words to articulate what happened outside 'our' words, as Anzaldúa says (in 1981, in 2015), in the domain of the innards.

As you know, I began this PhD full of hope (and I haven't lost that). In 2005, I was childlike in my energy and enthusiasm about the possibilities of 'dialogue' in a classroom. I wanted to share this with you all; with mis colegas (my colleagues) teaching Spanish and with students learning Spanish, like I'd done myself for several years in various local schools. I wanted to share lessons learnt in working with students in an Indigenous Mexican community. It was while I was being required to teach to the test (the TOEFL exam) that I began to question my role in students' lives. Conflicted, I came across Freire's *Pedagogía del Oprimido*. It helped me recognise my oppression and my role in that of others' in institutions of formal learning. The project I took to you was inspired by my students' empowerment emerging within our dialogical inquiries.

Like bell hooks (1994), when I read Paulo Freire's work, in particular his descriptions of the contradictions of the oppressed, it made me feel sick and then angry. The scenario of the oppressed was familiar to me. **But** it was a few pages into his book that a commitment de corazón (from the heart) with myself, my family and my students in the Sierra de Puebla would re-inspire my spirit. Since that time, my deeper readings of Freire's extensive works in educational projects and in my work with students in diverse sites, I've become more resolute in my convictions for dialogical education. This is significant in the current neoliberal, corporatized, educational climate in which I believe:

**... true solidarity with the oppressed means fighting at their side to transform the objective reality which has made them [and possibly even me] [as Hegel stated] "beings for another." (Freire, 1996, p.31)**

And while I don't assume all students, teachers, or early-career researchers are oppressed, I never doubt that this is possible, whatever their heritage, class, gender, faith, or health etc.

Today, I don't believe anyone owes me anything for my difficult educational experiences. These have taught me so much about the kind of mother, teacher, researcher, activist, and community member I want to be. And I'm extremely grateful that from my early schooling, teaching and early career-researcher journey, I was aware of oppressive machinations and bureaucracies in Banking Education systems. Perhaps, I was surprised



to the degree of race, class, and gender knowledge divides in such sites and practice, in particular, in my PhD journey. The threat to collective praxis motivates my mestiza voice and struggle for dialogue.

I admit that my idealised view of dialogue has countered the reality that there's no magic formula to 'dialogue'. Dialogue is broad and contestable in theory and in practice. Dialogue is, most definitely, always, mediated, in moment-to-moment exchanges, in struggle and conflict. And as the challenges in and for language education become reassessed in the neoliberal environment, higher must be our hopes, aspirations, and the benchmarks to resist further distortion of language education as a practice of freedom (Freire, 2005). Hope for a better Spanish language education system, a better life, keeps my mestiza body labouring on.

I realise that what researchers believe is effective dialogue in the abstract is likely to be at odds with what you, us, the participants, did in practice in this project. An aspiration to 'Freirean' dialogue was somewhat privileged and resisted; however, it was constructive and oppressive; inspiring and transformative. Dialogue meant different things to us all. Society, culture, and audience mediate meaning, in dynamic and symbolic ways (Habermas, 2015). I can only read this amazing wor(ld) from within my mestiza-ness.

I have no doubt today, that enabling 'dialogue' requires de-institutionalising 'dialogue' with participants. There must be a predominant place and space where participants can discuss multiple meanings, limitations, tensions, and possibilities of dialogue together. It cannot be artificially pre-engineered, timed, or discretely measured. Deep and personal conversation with participants in this study was denied by the practices institutionalised in the classroom and the PhD field and habitus (Bourdieu, 1984). PhDs come with protections against 'border-crossing' and can silence. It tried to silence my mestiza voice, but I'm still speaking now, though I don't have the last word, not yet, perhaps.

In this study, the institutional practices created to protect participants ended up depriving participants somewhat of their voices while also "cheating them in the sale of their labor" (Freire, 1979, p. 32). The researcher participant just as much as the Spanish teacher and Spanish student participants, were 'all' capable of using language and "master's tools" (Lorde 2012, p.112) to resist or sabotage dialogue and praxis. However, 'we' were also capable of standing up for 'our' voices and desires in crossing boundaries. In the words of Gloria Anzaldúa, it is possible that "...because we internalize how our language has been used against us by the dominant culture, we use our language differences against each other" (Anzaldúa, 2015 p.58). In our collaborative journey, dialogue was complex and contested, but silence was also powerful, it allowed us to hear each other's words, feelings and 'wor(l)ds. It allowed me to see through my mestiza eyes with some clarity and with passion, but also compassion in valuing diversity and inclusive practices.

Dialogue in practice is negotiated in the moment-to-moment in messy, subtle, hidden, covert, and confusing ways, with and without participant consent or consensus. At times, as has been shown in this study,

*participants' talk about practices which signal their complicit immersion in contradictory ideologies. I suspect they know they can enable oppression. However, to survive the journey of collaboration in this study, participants united in a 'third space' in spite of each other's differences (Bhabha & Rutherford, 1990). The 'dialogue' and 'solidarity' bonded some more than others, and contradictions were never resolved. To this day, I wonder about the effect that my writings may have had on your 'innards'.*

What I do feel, I know, is that this study made a significant contribution to participants' lives and learning (to us) in this study. In some ways, it also left participants, the students, and the researcher especially, with a degree of frustration as 'we' became conscious that while some things changed for the better, much was unmoved. What was possible made Spanish learning, according to students, 'different' to any learning in Spanish they'd ever experienced. It was also 'different' to learning they'd experienced in other classes in their school (Focus group, 2008). Students expressed excitement, love, unity, and pride when talking about this project (their reflections follow). It would sadden me to think that banking experiences highlighted in surveys, lesson observations, and researcher assumptions, should be replicated for many Spanish students to come given the overwhelming student voice and critique demanding for this to be changed. It would not be difficult to review the many insightful Spanish students' suggestions for how transformation could be collaboratively achieved.

At the end of the case study, it was difficult to hear the students' requests for me to please stay and 'come back' to teach, and to hear that in their present learning something had been lost which they understood was magnified in their classroom, in a new divide, an us and them, which 'split' students and tested their cultural understandings, while giving some the 'you're not good enough' tag. It was difficult to re-read the teacher's interview and to hear that I had not picked up on his/her need to speak about his/her workload. I realise that during these discussions, I was unable to articulate to the students or the teacher how we should be aware and act against being 'submerged' in powerful discourses, and being complicit in hierarchically exercising power against each other, instead of using our power to resist and challenge how we were '... socialised to behave...' (Shor & Freire, 1997, p. 184). Anzaldúa and hooks have inspired me to take some of the power, taken from me in this study, back, to speak uncensored on the page if not sufficiently back then. I feel I owe you all so much. But, one thing about power-sharing, as Derrida might say, is that it is always an incomplete project. Democracy is always already **to come**. What I've learnt from this, I did not know before.

Indeed, the project of critical inquiry is an incomplete project. It is always an unfulfilled promise to come. No one is ever critically accomplished enough. Given this, the ambition to set up a critically provocative classroom in a traditional banking system of education within a university and school bounded PhD is and was and will always be problematic – if not impossible. Should that deter anyone? It did not deter us!

The promise of conscientization is itself a series of ongoing awakenings and provocations, of intellectual, corporeal, emotional, and manual labours. We may not get to a promised land of ‘enlightenment’ but we may begin the journey of transformation and struggle with and for ourselves and others. This, in itself, could be considered a massive achievement in a mainstream punitive system. It is like one of the ‘so called’ illiterate (if there can ever be such a thing) peasant participants in Freire’s literacy campaigns one said:

## ***I work, and working I transform the world (Shaul, 1996, p.15).***

*It is this collaborative praxis that has transformed itself and participants’ wor(l)ds. And I am committed to the ongoing struggle to dialogue to come, in and outside education, for the benefit of many more of ‘us’.*

*I want to finish with some of your reflections, dear teacher (respecting your anonymity), as reminders for us all:*

*This project was fairly involved and took quite a long time (over three terms) to completion. However, I believe it was a positive and rewarding experience for the students. They gained a lot of knowledge through their own investigation. They were... up for the challenge. It was also important for students themselves to be able to reflect on their own performances and to recognise when they were successful and also what they could have done to further enhance their success. This kind of project can benefit all students but I feel that in some cases, the stronger students excelled and put in a huge effort, therefore gained so much from this experience. However, at times, other students found it a bit of a challenge which didn’t always appear to motivate them to do their very best. ... Through my own involvement, I have evaluated my practises in other classes, reflected on my own knowledge and applied some of what I have learnt. It is important to continue to learn and to do the best we can because **we do make a difference in the lives of our students**... Overall, I believe the project was successful and if I had the chance again, I would encourage more students to become involved. Hopefully, through their involvement, students can excel in their senior language education and those who did not continue, will remember this as a rewarding and valuable experience” (Spanish Teacher’s Journal, December 2007).*

*And your reflections, mis queridos alumnos (my dear students), reflect on the power of ‘our’ collaborations. I have reflected deeply on your words, and our relationship, in this thesis, in what I believe is a considered and ‘ethical’ way. I privilege some of your reflections and hopes (rather than my authority in precisely theorised conclusions). It is time here, for you to convey the passion, the dialogue and the mutual trust enabled throughout this project. You reveal ‘our’ contribution to Spanish learning, teaching and research in SA, in what became ‘our’ classroom and community: a site of possibilities for 14 Spanish students, their Spanish teacher and their researcher-collaborator-assistant-friend.*

*I'll begin this end of the story saying gracias, to you all, for teaching me so much, and sharing your learning/teaching and lives, with me, in this PhD. I promise to use it, should it succeed, to struggle on, ethically, and with passion, sin olvidar (without forgetting) how and with whom, I have it, or where and from whom I come from!*

*In 2008, at the end of this project, your journals became a final testimonio of this journey, and I conclude with what they say, to me:*

*Yes I did enjoy learning Spanish this year it has been a great experience I have had a lot of fun! Lol We have had lots of good conversations!! Ohhhh I loved the food we had yesterday. I am in love with your mum. That cake was delish. I'm sure that yours would be better of course!! I also loved the quesadillas. Don't you just love the little conversations we have that you get to laugh at haha!!!!*

*Thanks so much for the help you gave me! Mr X*

*...I don't agree with exams. I think they are wrong because if you blank out it all rests on that .... Stop them Kate!!! Things should be more practical. We should be using the things we learn in everyday life...*

*Hola, Spanish has definitely sparked up with the new methods. More games and fun things.... When we researched a famous person I chose Santana and I actually played guitar which was awesome ... It is definitely easier and more comfortable...Everything rocks woo hoo Lots of love J#*

*Kate you are an absolute legend, ur awesome. Since you have been here Spanish has been so much better and I have had fun learning. Thank you and good luck with your future endeavours. Lol Keep up the fantastic work*

*Hola =) I'm enjoying these more "realistic" topics because its' something people actually talk about. .... I can't wait for tomorrow*

*...We now know how to ask more questions in Spanish. We are using a lot more Spanish in the classroom which I find really good but I also find it hard as I find it hard to speak Spanish. But I can only learn and become a much better speaker...*

*...Spanish is very enjoyable + I am finding it a lot more interesting + easier to learn. The cooking was very fun + I think the excursion will be very educational ;)...*

*Spanish is fun because we get to do so many interesting things, we do a variety of different subjects or areas of Spanish. I am enjoying learning about their environment + how they live etc.*

*I think Spanish has been a great awakening to a different culture .... I am sad to not be continuing with this subject. I will miss Spanish even though it is no secret I have struggled with the subject. ...I know I could have become more understanding and knowledgeable of this culture and subject. I wish the best of luck to everyone in this class.*

*Hola. It is going to be heaps sad to know you are leaving at the end of this, it has been great having you in our class, we'll miss you! =)*

And as a point of departure, dialogue and praxis intersect when 'we' ask critical and difficult questions of our work with each other. I'm convinced that much can be achieved as a 'collective' in solidarity, as in this study. It is then that, in the words of one Year 10 Spanish student (Student focus group, 2007):

***We actually started to learn stuff***

## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Caminante no hay camino<sup>18</sup> (Joan Manuel Serrat) (Spanish / English Lyrics) [blocked-out due to copyright restrictions]

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<sup>18</sup> [Caminar (infinitive verb) means 'to walk'. El caminar (noun) means 'to journey'. Camino (verb) 'I walk']

Wanderer, there is no path (Translation by Manual Rodriguez)<sup>19</sup>

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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<sup>19</sup> Retrieved online from: <http://lyricstranslate.com/en/caminante-no-hay-camino-wanderer-there-no-path.html>

and is covered by the dust of a neighboring country.  
As he went away, he could be heard crying,  
"Traveller, there is no path. A path is made by walking".

Blow by blow, verse by verse...  
When the robin can no longer sing,  
when the poet is a pilgrim,  
when praying is no more of use.  
Traveller, there is no path. A path is made by walking.

Blow by blow, verse by verse (x3)

## **Appendix B: An Overview of the History of ‘Foreign’ Language Programs**

The history of language programs in Australian schools is incomplete and entangled with moments of debate and slow policy developments (Lo Bianco, 1990; RCLCE, 2007). A lack of consistency in program planning, provision, record keeping, and monitoring persists today and is considered a major barrier to understanding Australia’s languages profile (Lo Bianco, 1987; Clyne, Fernandez, Grey, 2004; Liddicoat et al., 2007; Slaughter, 2009; Wright, Black & Cruickshank, 2016).

The available literature reports that language programs in Australia began around 1855; French, Latin and Greek were taught in the manner of the classics, first in universities (Wykes & King, 1968). ‘Ethnic school’ programs began by 1857 but founding principles were ‘weak’ (Community languages Australia, 2005). The first school programs in the 60s taught mostly French, and a few, German (Clyne, 1997). French was slowly replaced with other programs, due to demographic demand for Italian, Greek and Russian (Clyne, Fernandez, Grey, 2004). Various states applied a World War I Education Act prohibiting bilingual education (Victoria’s was still in use in 1986) (Clyne, 1997). Clyne (1997, p. 63) sums up this period stating: “1964 assimilation was still very much the policy and pluralism was seen as a transitional token of good neighbourly relations.”

Globally, language subjects rated second class in educational institutions while considered intellectually prestigious throughout the 1950s and 60s (Wykes & King, 1968, p.5). Contrasting local assumptions deliver programs marked by controversy, difference, and hybridity (Clyne & Kipp, 1999; Clyne, 2005; Leitner, 2004). For instance, there was the use of ‘positive discrimination’ and testing in some states to assist students new to a language and discourage background language speakers: a



measure disadvantaging Italian, German and Russian background speakers (Clyne, 1997). Victoria abolished this in 1966.

In 1968, tertiary education programming impacted community support for languages elsewhere. Universities removed a language entry requirement (Lo Blanco & Wickert, 2001) instituted in the 1960s (Wykes & King, 1968). Events such as this increased lobbying from language professionals and the activism of the Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils (Clyne, 2005; Leitner, 2004; Lo Blanco & Wickert, 2001).

An 'official' reluctance to diversify curriculum (Lo Bianco, 2010), backed by ongoing assimilationist policies, did not deter debate at the time but mobilised an expanding lobby group (Clyne, 1997). In 1973, a large lobby of 'ethnic' Australians, unions, language practitioners, scholars, and George Zangalis, inspired a community *Statement on Immigrant Education, Cultures and Languages* 'demanding' migrant languages be offered widely in schools (Clyne, 1997). This resulted in more offerings for adult migrants in English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) and in more language maintenance programs for primary children (Clyne, 1997). Clyne, Fernandez, and Grey (2004) report that Indonesian, Japanese, and Chinese commenced around this time, responding to migration. Studies in The United States in the 80s and in New Zealand, the Netherlands, and Austria in the 90s praised Australia's '70s period (Clyne, 1997).

The Whitlam government's reforms approach in 1974 supported multicultural initiatives to the extent that Australia was then officially declared a multicultural nation (Clyne, 1997). Under such conditions, program (and policy) development was supported and 'vigorously contested', as there were substantial differences in language provision across states and territories and school sectors including a Eurocentric language focus (Dijite, 1994, p.10). Clyne's (1997, p.65) first-hand account of the grassroots movement is telling:

...the introduction of languages other than English into primary schools started as modest initiatives on the part of parents, teachers, communities, academics and students...

Much was achieved for community, maintenance, heritage and 'foreign' languages in schools in the 80s and considerable changes occurred with the abolition of anti-bilingual education in all states and territories, and the expansion of multilingual services for the community (Radio, phone interpreter services, international film viewing on television, etc.) (Clyne, 1997). South Australia and Victoria were leaders in languages provision: in developing materials, building educational networks between public sector schools and ethnic schools, and in offering diverse languages in Saturday school programs. Donald Horne (as cited in Clyne, 1997, p.63) declared Australia a 'blueprint for change...'

In 1990s, the first *National Policy on Languages* (Lo Bianco, 1987) instilled a degree of academic ‘seriousness’ and advocacy in the educational community, if not yet in the general public (Clyne, 1997). It informed the National Goals for Schooling (1989) in which languages were acknowledged as a key learning area for *all* school students (Browet & Spencer, 2006). It formalised primary and secondary language program development, however, “numbers of programs, numbers of language learners, and the number of languages taught” (MCEETYA, 2005, p.4) set up a quantitative benchmark for performance. Targeted funding and assessment standards emerged.

The assumption that languages are a resource and an investment increased the need for national ‘public administration’ and record keeping (Clyne, 2005; Lo Bianco, 2008). Economic rationalism led changes and debates to mandate languages (Liddicoat et al., 2008). From 1991-1994 government policy and reports (Commonwealth White Paper, 1991; National Asian Languages and Cultures Working Group, 1994) offered monetary incentives for school student enrolment. 208 million in unprecedented funding backed Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese, and Korean (Rudd, 1994, p.v). While the funding ended in 2002 (EREBUS Consulting Partners, 2002), arrangements continue today (Curriculum Corporation, 2003; Asia Education Foundation et al., 2014; Piller, 2016): a luxury other languages were never granted.

The impact of declaring a renewed ‘Asian Century’ (White Paper, 2012), a ‘capacity’ building aim of Australian languages education (in schools, VET and universities), enables languages learning, exclusively promotes and funds Asian languages nationally, and prescribes the wider community and school communities’ choices and access. This confuses the purpose of learning languages.

The main providers of language in education since the ’90s and to date are primary and secondary schools in the public, Independent and Catholic school sectors; School of Languages (Department of Education schools), Ethnic schools (Clyne, Fernandez & Grey, 2004), Cultural Centres, Open High Schools, and Distance Education Centres (Purdie, et al., 2008; *Sydney Morning Herald*, 2011). The number of students enrolled in language programs, and the most studied languages vary by state (Clyne, Fernandez & Grey, 2004).

In 2004, the top ten languages offered in Australian schools were reported to be Japanese, Italian, Indonesian, French, German, Chinese (Mandarin), Arabic, Greek, Spanish and Vietnamese (Clyne, Fernandez & Grey, 2004). However, variation within states is substantial. For instance, in Western Australia, the top languages offered in primary schools in one year alone was Indonesian, in Independent and public-sector schools, and Italian in Catholic schools (Coghlan & Holcz, 2014). Whereas the top language offered in secondary schools in one year alone was French, in Independent schools, Italian, in Catholic schools, and Japanese in public sector schools (Coghlan & Holcz, 2014).

A WA study indicated variations also in language delivery. Some schools teach languages as a ‘subject’, and others have bilingual or immersion approaches (Coghlan & Holcz, 2014). In 2007, a pivotal study, *An Investigation of the State and Nature of Languages in Australian Schools* (RCLCE, 2007) highlighted that data collection in languages is problematic as some approaches are ‘less systematic’ than others, and errors occur with data from schools which count one language under different names twice (i.e. Mandarin and Chinese) or count school numbers twice if they offer programs combined with Ethnic schools (RCLCE, 2007). This problem has been highlighted for decades (Lo Bianco, 1987). The variance in methods and data questions language figures in schools (RCLCE 2007; Asian Education et al., 2014).

In 2007, a study found that between 2001 and 2005, language student participation rates had dropped nationally (RCLCE, 2007). In 2007, the Group of Eight’s (2007, p.1) *Languages in Crisis: A rescue plan for Australia* report highlighted that: “Australian school students now spend less time learning a second language than students in all other OECD countries... [and] ...students graduating with a second language has fallen dramatically...”. Tragically, many of the languages spoken in large numbers in the community, are not offered in schools or in universities (Group of Eight, 2007).

From 2008 to 2010, the debates for a new National Curriculum for Australian Schools were underway. In the *Initial Advice Paper* English, Maths, Science, and History were prioritised and a language curriculum focus was absent: sadly, the message to the community is that languages are an ‘extra’ or irrelevant (National Curriculum Board, 2009). When the first languages draft, the *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Languages*, was developed almost three years later (ACARA, 2011), it listed Chinese and Italian as the first key languages to be developed in the curriculum. It instituted that 300 hours would be expected of students prior to the end of Year 7 (Topsfield, 2011). It is difficult to know the impact of prioritising some languages over others, however, clearly this instils an air of uncertainty for many in schools.

In 2011, not all Australian states mandate language learning in schools (only Queensland, Victoria, the ACT and SA) (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 2011) and the current curriculum encourages its learning up until Year 9 (ACARA, 2012). Studies have shown that such interventions impact language provision in schools (RCLCE, 2007; Coghlan & Holcz, 2014; Wright, Black & Cruickshank, 2016). The current *Shape of the Australian Curriculum* (2012, p.19) affirms an explicit focus on “Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia”, however it notes that languages provision ‘may be’ offered “...subject to school and curriculum authority arrangements.” It is deplorable to learn that Australia’s highest curriculum authority (ACARA, 2012, p.19) considers language learning an ‘extracurricular’ activity when international reports reveal that “on average 8 per cent of the

compulsory curriculum for children aged nine to 11 in OECD countries is devoted to modern foreign languages, rising to 13 per cent for children aged 12 to 14” (*Education at a Glance 2010*, as cited in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 2011).

The status of languages in schools today and the future of language education engagement in Australia is, in many ways, one-sided and in others, marginal. There have been positive advances in the provision of Indigenous and Asian languages (Coghlan & Holcz, 2014; Erebus Consulting Partners, 2002; Henderson, 2007; Purdie, et al., 2008), and recent trials for preschool language learning programs for certain languages (Mandarin, Japanese, Indonesian, Arabic, or French) are promising (The Hon Susan Ley MP, 2014; Early Learning Languages Australia [ELLA] 2017). Much more needs to be done in this area, in the space of attitudes towards languages learning in the community, and Commonwealth, State and Territory advocacy and funding to enable the provision of quality programs especially in public education, where languages are most negatively affected (Bense, 2015; Wright, Black & Cruickshank, 2016).

The most recent comprehensive report on languages notes that in Australia “only 11% of senior secondary students choose to study a language in addition to English. Languages have by far the lowest enrolments of any learning area nationally” (Asia Foundation et al., 2014, p.3). The *Australian Curriculum: Languages* supports languages from foundation to Year 10, only (Australian Curriculum, 2014). Not all states or territories have language policies or plans in 2017, and some sectors ‘encourage’ while others ‘require’ language learning (Asia Foundation et al., 2014). While it is difficult to understand how a ‘coordinated’ approach to languages learning provision (Lo Bianco, 1987; RCLCE, 2007) in Australian schools is possible, or even ‘ideal’, given the complexities discussed here, the mixed messages discredit the importance and value of languages to students’ lives and learning. This may explain, in part, the decline in student engagement (Feneley & Calixto, 2016).

OECD countries have a better formula than Australia when it comes to languages education (Feneley & Calixto, 2016). The state leading in provision at present is Victoria. There, “17.3% of final year students” are studying a foreign language and the state goal is for “all students from primary to Year 10 to study a language by 2025” (Feneley & Calixto, 2016). This illustrates what positive official and unofficial policies can achieve to enable student engagement. This provides official and institutional support to language teaching and learning communities, an unwritten policy that embraces the opportunity and challenge of language learning at a collective level. Insights can be gained from a brief examination of the past thirty years of policies framing languages in Australian education, as this study will argue that what happens in school communities is not entirely reliant on what happens in schools or in students’ and teachers’ language classrooms.

## **Nationally agreed policies shaping ‘languages’ in Australia**

Policy is designed to inform teaching and learning aims and practices in education, however, policies are intended to work in coordination with Commonwealth, State and Territory goals and initiatives (MCEETYA, 1998) and at present, ‘inconsistency’ prevails (AEF, 2014). Although a committee was established to consider language issues in 1969 (Tsung, 1992), it wasn’t until 1987 that the first *National Policy on Languages* (NPL) was implemented (Lo Bianco, 1987). The Australian Government had been pursuing a ‘languages’ agenda in the Senate from 1982 (Liddicoat, et al., 2007).

*A National Language Policy Report* by the Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts (1984, p.2) held a broad view of ‘language’ and acknowledged its role in “building a multicultural society”. It declared that any policy in the future should not be “selectively beneficial to segments of the community” and would not employ a ‘top down’ approach or require “huge” allocation of funds (pp.1-2). The report valued English competency, the ‘maintenance and development of languages’, delivery of language services and access to learning second languages (Senate Standing Committee, 1984, p.4). It also acknowledged the multilingualism of Indigenous Australians and recognised the diversity of ethnic language groups (Senate Standing Committee, 1984). This report is acknowledged as the source of the term Languages Other than English (LOTE) still in dominant use today (Liddicoat, et al., 2007) despite its privileging of the ‘English’ language (AEC, 2014). In this study, the term ‘LOTE’ is used in its historical context, otherwise the term ‘languages’ is used.

Throughout the decade of the 80s, it can be argued that languages were considered a ‘key’ area of learning within *Australia’s National Goals of Schooling* in its various revised forms (Australian Education Council, 1989; National Report on Schooling, 1999). *The Hobart Declaration* (Australian Education Council, 1989) upheld ‘common and agreed national goals’ with ten aims “to develop an excellent education for all young people...” which promoted “a knowledge of languages other than English” (Australian Education Council, 1989). Later, the *Adelaide Declaration on National Goals for Schooling in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (Australian Education Council, 1999) replaced this policy and identified languages as the eighth key learning area of a balanced curriculum. Following this, the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* set out ‘broad’ aims where languages were outlined, Asian literacy and an ability to ‘relate to and communicate across cultures’ in Asia, was repeatedly highlighted (MCEETYA, 2008, p.9, p.13). Each successor policy outlining Australia’s national goals for education, since the NPL of 1989, has expressed, in comparison, ‘vague’ commitments to ‘other’ languages. Clearly, the NPL supported a diverse language curriculum, and successive policies have swayed the focus towards Asia while intensifying the

privileging of English and Maths. While the first national policy did not ignore the Asia/Pacific's influence, this was not privileged (Lo Bianco, 1989).

### **Language policy shaping 'languages in Australian schools**

Language policies shaping Australia's languages in schools have evolved from historical, geographic, and migratory circumstances, shaped themselves by ongoing resistance to waves of migration and other multicultural issues (Dijite, 1994, p.17; DEST, 2001; 2006). The persistence and commitment from several submissions which initiated the Senate Inquiry discussed earlier, led to a *National Policy for Languages* (NPL) in Australia (Clyne, 2005, p.154). Previous initiatives failed to acknowledge the educational value of languages in educational agenda (Liddicoat, 2002) or the key role they play in identity formation, in socialisation and in social relations for personal connection to others and to place (Dunworth & Zhang, 2014; Leitner, 2004; Moreton-Robinson, 2003). It is argued here that the NPL was ahead of its time in its aims and advocacy.

#### ***The NPL (Lo Bianco, 1987)***

The NPL outlined the complexity and divergence of views on languages learning in Australia while seeking to inspire a 'coordinated' approach to policy and program implementation. It advocated for the value of Indigenous and 'ethnic' community languages and sought to support 'first' language maintenance and encourage 'acquiring' a second language (Lo Bianco, 1987; 1989). Principles underpinning the policy acknowledged the dynamism of languages, the multiple purposes they serve, the power that language 'confers', its potential for social cohesion, its value as a 'resource' in a pluralistic society and the value of specialist languages to people with additional needs (i.e. Auslan) (Lo Bianco, 1987). It is also reported to have shortcomings. For instance, it introduced 'economic' incentives for schools and while it privileged English and afforded high status to Aboriginal languages, it separated ESL (English-as-a-Second-Language), English, community languages and 'international' languages (Lo Bianco, 1987), introducing an element of 'othering' (Liddicoat et al. 2007). It also determined 'languages of wider teaching', and with this, Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Greek, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese and Spanish were officially endorsed in schooling and encouraged for tertiary education (Lo Bianco, 1987, p.124-125). Lo Bianco (1990) himself explained that language policy is problematic: giving 'status' to some languages among 'disparate' groups and having to select languages whilst seeking not to 'devalue' others (Lo Bianco, 1987). Such decisions must acknowledge 'power-holders' and dominant and minority views (Lo Bianco, 1990). All policies are in this bind.

### **The Australian Language and Literacy Policy (ALLP) (Dawkins, 1991)**

*Australia's Language: The Australian Language and Literacy Policy* (Dawkins, 1991) followed the NPL consolidating support and advocacy for Australia's language programs (Clyne, 2005). It also narrowed down the targets of the NPL (Liddicoat, et al. 2007). The policy outlined immediate action required in several areas, including: literacy, adult migrant English proficiency levels, in school second language support, 'mainstream' society's understanding of 'LOTEs', low participation rates in 'LOTE' in schools, and the "...loss or neglect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages" (Dawkins, 1991, p.2). Its four key goals privileged English proficiency, 'LOTE' programs, Indigenous Languages and Language Services and it set a 25% of Year 12 'LOTE' student target (Dawkins, 1991, pp.4-20). The policy identified 14 'priority languages' (from which states could choose 8) of national interest (Dawkins, 1991, p.15). These included: Aboriginal Languages, Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Modern Greek, Russian, Spanish, Thai and Vietnamese (Dawkins, 1991).

Although the ALLP declared several languages were given priority status (DEET, 1991 as cited in Ingram, 2001) for improved 'educational' and communicative outcomes, an economic rationale behind language policy support continued and in some ways intensified (Ingram, 2001)<sup>20</sup>. It offered school grants and incentives, for instance, "\$300 per Year 12 student" completion and promised further exclusive funding for Asian languages which had commenced in 1989 (with National Priority Reserve funds and other grants which would continue in multiple forms (Dawkins, 1991, p.16).

### **The National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools Strategy (1994) (NALSAS)**

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Working Group on Asian Languages and Cultures developed a report titled *Asian Languages and Australia's Economic Future* (Curriculum Corporation, 2003). From this report arose a Commonwealth, State, and Territory initiative to "improve participation and proficiency levels in language learning in four targeted Asian languages - Japanese, Modern Standard Chinese, Indonesian and Korean" (Curriculum Corporation, 2003). 'Bilateral' agreements were made between the Commonwealth, States, and Territories to exclusively allocate funding to these and when Commonwealth funding would cease remaining parties would continue funding it (Erebus, 2002). This meant that the NALSAS Strategy received unprecedented federal support (Lo Blanco & Wickert, 2001, p.15) widespread endorsement and inequitable promotion (Clyne, 2005, p.158).

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<sup>20</sup> Lo Blanco (1991) and Clyne (1991) reported this issue, as have others (Dijite, 1994; Valdes, 1995; DEST, 2002; MCEETYA 2005). Nalsas exemplifies this priority (Taskforce, 2004)

The NALSAS policy was implemented alongside the ALLP (Liddicoat et al., 2007) and Asian languages given priority were selected based on “regional economic forecasts” (Curriculum Corporation, 2003, p.1). This initiative became the *NALSAS Strategy* and MCEETYA set up a Task force in 1994 to monitor it (Curriculum Corporation, 2003). By 1997, the Taskforce had reported that enrolment had ‘increased by 50%’ (Curriculum Corporation, 2003, p.1). Erebus’ (2002a) *Evaluation of the National Asian Languages and Studies in Australian Schools Strategy* reported that 200 million (Au) dollars were invested in the project and had succeeded in: increasing the number of schools and the number of teachers teaching a NALSAS language (Erebus, 2000). Asia studies and languages initiatives continue, under various guises, embedded in school curriculum, as per the White Paper (2012). This inspired the National Asian Languages and Studies in Schools Program (NALSSP) (2008 to 2012) (AEF, 2010). It allocated 62.4 million (AEF, 2010) and has ‘a target of 12%’ of senior students studying an Asian language by 2020 (AEF, 2010, p.4). It also received 1.2 million in yearly grants (Curriculum Corporation, 2003). Inequities in implementation, and funding, feed into many areas, including the development of Asia specific resources (AEF, 2014; Möllering, 2014).

National policy-making initiatives and their associated products have reinforced a disjointed perception of the value of languages in education in the Australian curriculum (Williams, 1996; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2009). In the official discourses in education, languages have been promoted for different agendas, signalling different dominant trends. Language curriculum has been promoted as something important for: increasing youth access to cultures and nations for travel purposes; improving general literacy (Senate, as cited in Clyne, 1997 p.99), and increasing Australia’s cultural, social, and economic capital (Clyne, 1991; Lo Bianco, 1987; SSABSA, 2004). As a result, it has been communicated to the public, through policy, that language programs are a commodity delivering economic, socio-cultural, and linguistic benefits, depending on the ‘official’ agenda of the day (Liddicoat, 2004).

The study of languages as a key resource for learning had not received much attention in language policy or programming prior to the time of this study (Cummins, 2005). Competing discourses in circulation on the value and importance of language learning for learners would likely impact on language learning and participation, as well as on community views (Clyne, 2005). Wavering and negative perceptions, back to basics advocacy (e.g. ALLP, 1991; Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training, and Youth Affairs [MCEETYA], 1998) and weak support for multiculturalism (Commonwealth of Australia, 1999), given the strength of monolingual mindsets (Clyne, 2005; Möllering, 2014) have served to reduce recognition of the cognitive, affective, social, reflexive, and intercultural benefits of language learning (Liddicoat 2003, 2004; Jaatinen, 2009;). In addition, it seems likely that the weakened support for languages in schools and in official decision-



making has impacted on students' perceptions of languages and their willingness to participate in programs, on a long-term basis, as in other countries (MCEETYA, 2005; AEF, 2014). This is especially the case for minority languages. It has been reported that the need to teach Spanish has not been taken seriously by the Australian government or its schools (Clyne, 2005).

The *National Report on Schooling in Australia's* (1997) reported that at senior secondary levels, languages were failing. In 2005, MCEETYA argued that "languages education is not yet part of the learning experience of all students" ... (p.4). It's similar in SA (DECS, 2004).

**Appendix C: New Basics Model Cue Sheet** (Permission granted from authors for use)

CUE SHEET		Student /Teacher	S	T	
Adapted from New Basics Project, 2001					
<b>Substantive Conversation</b>	<b>Code</b>				
Deconstruction of lang/txt	Dctx				
Intellectual Substance	Intsub				
Dialogue	Dial				
Knowledge Integration	KI				
Knowledge Problematic	KP				
Deep Understanding	DU				
Background Knowledge	BK				
Flexibility/Spontaneity	Spon				
<b>Critical Learner Strategies</b>					
Questioning techniques	Que				
Higher order thinking	Hi				
Deep Knowledge	Dk				
Knowledge Integration	KI				
Knowledge Problematic	KP				
Deep Understanding	DU				
Problem Solving	PBL				
Exercise Power	Expo				
<b>Student Interest</b>	<b>StInt</b>				
Emotive response	EM				
Initiative	Ini				
Resistance	Res				
Persistence	Pers				
Passive	Pas				
Effort	Effor				
<b>Observed Learning Behaviour</b>					
Active	Act				
Passive but involved	Pasin				
Not involved	Notinv				
<b>Teaching Strategies</b>					
Teacher directed	Tdir				
Facilitates/narrates	Tnar				
Question Answer	Qan				
Shares power	Shpow				
Maintains a critical stance	Criti				
Emphasis/connectedness	Conn				
<b>Proficiency</b>					
Speaking	Spea				
Reading	Rea				
Writing	Wri				
Listening	List				
Metacognition	Metc				
Meta-language	Metl				
<b>Culture</b>					
Dominant Culture	DomCul	Spain			
Non dominant culture	Nondom	Marginalised/minorities			
Generative Themes	Genth	Life, world events, opini, prefer			

## **Appendix D: The Grammar Translation Methodology**

### **The research and literature on Grammar Translation Method (GTM)**

The GTM approach to foreign languages is characterized by a mechanistic view of language that is somewhat decontextualized of its cultural context (Mackerras, 2007; Lo Bianco, 2011). It is mechanistic in that its teaching is largely premised on technical aspects of language with an explicit focus on the study of forms and functions (Celce-Murcia, 1991; Thoms, 2012; Mart, 2013), rather than language use for communicative and intercultural social purposes (Jia, 2000; Larsen-Freeman & Freeman, 2008) and critical socio-cultural ends (Byram, 1997; Moreno-Lopez, 2004; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Nugent & Catalano, 2015). The latter embrace a pluralistic view: language is evolving and mediated in action.

The GTM method was developed in the applied linguistics field and has been ‘dominant’ in language teaching in Australia, the UK and USA (Lo Bianco, 2011). Wedell and Malderez (2013, p. 86) argue that it is “the most widely used language teaching method in the world....” Its systematic lens has its origins in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (Wedell & Malderez, 2013) when unused languages (i.e. Latin) in Europe were being preserved through the study of the written word and literature (Larsen-Freeman & Freeman, 2008). Translation was the goal – it still is (Mart, 2013; Kelly & Bruen, 2015) in spite of its critics (Firth & Wagner, 1997; Cook, 2010; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). Translation relies on learning language parts (i.e. grammar and lexis). This can obscure how culture and language are interconnected and always being reconstituted (MCEETYA, 2005; Mackerras, 2007; Lo Bianco & Slaughter, 2009; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2010; Díaz, 2012).

This method’s assumption that learners ‘acquire’ the code of language, is problematic, founded, as it was, in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory (Mackerras, 2007; Larsen-Freeman & Freeman, 2008; Wedell & Malderez, 2013). This theory assumes learning involves cognitive and systematic exercises (Mackerras, 2007; Lo Bianco, 2011). Learning is often dedicated to developing ‘skills’, memorization, and identification of word parts and verb conjugations. Skills are learned via ‘drills’ and rules to practice patterns and exceptions, and model accuracy (Nunan, 1998; Larsen-Freeman & Freeman, 2008). Learning is restricted to the orthographic ‘code’ (Mackerras, 2007): reading, writing and the filling of information gaps (Wedell & Malderez, 2013) to ‘cloze’ exercises (Larsen & Freeman, 2008) provided in lessons. This is defined here as language ‘study’, rather than language learning for critical intercultural communication and action.

## Appendix E: Example of a student rubric with feedback (double sided)

100% + 11

Average: 94.2 words per stu.

3rd May - no time  
5th June - absent.

Tool 4 Prof. 4  
May 21 - June 4

Solo Level Descriptors (adapted from Collis & Biggs 1979, p.16)

Pre-structural: doesn't answer the question or understand it (no aim or no structure)  
 Un-structural: limited ideas/focus of relevant facts (no explanations, cause/link or example)  
 Multi-structural: several relevant statements (no links or explanatory relationships made)  
 Relational: the answer focuses on key ideas that relate to all of the relevant detail (explanations and some attempts to link beyond the basics)  
 Extended abstract: uses abstract principles to explain relationships (explanations and extensions to abstract views/showing critical/creativity or authentic thinking)

	Average sentence length	Total number of phrases used	Total number of words	Total number of different words	Use of socio-cultural information	Level of complexity of grammatical structures	Critical evaluations of events	Reflections on actions	Identification of strategies or action plans	Interaction with the researcher
Hablarite (Esp. INCA) Pre-structural	-	-	-	-	-	x↓	-	-	-	-
Hablarite (Esp. INCA) Un-structural	-	-	63	33	-	-	-	-	-	✓
Hablarite (Esp. INCA) Multi-structural	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hablarite (Esp. INCA) Relational	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hablarite (Esp. INCA) Extended Abstract	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Notes on the right side of the rubric:

- Notes tips
- food
- sport
- Buenas ideas
- Tiene confianza
- orgullo
- crecimiento

Reliability and Validity (Bilingual Syntax Measure I and II (BSM I & II Spanish) Correlation of 1027 - 890 Students of dominant Spanish in San Diego, K-year 6 grades (Guerrero & Del Vecchio, 1996)

Me gusta pinas porque es...  
 Me gusta deportes es compartir mi bicicleta. Mi gusta... mi gusta correr  
 la tarta (torta) me gusta beber el agua. No me gusta correr  
 No bien correr. Mi escuela es grande, mucho grande es muchas clases  
 muchas estudiosos. Mi escuela es dirby - sucia - deportes. No me gusta  
 Por... dia. correr mi bicycal with mis

5. me gustan los deportes  
 6. andar en mi bicicleta  
 7. me (I) gusta. (Mi = mine/my)  
 8. me gusta  
 9. me gusta comer torta  
 10. me gusta beber agua  
 11. No corro bien  
 12. es muy grande  
 13. hay muchas clases.  
 14. y muchos estudiosos  
 15. gustan (plural)  
 16. El deporte que no me gusta es el fútbol  
 17. Por la tarde me gusta correr con mis amigos en nuestras bicicletas or Por la tarde me gusta andar en bicicleta con mis amigos en las pistas (tracks)

Dear [redacted] for having a go at this first recording of your proficiency I know it's hard when you've been away a few days, to think in the language again, but you had a go and I appreciate that. I would recommend that you work little on your pronunciation of some of the 'i', 'di' and 'rr' (this last is difficult for many students and so don't worry. It's not to hear about but more please questions? ¿cuánta vida?

Feedback includes: verbatim transcript of student's words, encouragement regarding ideas discussed, index of quantity and diversity of words used, numeric index of cultural information and statements regarding confidence shown with an invitation to keep conversing (and corrections for errors). Tool draws on language/proficiency analyses tools to provide descriptive feedback on level and complexity of language use (as per Collis & Biggs, 1979, and Guerrero & Del Vecchio, 1996).

## Appendix F: Trial Year 8 Survey

Please **Do NOT** put your name on this questionnaire.

Dear student,

This questionnaire is part of a larger research project in the area of Spanish teaching and learning. I am interested in your opinion about your learning and experiences with Spanish teaching because I believe that student's views and opinions contribute to educational research in many ways.

I am researching a new method for teaching Spanish and I am interested in your reflections. Please use the final section to discuss any suggestions that you consider important. Thank you =)

### **Your answers are confidential**

Please tick:

Year level 8  9

Gender Girl  Boy

1. Do you think learning Spanish is interesting? Yes  No  Somewhat

2. What parts of learning Spanish ARE NOT interesting?

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3. What parts of learning Spanish ARE interesting to you?

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4. What could Spanish "TEACHERS" do to make learning Spanish more interesting for you?

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5. What could YOU do to make learning Spanish more interesting?

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6. Are there any topics listed here that interest you? Please tick those that interest you.

- a. What is Spanish and why do we learn it?
- b. Research about lifestyles, in the city and the country, in a variety of Spanish speaking countries
- c. In what ways does my life link to others'
- d. How young people cope with routines, school and study
- e. Justice, oppression, and injustice in our world
- f. Careers, employment, work conditions and change
- g. Social scenes and comfortable lifestyles
- h. Entertainment across cultures
- i. Media and influences on culture and representation
- j. Sex and health
- k. What influences civic and emotional development
- l. Historical and cultural roots in communities
- m. Why do we learn what we learn and who's interests are served
- n. Government and institutional structures
- o. Social movements and revolution
- p. Unique cultural celebrations of Latin America and Spain
- q. Expressions used by youth
- r. Fashion
- s. Music
- t. Dance and movement

7. Are there any other topics, not listed here, that interest you?

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**Section 3 (final section)**

**Reflections for the future.** Please answer the following question:

Do you believe that you will continue learning Spanish till year 12?

Yes  No  Not sure

1. Please explain **in as much detail as possible**, the reasons for 'why' you believe this.

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2. Please make any other comments which you consider important

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Thank you very much for taking the time to answer these questions. Your answers are considered extremely valuable contributions to this study and confidentiality will be respected.

Signed

Katerin Berniz  
PhD Student  
Flinders University of South Australia



# FIGURES

(List of figures, diagrams, tables, and images)

## Post Title Page Cover

Image 1: A Year 10 Spanish Student Workbook (Participant data, 2007)

## Acknowledgements

Image 2: Mother & Daughter's First Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Protest, 2016.

## El Espíritu de la Tesis

Image 3: La rutina diaria para escribir

## Chapter 1: Hybrid entries and departures

Image 4: A growing mestiza Australian daughter of an Australian-German Father, and an Australian-Uruguayan Mother, at a multicultural SA unions protest in Adelaide, SA, in 2017.

Image 5: Students collective journal (right column)

Figure 1: Case study phases (left column)

Figure 2: A multi-dimensional study (left column)

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## Chapter 2: PhD Baggage and tools for survival

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Image 22: Researcher notes taken from the participant teacher and researcher's first meeting at the beginning of the 'collaborative-intervention' (June 2017)

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Image 27: A Collage of Spanish Students' workbooks during the collaboration-(2007)

Bricolage: The Mestiza Journey

## **Carta a quienes luchan por dialogar / *Letter to those who fight for dialogue***

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