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Choque Cultural in Higher Education: The Lived Experiences of Two Transnational Doctoral Students on the U.S. Mexico Border

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“CHOQUE CULTURAL” IN HIGHER EDUCATION: THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF TWO
TRANSNATIONAL DOCTORAL STUDENTS ON THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER

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Lyn McKinley

2011

Dedication

In Memory of My Parents:

Marilyn and Frank McKinley

I can't get used to the fact that you are gone, keep waiting to hear the stability in your voices on the phone one more time. Thank you for the value you placed on learning in our lives.
I miss you tremendously, lovingly.

To the Informants:

Ay, amigos. What can I say to you with my *¿poquito español?* I hope it doesn't become
"Who is Lyn?"

Thanks for letting me know your stories. You are now a treasured part of mine. You made me laugh! Thank you so much for your friendship. I can't wait to see your names with the credentials! Nobody deserves a Ph.D. more than you.

And to You:

Thank you to the one who stood by me through this project in every way, from creation to completion...through the research conferences, the highs and lows, the ever-shifting tables of contents...those long nights at my laptop, when you reassured me with, "Just keep going."

Thank you for providing the community of people you surrounded me with so that I could complete this project, from staff in the Dean's Office in the College of Education, to professors, to wonderful friends who prayed for me every step of the way, even now. To you, my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I am most grateful of all.

*"To one who has faith, no explanation is necessary.
To one without faith, no explanation is possible."-- St. Thomas Aquinas*

SDG

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TRANSNATIONAL DOCTORAL STUDENTS ON THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER

by

LYN McKINLEY, B.A.

THESIS

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Abstract

This study seeks to develop a deeper understanding of the experience of transnational students in higher education in a U.S. public university. The setting for the study is the U.S.-Mexico border between Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, and El Paso, Texas. While numerous studies examine the experience of transnational K-12 populations in U.S. schools, there is limited research on students in advanced levels of higher education in this context.

This purpose of this study is to provide an in-depth perspective of the experiences of two transnational doctoral students enrolled at the doctoral level at a U.S. university on the U.S.-Mexico border. The research question this study examines is: “How do two transnational doctoral students from Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, describe the experience of studying at an advanced level in a research-intensive U.S. university, and what does the transnational experience mean to them?”

Findings of the study indicate that the informants experienced a 21st century culture shock or “*choque cultural*,” building on Oberg (1960). The informants’ experience of “*choque cultural*” took place between two cities that are separated by about five miles, not between cultures in distant locations that are far away. The data were analyzed through an anthropological perspective, which indicated that the current violent context of Ciudad Juárez had an effect on the students in their doctoral work. Also considered in this framework were social fields and support systems described by the informants as part of their border identity.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The time is 3 p.m. on a Saturday, and I am sharing Taco Bell bean burritos with Marco, a 28-year-old doctoral student in Education at a university located on the U.S.-Mexico border between Ciudad Juárez and El Paso. He has just attended a five-hour class and is preparing to drive home. We sit at a formica table for four in the basement of the Education Building, talking about his life as a border dweller. You see, Marco lives in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, a stone's throw from El Paso. Or perhaps now, a rifle shot away.

Every day he crosses the international bridge over the dirty, shallow water of the Rio Grande, the deadly border between his hometown and El Paso. He kisses his wife goodbye and leaves, driving past abandoned homes to a police road block, and on past to make the typical two-hour, five-mile drive to El Paso. He stops at another checkpoint before he reaches the Santa Fe Bridge, which is marked by an insignificant placard located at the exact point where Mexico stops and the U.S. begins. Pedestrians also make their way across on the nearby foot bridge, speaking the fluid cacophony of Spanish and English that blend into border dialogue.

Introduction

Marco and the other informant of this qualitative study, Carolina, live lives juxtaposed against this setting like countless other *Mexicanos* (Mexican nationals) with *esperanza* (hope). They are doctoral students in the early stages of advanced academic studies in Education. They are the informants for this qualitative research inquiry, conducted to fulfill the requirements of a Master of Arts degree in Education. To attend classes, one informant, Marco, crosses the bridge over the Rio Grande every day. He lives with his wife, an attorney, in Ciudad Juárez. Carolina lives in El Paso, having moved from Juárez two weeks after classes began the first semester.

Even up to five years ago, Juárez was a safe and enjoyable excursion for many El Pasoans, who frequently crossed into Mexico for nightlife, restaurants, and shopping. Now, both Mexicans and Americans feel uneasy journeying back and forth because of the violence in Ciudad Juárez. Many won't make the trip at all. The river itself is a demarcation line, a type of militarized zone, which marks the border between the two countries, long-standing shadowy neighbors.

These two informants are among a distinct group of students at this research-intensive university located on the U.S.-Mexico border. Their context is bifurcated between, for one informant, living in Ciudad Juárez and simultaneously studying for a doctoral degree at an American university. For the second informant, alleviating the daily border crossing meant uprooting her family and moving to the U.S. side of the border, while also experiencing new and challenging horizons in her first year in a doctoral program. Both are native Spanish speakers with no formal training in English, the language of the academy. Responsibilities at home and at the university are constant pressures in their lives. In addition, they must come to terms with their positions in the ebb and flow of life on the U.S.-Mexico border, the bilingual-bicultural tapestry that is the root of their experience. The traverse is both physical and metaphorical, as they constantly challenge situations that are new to them, in a setting—at least geographically—that is familiar. Both are natives of Ciudad Juárez, located only a few miles from El Paso. It is almost assumed at the university, where 7 percent of the student body is from Mexico, that border crossing is as simple as walking across the 75-yard footbridge that separates the two countries. Pay your 35 cents or \$2.00, whether walking or driving, and you have crisscrossed the cultural divide. The campus is five miles away, doctoral classes begin at 5:30 p.m. This research, which focuses primarily on the informants' first year of study, suggests otherwise.

The Research Question

The primary research question this study examines is: “How do two transnational doctoral students from Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, describe the experience of studying at an advanced level at a research-intensive U.S. university, and what does the transnational student

experience mean to them?” A secondary theme deals with the diverse ways in which the context of the unique transnational border setting of this study impacts the informants’ lived experiences.

The Statement of the Problem

In higher education scholarship, there is a paucity of research concerning the experiences of transnational students pursuing doctoral degrees at American universities. The two informants of this thesis study are considered transnational students. Scholars define transnationalism as the process by which immigrants build “social fields” between their countries of origin and the countries where they reside (Conway & Cohen, 1998; Glick Schiller, Basch & Blanc-Szanton, 1992; Menjivar, 2002; Nagel, 2002; Remennick, 2002; Spoonley, Bedford & Macpherson, 2003). Thus, these immigrants, or students, in this case, live in one country but remain tied to their home countries. This often the case on the border between Ciudad Juárez and El Paso, where transnational students fluidly move from country to country. In contrast to the transnational student, the international student may board an airplane with only a few suitcases, earn a degree in a host country, then return to live in the home country again. Statistically, record numbers of international students are currently matriculating at U.S. universities. According to the *Open Doors* report, published annually by the Institute of International Education (IIE) with support from the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, almost 700,000 international students studied in the U.S. in 2009-2010 (www.iie.org/opendoors). Particular to this study, 13,450 students from Mexico attended U.S. universities from 2009-2010. The majority (almost 60%) were undergraduates, with almost 30% graduate students, and 7.8% other. At this particular border university, there are 2,200 international students, 7% from Mexico. (<http://research.utep.edu>).

The informants of this research study are among the most highly educated young people from Mexico. They are intelligent professionals who have chosen to commit themselves to doctoral-level study in a language that is not their own, in a university that is in another country, in areas of intellectual study that are beyond what they have attempted before. Their stories are significant to further expand the body of research on transnational PhD students—those who live in neighboring countries and study in a binational context—where cultures seem to blur. But is that really the case?

Research has been conducted on international students in New Zealand (Weiss & Ford, 2011) the UK (Robinson-Pant, 2006), at Indiana University (Zhao, Kuh, & Carini, 2005), and at other Midwestern universities (Rhee, 2006). Specifically, qualitative research is scant on the experiences of the ever-growing transnational graduate students in the United States. Though research is plentiful on the K-12 population at the border (e.g. de la Piedra, 2010; González, Moll & Amanti, 2005; Mendéz, 2010), there is a need for further research on transnational students studying at the doctoral level in the U.S/Mexico border area.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative research study is to provide a deeper understanding into the lives of two transnational doctoral students at a U.S. university in an era of increasing globalism both in society and at the academy. This study utilizes the qualitative research technique of “narrative ethnography.” Chase (2005) defines narrative ethnography as a hybrid of the ethnographic and life history methods. It is a combination of informants’ and author’s stories, blended into a rich narrative that seeks a deeper vision into the experiences of the informants. Their lives exemplify a common border phenomenon at this university—crossing between

Mexico, which both informants call “tercermundista” (third world) and the United States every day. Is this experience set in two distinct cultural worlds, as Vila [2000] posits? Are these cities joined at the hip, as history bears true (Vélez-Ibáñez, 1996), or as Vila says, different “planets”? (1999, p. 82).

The study will also explore new directions in the application of critical theory (e.g., Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1997; Roberts, 2010; Shor & Freire, 1987) to the lives of doctoral students in a unique border context.

The Significance of the Study

The study considers the roles played by transnational students in university settings. It offers new perspectives on the role that the academy plays in their educational experience. Are the policies of universities that host transnational students responsive to the challenges that cross-border students bring to their lives at the university? In particular, this research attempts to uncover the personal understandings of the informants studying at an advanced academic level during their first year of study. This project seeks a deeper understanding of the transition experiences of these students, their lives at an American university, the push/pull of ties they have in adjacent countries. The study applies critical theory concerning the emancipatory nature of education and the importance of dialogue in learning, linking theory with practical application.

The university.

The campus of a research-intensive U.S. university located on the U.S.-Mexico border was the setting for this research. The university is a federally designated Hispanic-serving institution; many students are among the first in their families to attend college. Of the

university's 22,106 -member student body, it is 76.19 percent Hispanic; 9.97 percent Anglo (white); 2.81 percent African-American; and 1.22 percent Asian-American (according to university figures). As stated, students from Mexico comprise 7% of the university's 1,853-member international student body, many of whom are from Ciudad Juárez and cross the border every day to attend the university. Specifically, the College of Education serves almost 40 percent of the university's 3,946 graduate students.

Ciudad Juárez, Mexico.

A city of 1.3 million people, Ciudad Juárez is the fifth largest in Mexico (INEGI, 2001). The projected population of Juárez by 2020: 2.5 million. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the population of El Paso was 649,121 in 2009, a 15.2 increase over 2000 figures. The city is 76.6 percent Hispanic. Per capita income is \$14,388; 22.2 percent of El Pasoans live below the poverty level. In comparison, the statewide average per capita income is \$19,617; 15.8 live below the poverty level.

El Paso-Ciudad Juárez was originally one city known as El Paso del Norte until 1848. The cities then separated with Mexico's loss of territory and the U.S.'s gain of the city of El Paso as a result of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the U.S.-Mexican War (Staudt, 2010; Vila, 2000). El Paso and Ciudad Juárez have thus long been linked not only geographically but also economically. Mexican immigration has fueled the border economy since World War I and through World War II, when this abundant, cheap labor force filled in for Americans fighting overseas (Morgan, 2004). The Bracero Program provided Mexican workers in the 1940s and '50s, fulfilling the continuing need for labor in the United States. Many of these jobs were filled by Mexican professionals, who took manual labor work to feed their families (Vélez-Ibáñez, 1996). The 1986 passage of the Immigration and Control Act (IRCA) provided amnesty

and residency for 2.2 million immigrants (Núñez & Klamming, 2010), which fueled further settlement of the border region. Ciudad Juárez-El Paso has been central to border economic growth and development, particularly after passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1994. The border cities are part of what Staudt calls a “global manufacturing region” that features a “plentiful low-paid labor force” (p. xvi). Staudt states that the region “vividly illustrates the underside of global and global manufacturing cities: inequalities, challenges associated with the full rights of citizenship, insecurity, and informal economics” (p. xvi).

Summary

This qualitative research study provides a deeper understanding into the lives of two transnational doctoral students at a U.S. university in an era of increasing globalism both in society and at the academy. Though research is plentiful on K-12 students who live in border areas, there is a gap in the literature concerning transnational students studying at the doctoral level in U.S. universities. This thesis addresses findings that can help fill that gap. The methodology is narrative ethnography. This project seeks a deeper understanding of the transition experiences of these students, their lives at an American university located on the U.S.-Mexico border, between the cities of Ciudad Juárez and El Paso.

Chapter 2: The Literature Review

It is 2:15 p.m. Carolina sits at her desk on the eighth floor of the Education Building. It is a 9-story 1970s tower rising in concrete blocks amid asphalt, spindly creosote bushes, and cacti. She glances at the clock on the wall, grabs her purse and searches for her keys as she shuts down her PC. She is already late to pick up her 2-year-old daughter, Gloria, at daycare. She heads down the stairs instead of waiting for the elevator, reminding herself that they charge for an extra hour if you are more than 15 minutes late to pick up your child. The guarderia (daycare) costs Carolina more than \$100 weekly.

The stairwell walls are bare and painted white. She runs her hand along the cool metal railing as she descends. After picking up Gloria—she runs through the routine in her mind—she has 30 minutes before picking up the boys at school. She exits the building and begins the 10-minute climb up “cardiac hill” to reach her car in the remote parking lot. Now that Miguel is in middle school, she makes two stops: one for him, then on to pick up Alejandro, who is in his last year of elementary school. That leaves her 45 minutes to prepare an early dinner for the children before her 5:30 p.m. class.

The boys are being educated in El Paso public schools, in English as a Second Language classes. Miguel readily answers questions in English, though he is only in his second year of studies. Alejandro will greet you in Spanish. And Gloria, she speaks English when spoken to in English, Spanish when spoken to in Spanish. In an effort to reinforce the boys’ Mexican heritage, the family spent several weeks last summer on a farm in Durango where Carolina’s husband was raised. The boys rode horses, milked cows, and ate authentic Mexican food from that region. They also learned that they really don’t like traditional Mexican music.

Introduction

Several bodies of literature and conceptual resources have given shape to this ethnographic study. These include the domains of Transnationalism, Critical Theory/Critical Race Theory, and Border Identity Formation. The nature of the insight that can be drawn from the above areas of literature and experience and the contributions they have to offer to the conceptual framework of the thesis is briefly indicated in the following pages. The findings of the literature review help us understand existing literature on the topic and new expressions of experience that have emerged from this research.

Transnationalism: The Phenomenon

According to immigration scholars, transnational students are connected to both their home countries and their countries of origin (e.g. Conway & Cohen, 1998; Glick Schiller, Basch & Blanc-Szanton, 1992; Menjivar, 2002). Glick Schiller et al. (1992) state that immigrants who form such “social fields” are called transmigrants. The researchers state: “Transmigrants develop and maintain multiple relations—familial, economic, social, organizational, religious, and political that span borders” (p. 1). The connection between these two sites is a powerful bond but also sometimes tenuous tie for immigrants (Menjivar, 2002). The link between home countries and host countries is simpler yet more complicated by increased globalization and communication technology (Glick Schiller et al., 1992; Menjivar, 2002; Remennick, 2002). Immigration scholars (see Glick Schiller et al.) are divided over whether these relatively new patterns of connection are similar or different from past generations. Some scholars support the transnational concept of “constant back and forth flow” (Glick Schiller et al., 1992) between borders. Yet others, drawing on patterns of European immigration of the 19th and early 20th centuries, state that immigrants typically lacked the means to remain rooted in their home countries and often completely broke ties with their homelands (Nagel, 2002). Culture, in the comprehensive sense of the word, was simply a fraying cord that severed with the passage of time.

Other scholars such as Nagel (2002) argue that communities of migrants develop, in which members live in both home and host countries, are bilingual, and cross borders easily. According to Remennick (2005), “Over time, many immigrant groups develop cultural hybridism—mixing elements of their ethnic language and lifestyles with those adopted from the

host culture. A common expression of this trend is the formation of hybrid ‘immigrant lingoes’—Mexican English, Algerian French, Turkish German, etc” (p. 517).

Assimilation into the new geography is another area of research in transnational lives. Is the model “assimilate into” or “alienate from?” Again, transnationalism scholars are divided over whether today’s immigrants become bound to their new cultures or choose non-assimilation and loyalty to their homelands. Or, is the choice made for them? Since the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States, many immigrant groups who choose to remain loyal to their native countries have been met with hostility (Nagel, 2002). Some scholars (see Nagel, 2002; Zolberg & Litt Woon, 1999) paint the picture of post-9/11 American nationalist mentality as an “us” and “not us” scenario. Nagel (2002) skillfully discusses the debate over contemporary and historical ideas of (non)assimilation, completing the argument by stating that power still rests in the hands of the “home” (i.e., host) country. Nagel states:

The dynamics of assimilation...are set in motion by the geopolitical systems in which contemporary migration takes place. The construction of political territory, the spatial enclosure of the nation, and the containment of external threats (including “floods” and “hordes of immigrants”) are processes laden with the ideological conceptions of self and other (p. 981)

It is on the palette of globalism that scholars place transnationalism, where transmigrants typically live their daily lives in hegemonic contexts (Glick Schiller et al., 1992).

Transnational Students in the U.S. Educational System

U.S. Public Schools.

Extant literature in the area of transnational students’ educational experiences has been conducted in K-12 settings (e.g. de la Piedra, 2010; González, Moll & Amanti, 2005; Mendéz,

2010; Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco & Todorova, 2008). For example, work by Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco and Todorova (2008) on immigrant youth in K-12 schools found that, after a five-year study period, 59 percent of students felt that they had little contact with persons outside of those in their country of origin group. Approximately 15 percent indicated that they had somewhat identified with other groups. The researchers also found that, among country of origin groups, 75 percent of Mexicans identified solely with peers from Mexico. The informants for this thesis are adult Mexican nationals; this research project in part considers those relationships.

Higher Education.

Few studies, however, have described the experiences of transnational students in higher education in the United States, specifically on the U.S./Mexico border. One of these (Weiss & Ford, 2011), discussed transnational students' identities, specifically, Southeast Asian students' experiences in Australia. Other works, based in the United States, include themes of oppression (Rhee, 2006), comparisons between international and American students' academic and social experiences (Zhao, Kuh, & Carini, 2005), differences between academic expectations in the home and host countries and experiences on returning home after graduate-level study (Robinson-Pant, 2009).

A majority of the students in Weiss and Ford's (2011) study located themselves as strongly national, yet afloat, as it were, in international settings (p. 238). Weiss and Ford (2011) challenge the responses of the university to "accommodate" transnational students, as they take "rather tokenistic steps" at internationalism as opposed to grounding their approach in "pedagogical initiatives to bring a more global perspective to university curricula" (p. 238). They found that temporary transnationals did not engage politically, and that their link with their home countries strengthened during their absence. Weiss and Ford state:

Their sojourns overseas accords students new agency to mould their own sensibilities and career and life paths, and does appear to erode subnational or ethnic affinities, at least to some extent, although possibly only in the short term (p. 244).

Doctoral Students' Experiences

Two ethnographic studies consider the overall interpersonal experiences of doctoral-level students, including those in medical school. Hudson and O'Regan (1994) found that women students at advanced levels of academia report higher instances of stress than male students. Raddon (2002) adds that women are at greater risk of stress because of the need to balance personal and professional lives. Kurtz-Costes, Andrews Helmke, & Ulku-Steiner (2006) state that faculty interactions play a primary role in student experience. These interactions may benefit students or exacerbate their difficulties concerning their studies and their personal lives. Some female students benefit from professors who have children and can serve as mentors and role models, demonstrating ways to balance family life with career development and advancement. These researchers also found that little research has specifically addressed how students' personal needs are affected by their doctoral studies, particularly women. Since many doctoral students are within marriage and child-bearing ages, further studies about their personal lives are indicated (Kurtz-Costes et al, 2006).

In research concerning international student experiences in America, Rhee (2006) discovered that the relationship between the students' country of origin and the host country affects the experience of the student. In his work with Korean graduate students, Rhee found that U.S. imperial domination of the Asian country throughout history was one facet of oppression

that his research participants experienced while studying in the United States. Even though these “distant geographies” (p. 595) seemed far from their daily lives, his informants found a sort of invisible veil of oppression that covered their lives in the U.S. As women, they also felt like they experienced gendered oppression. Rhee sees “gendered, racialized and nationalized locations” as commonalities among the study participants (p. 595). One could argue at length that, for this research project, the relations between the United States and Mexico, having been those of “oppressor—oppressed,” “colonizer-colonized,” “First World—Third World,” include similar connections to what Rhee found in his research.

Zhao et al., (2005) studied the experiences of undergraduate transnational students in the U.S. While they did not explore the country of origin theme in their quantitative research, they did make notable comparisons between American and transnational students in terms of university experience. Zhao et al. found differences in levels of engagement between first-year international and American students. First-year international students surpassed their American classmates in terms of “level of academic challenge” and “student-faculty interaction” along with “personal and social development” (p. 223). The researchers also found that international students tend to use technology more often than their American counterparts. The authors attribute this to lack of confidence on the part of the first-year students in face-to-face communications with their English-speaking professors. By their senior year, levels of technology use were the same for American and international students. Another noteworthy finding of this study was that, as the proportion of international students increased, both international and American students felt that their campus was less supportive of internationals. The authors suggest that once the percentage of international students grows, they are more likely to engage with peers from their home countries, as opposed to American students.

Robinson-Pant (2009) found that the doctoral-level international students she studied in the UK reflected a traditional approach to international-student study. They indicated that difficulties for them during their studies lay not only in English-language proficiency but in different approaches to research. Many found that ethics was significantly more important in research in the UK, along with the nature and “respectfulness” of the roles of researchers and informants. This researcher also studied their thoughts on returning home; they typically envisioned themselves as “agents of change” once they returned after study abroad.

Kell and Vogl (2008) argue that new methods of describing the experiences of transnational students in higher education are needed. They state: “Many of the theoretical frameworks used are inadequate to account for the complexities that characterize transnational higher education and what international students experience” (p. 21). The authors argue that most research concentrates on neoliberal perspectives such as “global flows” and “market trends.” Kell and Vogl cite Pahl (1988), who states that the “way forward” is the creation of individualized friendships that are “de-institutionalized.” The presence of international students, many of whom desire to become citizens in their host countries, often triggers racist and xenophobic reactions at U.S. universities. Negotiating these spaces can be more difficult when language, culture, and financial issues are taken into account. Pahl argues for “risks that are replaced by reciprocity, collaboration and interconnectedness rather than fragmented isolation” (p. 30).

Critical Theory and Education

The study explored new directions in the application of critical theory (e.g., Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1997; Roberts, 2010; Shor & Freire, 1987) to the lives of doctoral students in a unique border context.

Freire.

Dialogue. According to Freire, one of the challenges faced by Latino students in the U.S. is more than the language learning required to succeed in their courses. It is one of finding voice. Authentic dialogue, to Freire, is the fulcrum on which true learning occurs. In his landmark work on radical liberation through education, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (1970) states that authentic dialogue is reflection and action. “There is no true word that is not the same time a praxis. Thus, to speak a true word is to transform the world” (p. 87).

Numerous scholars (e.g. Giroux, 1997; Kaufmann, 2010; Roberts, 2010; Shor and Freire, 1987; Rozas, 2007; Van Willigen, 2002) have researched Freire’s inquiry into liberation through education--freeing the illiterate masses from oppression--and dialogue. In this study, the informants are part of an exclusive group in their country who are studying for doctoral degrees at an American university. It is Freire’s work on dialogue that best describes the informants’ positionality, at the university and in the context of their daily lives. The theme of oppression may be a lens for further examination of the informants’ lived experiences.

Freire broke dialogue into three sensibilities that are abstract in concept but are, at the same time, praxis. These three concepts are: love, trust, and hope (Freire, 1970). Love, according to Freire, is the core. “Dialogue cannot exist in the absence of a profound love for the world and for people....Love is at the same time the foundation of dialogue and dialogue itself” (Freire, 1970). Of the second quality, he wrote: “Trust is contingent on the evidence that one party provides the others of his true, concrete intentions; it cannot exist if that party’s words do

not coincide with his actions” (Freire, 1970). And of hope, he said, “Hope is rooted in men’s incompleteness, from which they move out in constant search—a search that can be carried out only in communication with others” (Freire, 1970).

To Freire, public education is the method for converting the illiterate masses into persons with social and political consciousness or *conscientizacao* (Freire, 1970; Ozmon & Kraver, 2008). This conscientization entails bringing to the surface the dialogue of the masses as they learn about systems and structures of oppression (Miller & Havner, 2008). Freire was successful in bringing literacy to hundreds of people of the slums of Brazil through adult-education programs, in an approach that Van Willigen (2002) describes as cultural action, “a process directed at changing the relationships between poor people and the power elite.”

As Cavalier (2002) writes, Freire was a proponent of a horizontal relationship between teacher and learner. “He (Freire) talks about it as “a relation of ‘empathy’ between two ‘poles’ who are engaged in a joint search,” as nourished by love, humility, hope, faith, and trust” (p. 264). This is an ethical concern for the Brazilian philosopher, which Cavalier ties to his Roman Catholic liberation theology framework of thought.

Mexican writer and philosopher Octavio Paz, a chronicler of late 20th century Mexican life, also sees dialogue as a key element in the composition of his country’s tenuous political fiber. “Democracy is dialogue, and dialogue paves the way for peace” (Paz, 1985). Paz describes his country as one of a history of democracy and dictatorship run amok. Yet he believes that dialogue among the people who comprise political parties is crucial to its survival. Future research could examine the connections between democracy and dialogue, and the roles each play in the informants’ lives.

Both writers believe that struggle is a part of dialogue, hope a key element of the *lucha* (struggle). In *Pedagogy of Hope*, Freire (1994) writes:

The idea that hope alone will transform the world, and action undertaken in that kind of naivete, is an excellent route to hopelessness, pessimism, and fatalism.

But the attempt to do without hope, in the struggle to improve the world, as if that struggle could be reduced to calculated acts alone, or a purely scientific approach, is a frivolous illusion. To attempt to do without hope, which is based on the need for truth as an ethical quality of the struggle, is tantamount to denying that struggle one of its mainstays” (p. 8).

Banking vs. Problem-Posing. Another significant Freirean concept is that of “banking education” vs. “problem-posing” (Freire, 1970). Freire sees the banking portion of the binary as the scenario where students are seen as “containers,” as “receptacles” to be “filled” by the teacher (p. 72). Mayo (1995) describes this as teacher as “subject” of the learning process while the learner is “object” (p. 365). The student in this scenario has any creative impulse “smothered.” Dialogue is categorically silent between teacher and learner. There is no space for co-teacher, co-learner in this classroom, which dehumanizes the learner, even denying his existence. Through dialogue, the teacher and learner form an emancipatory process: learning as a political act.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit).

In the last 20 years, scholars (e.g. Ladson-Billings, 2003, 1998; Solorzano, 2010; Villalpando, 2004; Yosso, 2005) have developed a theoretical framework through which to view the experiences of People of Color, and Latinos in particular. Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Latino Critical Theory (LatCrit) help scholars analyze any “legally sanctioned education

patterns” that may, in some cases, promote inequality against college students in an academic setting (Villalpando, 2004). Insidious instances of inequality that might limit the performance of People of Color--Latinos in the case of LatCrit--are carefully examined through these lenses. Critical Race Theory and LatCrit can help universities to be more aware of “false notions of racial objectivity” and “equal opportunity in the dominant ideology” in higher-education settings (Villalpando, 2004). One might wonder what the dominant ideology is at a school, such as the site of this study, which is predominantly Latino. This study examined the experiences of Mexican national students in such a setting, where perhaps Mexican-Americans predominate, over not only Anglos but also Mexican and other transnational students. More research is needed to examine the border university where this study took place from CRT and LatCrit perspectives, as perhaps the American university system itself is based on a dominant ideology, under which this university would operate.

Ladson-Billings (1998) examines the historical underpinnings of CRT, which argues against the slow pace of judicial racial reform. She traces race history, reporting that in the past, only two categories of race have existed in the U.S.—Black and White, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Ladson-Billings (2010) reports that, in early census data, people of Mexican descent were considered White. As Yosso argues, citing Ladson-Billings (2000) and Dolores Delgado Bernal (1998, 2002), whose knowledge counts and whose knowledge is discounted? (p. 2005).

Storytelling is another characteristic of CRT. Ladson-Billings (1993) states: “The value of storytelling in qualitative research is that it can be used to demonstrate how the same phenomenon can be told in different and multiple ways depending on the storytellers” (p. 417). The way an anthropologist might attribute the meaning of circumcision, for example, would be

seen differently by a Jew (Ladson-Billings, 1993). Through the lens of critical race theory, the question Ladson-Billings raises is: Which story is true? Whose story is deemed legitimate?

Central to this thesis are stories told by the informants.

(p. 417).

Yosso (2005) utilizes community cultural wealth as a “critical race theory challenge” to “traditional interpretations of cultural capital.” The researcher defines CRT in education in terms of discussions of race and racism and their impacts on educational structures, practices, and discourse (p. 74). Yosso cites Freire (1970) and his work on banking vs. problem-posing education, as protests against the racism she saw in public schools through her research. Yosso traces the roots of cultural capital theory to the work of Bourdieu, who she states believed that cultural capital refers to:

An accumulation of cultural knowledge, skills and abilities possessed and inherited by privileged groups in society. Bourdieu asserts that cultural capital (i.e., education language), social capital (i.e., social networks, connections) and economic capital (i.e., money and other material possessions) can be acquired two ways, from one’s family and/or through formal schooling. The dominant groups within society are able to maintain power because access is limited to acquiring and learning strategies to use these forms of capital for social mobility.

Communities of Color often possess cultural knowledge that is not considered “capital” in the modern school setting. Yosso quotes cultural capital scholars (e.g. Delgado Bernal 1997, 2001; Auerbach, 2001; and Stanton-Salazar, 2001) who identify six types of cultural capital: aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational, and resistant. People of Color bring different measures of these categories into the predominantly Anglo-based school system.

The perspectives of the informants are considered in relation to the foundations of scholarship of the researchers whose work comprises the literature review. The next section is a brief survey of border study from the field of anthropology.

Border Identities and Culture: An Anthropological Perspective

Extensive scholarly research in the social sciences has been conducted about the U.S.-Mexico border and forms a framework on which the “border perspective” of this thesis is sociologically and anthropologically viewed. Heyman (2004) succinctly divides this broad body of scholarship into three groups: works about the border as location (e.g. Alvarez, 1987; Alvarez & Collier, 1994; Chavez, 1992; Fernandez-Kelly, 1983; Greenberg, 1987; Heyman, 1991; Kearney, 1991; Vélez-Ibáñez n.d.); works that are theoretical (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992; Rosaldo, 1988) and works that consider relationships (Behar, 1993; Rouse, 1991). Sociologist Pablo Vila (2003, 2000) has conducted extensive ethnographic research concerning identity on the U.S.-Mexico border. He identifies Anzaldúa (1987) and Rosaldo (1989) as theorists who have written about areas such as hybridity and “border crossing,” and Martinez (1994; 1978), Vélez-Ibáñez (1996), and Bustamante (1988) as empirically driven. I draw primarily on the work of Vila (2003, 2000) in this section.

Vila (2003) makes four comprehensive arguments about the concept of identity in academic “border studies” at this juncture. His writing is based on almost 10 years of data gathering and analysis of ethnographic study, centered on the Juárez-El Paso border. While paying due homage to forebears such as Anzaldúa, Vila renders four criticisms of representations of identity in U.S. border studies:

- 1) Confusion of the American side of the border with the border itself, meaning that “many Mexican nationals do not feel represented by the border as it is portrayed by current, mainstream, U.S.-based border studies and theory;”
- 2) Failure to pursue the possibility that “fragmentation of experience can lead to reinforcement of borders instead of an invitation to cross them;”
- 3) The tendency to “characterize those living on borders, the hybrids, as having a kind of privileged ontological status in terms of gender, class, ethnicity, nationality, etc;”
- 4) The tendency to “confuse the sharing of a culture with the sharing of an identity” (pp. 609-611).

“Anthropologists have paid greater attention to how people experience transnationalism, but we remain largely at the level of amazement that people can bridge and relocalize identities in two nations” (Gupta & Ferguson, 1992, as quoted by Heyman, 1994, p. 57).

Vila (2000) argues that, on the Mexican side of the border, people see their identity based on regionalism (Juarensen, fronterizo, norteno) as opposed to ethnicity (Mexican, Mexican American, American). He suggests that the “crossing borders” metaphor does not depict the complexity of the border picture. Vila (1999) states:

Any border is an area where limits and differences are established, but it is also a place where different elements come together. Commercial, personal and cultural exchanges are continually taking place in border areas, where capital, people and culture are in constant movement, allowing the social actors to anchor their identities in the new entities which this process creates (p. 85).

Vila posits that the idea “all poverty is Mexican” permeates the American side of the border (2000, p. 19). While this narrative is one of the main thrusts of his comprehensive 2000 border

work, *Crossing Borders, Reinforcing Borders*, Vila's findings might today, 11 years later, be overshadowed by the violence occurring in the city. Once known as the "city of vice" in the country, Vila states, the decaying if not fallen rule of law in the city gives it a much darker picture. El Paso, in stark contrast, was rated one of the safest cities with more than 500,000 people in the United States, the *El Paso Times* reports (Kolenc, 2010). By Dec. 2010, El Paso had recorded only four murders. Ciudad Juárez, by that time, had 2,640 reported murders. Violence aside, Vila found the poverty/Mexican binary throughout his border research. This thesis study considers Vila's poverty border trope, along with his concepts of border culture, which people crisscross on a daily basis, yet remain firmly entrenched in their worldviews.

When one considers work on border identity, the name Anzaldúa cannot be overlooked. Her work, *Borderlands: La Frontera* (1997) brought the concept of hybridity into the dialogue about Chicanos living on the border (Vila, 2003). Bornstein-Gomez (2010) posits that the book "opened up a significant theoretical perspective that enriched the development of a new social, cultural, and political organization in the construction of a more just society" (p. 46). The work of Anzaldúa is the epicenter of the term hybridity in discussion of border identity. According to Vila (2003), Anzaldúa defines herself a border woman, to which Vila states:

This definition implies a theory about a *mestizo* identity and a particular border culture. Both of them are represented through the metaphor of the third country. For Anzaldúa, the borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural border. Since some U.S. citizens in the Southwest consider the former habitants of the region (Aztec, Mexican braceros) transgressors, aliens, the place became itself a *travesía*, a crossing (p. 608).

Vila argues that the hybridity actor—the border crosser—is a character of one homogenous identity, labeled as border crosser. In his extensive ethnographic research of this border area, Vila (2003, 2000) interviews Mexican nationals, Anglos, Mexican Americans, and African Americans about their perceptions of border identity between El Paso and Ciudad Juárez. Thus, he does not rely on any phenotype to predominate as a prototypical border identity. Anzaldúa champions the place of the new mestiza who has survived hegemonic domination by the ruling class. As Bornstein-Gomez states: “Anzaldúa offers a symbolic and political response to practices and thoughts of domination that are central to a fundamental understanding of Chicana/o culture and literature and the decolonization of knowledge” (p. 46). Vila and Anzaldúa both offer their own scholarly interpretations to border identity.

The concept of Funds of Knowledge is another key area in the study of border identity. Vélez-Ibáñez and Greenberg (1992) define funds of knowledge as the “strategic and cultural resources that households contain.” They trace the underpinnings of this theory to the work of Wolf (1996) on the dimensions of household economy (Vélez-Ibáñez & Greenberg, 1992). Wolf posited that various funds existed in households: “caloric funds, funds of rent, replacement funds, ceremonial funds, social funds” (p. 49). Embedded in these is information that each household needs to maintain its well-being. It was Wolf’s premise that gaining a deeper understanding of these funds would uncover issues of “strategic importance to households,” which leads to more profound questioning as to where the funds were historically formed, their transformability between contexts, and how they are transmitted and distributed (Vélez-Ibáñez & Greenberg, 1992). Understanding a household’s economic and sociopolitical context includes knowledge family members’ origins and development and the labor history of families, which González, Moll, Tenery, Rivera, Rendon, Gonzales and Amanti (1995) argue, constitute some of

the “accumulated funds of knowledge of the households” (p. 91). More succinctly, funds of knowledge, González and Moll (2002) state, “is based on a simple premise. That premise is that people are competent and have knowledge; their life experiences have given them that knowledge” (p. 625). In terms of education, this means that students and their families bring with them bodies of knowledge from their households that can be part of the curriculum they are learning. In much of González’ work, teachers serve as ethnographers of their students’ households. In that manner, they, too, contribute to the funds of knowledge of a classroom.

In terms of identity, one can see that the outcomes of funds of knowledge theory in ethnography are inclusive of the stories of individual students (in terms of education research) and their family members, which clearly portray the identities of subject participants in multifarious ways. In their work in school communities in the Tucson, Arizona, border area, González et al., (1995) found that:

Funds of knowledge are abundant and diverse; they may include information about...farming and animal husbandry, associated with rural households’ rural origins, or knowledge about construction and building, related to urban occupations; or knowledge about many other matters, such as trade, business, and finance on both sides of the border (p. 92).

Thus, funds of knowledge promulgates a much deeper understanding of the lives of those studied using this well-developed and practiced research approach.

Funds of knowledge may also be utilized with adult learners (Oughton, 2010). In her work with adults in a Chinese borough of a United Kingdom city, Oughton had prepared a lesson for her students on the history of China in the 1940s. As the lecture ended, several students began reminiscing about their experiences during this time, some of which included internment

in Japanese prison of war campus. Oughton realized that her scholarly presentation lacked the power of her students' personal narratives, their use of funds of knowledge, which she had overlooked in preparing her lesson (Oughton, 2010). Funds of knowledge for adults are considered concerning the informants of this study, whose life experiences are rich in depth and breadth.

Cultures and “*Choque Cultural*”

Finally, the area of culture shock or “*choque cultural*” is central to my research study. Xia (2009) and Church (1982) discuss the seminal work of Oberg (1960, as cited in Church, 1982, and Xia, 2009), who founded the term “culture shock.” Oberg defined culture shock as: an “occupational disease” suffered by people who are suddenly introduced to a culture that is “very different” from their own. It is the anxiety felt by these persons that is more popularly known as culture shock (Oberg, as cited in Church, 1982). Xia (2009) quotes Oberg as including the sight, smell, sound, value, tradition, custom, behavior, and ways of thinking as cultural qualities that may trigger the psychological response of anxiety among people experiencing culture shock. This is “especially true” when people are away from home and immersed into a new environment (Xia, 2009).

There are four linear stages of culture shock, according to Xia (2009):

Honeymoon: The initial stage is called the “honeymoon,” when people enjoy the newness of their surroundings, reveling in the fact that few experiences are like they are at home.

Emerging discomfort: The second stage emerges after several weeks and includes episodes of problems or negative experiences. This stage produces stress and even depression.

Adjustment: The penultimate stage is adjustment, when people learn to be more flexible in the face of change.

Mastery: This is the final stage, when people are accustomed to the cultural changes they are living in. Xia reports that this stage often is ultimately realized after almost two years of living in the new culture (p. 98).

Time

Time is multi-dimensional, multi-layered in the U.S.-Mexico border experience. Anthropologists Ferraro and Andreatta (2010) discuss Hall's extensive work with culture and time. Hall divided cultures in regard to time as monochronic and polychronic. People from monochronic cultures, such as the United States, view time linearly, as something to be precisely measured. In contrast, people from polychronic cultures value social relationships over punctuality. Hall emphasized that people in polychronic cultures are not "lazy" but found no value in upholding "time for time's sake." People living in monochronic environments may be seen as rushing from appointment to appointment, while those in polychronic settings might prefer to share a meal and a lengthy visit before conducting any business, if at all.

Likewise, Avnet and Sellier (2011) quote the work by Lauer (1981) and Levine (1997) on time by breaking it into two similar divisions. Lauer and Levine contextualize time as "clock time" and "event time." When people divide time into units and let the clock dictate when tasks begin and end, they are following "clock time." When people let tasks begin and end without

paying attention to a clock, they are living in “event time.” The researchers continue by saying that Western societies are characterized by a strict observance of “clock time,” days often organized by 30-minute appointments logged into cell phones.

Summary

The literature review yielded insight into transnationalism, border identities and culture, time, and “*choque cultural*” or culture shock. While extensive research has been conducted on K-12 populations in regard to insider/outsider status, less research exists on this phenomenon in higher education. The context of this study—the U.S.-Mexico border between Ciudad Juárez and El Paso—brings with it new meanings to the existing base of literature concerning binational populations, especially in higher education.

Chapter 3: Methodology

It is mid-July, middle of the day, on the four-lane Santa Fe Bridge between Ciudad Juárez and El Paso. The siren light of summer shines unabatedly on the hardtops of the cars lined up to enter the United States. They are almost parked, moving a foot or two forward as if on cue, every few minutes. The guy ahead of you breathes the exhaust of the car ahead of him, and you do the same behind him, everyone exhaling the same blend. If you are lucky enough to have air conditioning, the scene plays out through auto glass.

Marco is among those on the bridge, his car one of thousands that will pass this way today. One hand rests on the top of the steering wheel, the other steadies some papers stapled together, on the passenger's seat. He glances down to focus on the text, then looks up quickly to check the line ahead of him. He inches forward, encounters a word he does not know, brakes suddenly to avoid a collision. The afternoon sun heats the asphalt; it is so hot outside. It is already over 100 degrees; the exhaust pushes up the ambient temperature.

He looks out the window, checks his rear view mirror. Then he glances at the page, looks up carefully, the cycle beginning again. Perhaps two hours later, he crosses through U.S. customs and drives another ten minutes to the university campus. He parks the car after searching neighboring streets for a space, and stuffs the papers he was reading into his backpack. He chides himself for waiting so long to re-read the information, an article on critical theory that he will discuss in his upcoming class. He pauses...thinking...reading on the bridge. He shakes his head, puts his keys in his pocket, and starts up the hill.

Introduction

The primary research question this study examines is: “How do two transnational doctoral students from Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, describe the experience of studying at an advanced level in a research-intensive U.S. university, and what does the transnational student experience mean to them?” A secondary theme deals with the diverse ways in which the context of the unique transnational border setting of this study impacts the informants’ lived experiences. These transnational stories are told in the voices of two informants, who are both Mexican national doctoral students at a border university. The following section provides the key elements of the methodological design of the study, which is fully qualitative.

The Ethnographic Approach

Ethnography is the methodology of this thesis. Angrosino (2007) reports that the term “ethnography” derives from a Greek word that means “the description of a people and its way of life.” He adds that contemporary ethnography is both a method of research and the account that results from that research. Chase (2005) defines narrative ethnography as a hybrid of the ethnographic and life history methods. It is a combination of informants’ and author’s stories, which Chase calls “intersubjectivity,” blended into a rich narrative that seeks a deeper understanding of the experiences of the informants. In this study, section headings lead the reader through a series of vignettes that are fictional accounts based on data collected in interviews.

Qualitative Paradigm

Qualitative methodology, and the interpretive paradigm of constructivism, is the structure utilized for this research design. Qualitative research, according to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), cross cuts various fields of inquiry and what the authors consider “historical moments.” These moments are: traditional (1900-1950); modernist (1950-1970); blurred genres (1970-1986); crisis of representation (1986-1990); postmodern (1990-1995); postexperimental inquiry (1995-2000); methodologically contested present (2000-2004); and fractured future (2005-present). Any definition of qualitative research falls into one of these categories. However, Denzin and Lincoln (2005) provide the following as a basic definition:

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible.

These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of

representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self...qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms the meanings people bring to them. (p. 3)

This study presents the meanings that the informants bring to their lived realities during a 10-month research period. Their stories are similar to those of any doctoral student, yet framed in a world of second-language learning, at the doctoral level, in a student body with over 20,000 students, in a shockingly violent U.S.-Mexico border setting. As the researcher, I found their stories compelling, heart-wrenching, and triumphant in the face of multiple adversities that challenge and make us all participants in their stories, as we watch the respondents draw deeply into the reserves of the human spirit. After the ethics section, methods of data collection, which allow us into the worlds of the respondents, will be discussed.

Ethics

Permission was sought and granted by the Institutional Review Board at the university to conduct this study. (See Appendix A.) A bilingual (Spanish-English) informed consent form was provided. (See Appendix B.) Pseudonyms were used to protect the informants' identities. One informant chose the pseudonym. All data were kept on USB drives that I protected. All hard copy translations were kept under lock and key. Through member checks, the informants knew about the progress of the research and added their own comments to the work. The informants were not coerced into participating in the study and willingly took part in it.

Entry and Access

Marshall and Rossman (2011) elucidate the entry and access process as one of building true relationships with the informants, not contrived or inauthentic in any way. They state: “The energy that comes from a researcher’s high level of personal interest (called bias in traditional research) is infectious and quite useful for gaining access” (p. 114).

Access and entry with the informants in this study was achieved through personal relationships. As a participant observer, I served as their tutor in Fall 2009, and taught an independent studies course for the two informants and two other doctoral students during Spring 2010. I also presented beginning stages of this research proposal with Carolina at a conference in Spring 2010. Bogdan and Biklen’s (1992) “overt approach” to gaining entry and access was used.

Sampling

One of the distinguishing characteristics of qualitative research is the use of small sample sizes; a case study often focuses examination on one informant or one unit of analysis (Patton, 2002). Patton says that the “logic and power of purposeful sampling” emanate from the emphasis on “in-depth understanding.” Informants are chosen based in part on a sense of the information-rich data they could provide. That is the case in my thesis study. I purposefully chose two informants among a wider pool of possible respondents. I based that choice on the information-rich accounts I felt they would provide. During my time as participant observer, I was engaged with a pool of possible informants as an instructor in the independent study course. As per my purview as a qualitative researcher, I chose two from the wider group because they were the most articulate, because they had both crossed the border every day to study at the university,

because one had moved to the U.S. to avoid both that trek and, later, the violence, and because of what I knew about their stories through anecdotal accounts. The two informants were male and female. According to Patton: “Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus the term ‘purposeful sampling’” (p. 46).

Creswell (2009) states that the “idea behind qualitative research” is to “purposefully select participants or sites that will help the researcher understand the problem and the research question” (p. 178). This thesis study is thus fully qualitative; two informants were selected as a purposeful sample to provide their personal studies of transnational doctoral students’ experiences in higher education at a university on the U.S.-Mexico border.

Data Collection Procedures

Carolina was interviewed twice, in sessions that lasted 60 to 90 minutes. Marco was interviewed three times, one session of two hours and two sessions of 30 minutes. A focus group interview was held that was 90 minutes in duration. Participant observation occurred during a 10-week period, as I taught their independent studies course. I also attended a small group meeting on a research project they were conducting for a professor. Questions were asked by e-mail throughout the participant observation phase, over the period of the Spring 2010 semester.

Data Collection Instruments

A preliminary protocol was prepared for each interview. Broadly, they cover interpretation of the currently violent context of Ciudad Juárez, experiences of time both in Mexico and in the United States, changes in identity based on geographic shifts, ESL language

issues, and educational experiences in Juárez from childhood through college. I also extrapolated a variety of spontaneous and follow-up questions from the interviews. Samples of questions may be found in Appendix C.

Data Analysis

Throughout the months of data gathering, beginning in June 2010 and ending with final member checks in May, 2011, I was continually engaged in re-reading and reflecting upon the data, as the phase of data analysis took place. The material was read both in Spanish and in English, reflected upon and reviewed between June, 2010, and April, 2011. I spent hours reviewing interviews, transcripts, and e-mail responses to better understand the informants' lived experiences. I made a collection of notes, reflections, thoughts, and follow-up questions in a research log. I reviewed, studied, developed new questions, and pondered themes from this log. Translations were continually reviewed and revisited to look for new themes and any changes in responses and interpretation that occurred over time.

Throughout comprehensive review, two themes began to emerge from the data: first, the informants' descriptions of the experience of 'culture shock', specifically, interactions with the U.S. graduate school environment as viewed through the following categories: interpersonal relationships; extensive use of technology in the educational setting; funds of knowledge; outsider/insider perspectives; personal pressure; language; gender; and time. The second key theme deals with the diverse ways in which the context of the unique transnational border setting of this study impacts the informants' realities.

Credibility

Marshall and Rossman (2011) cite Lincoln and Guba's 1985 work, *Naturalistic Inquiry*, as groundbreaking in the area of ensuring credibility in qualitative research. They state that the terms "credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability" must be fully met to ensure academic rigor in qualitative research. Strategies for establishing credibility, Lincoln and Guba state in Marshall and Rossman, include prolonged engagement (spending a long time in the research setting); member checking (sharing data and themes with the participants); triangulation (using a variety of means to collect data) and peer debriefing (sharing emerging findings with critical colleagues to check analyses). (See Marshall & Rossman, pp. 39-44.)

In this thesis research project, I have utilized member checking and triangulation to ensure trustworthiness. Creswell (2009) defines member checks as taking generated themes of findings back to the informants for their comments on accuracy. This occurred as themes were generated and at the end of the writing process. Follow up interviewing is another type of member check, which I utilized throughout the course of the research. Triangulation was another key element in my study. Triangulation is defined as the use of different data sources to build justification for themes (Creswell, 2009). It is one way in which qualitative researchers define validity. Triangulation in this study was ensured primarily through focus group interviews, participant observation, and questions asked over e-mail. Thick description was also utilized as a means of checking validity (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). According to Creswell (2009), thick description "transports the reader to the setting" and adds an element of "shared experiences" to the work. It is often used with small sample sizes to add the depth that they require. I used this technique to more fully depict both the university and border contexts.

The Researcher's Role

My role in this study was built on a strong relationship of trust with the informants. I conducted interviews, (including follow ups), reflected on findings and continually reviewed the literature. I realized that, as a qualitative researcher acquainted with the informants, I brought certain biases into the project. Our beginning academically based relationships turned into friendships. I also brought my own beliefs and experiences into the research setting. Credibility and trustworthiness were assured by triangulation and member checks, which address these concerns.

In qualitative research, the researcher is the primary data collection instrument. As a former journalist, I brought with me to this project the love of story that fueled my ten-year-career as a newspaper and magazine journalist. I believe that every person has a story. To immerse oneself in another's experiences is to gaze outward from one's own self, beyond our personal boundaries, into another's life perspectives.

Translation.

Interviews for this study were conducted primarily in Spanish with occasional use of English. Spanish was chosen as the interview language to ensure that the informants could completely express their experiences in the language in which they felt most comfortable. Interview texts were transcribed from the audio recording into Spanish. These hard-copy transcriptions were then translated into English by a professional translator. (See Appendix D)

Translation issues are rarely studied in the qualitative framework, according to Wong and Poon (2010). Often, issues of social position and worldview are not considered as key aspects in selecting a translator and in interpreting translated text (Esposito, 2001; Wong & Poon, 2010). Issues of identity and culture underlie the translation process. According to Wong and Poon

(2010): “The translator holds an important position: The researcher gains access to the ideas and experiences of the participants through the translator, and it is through the translator that the research participants’ voices are heard” (p. 153). The typical framework for Spanish-English translation has been based on formal Spanish (Esposito, 2001). However, health researchers have found that the use of local dialects of Spanish is key to achieving the most efficacious translation. For this research study, a native Spanish speaker with higher education in the United States served as translator, a person fluent in the academic Spanish spoken by the informants.

Summary

In this research study, data were collected primarily through interviews, and also through participant observation and questionnaires sent via e-mail. Interviews were conducted primarily in Spanish, transcribed into Spanish, then translated into English by a professional translator. The IRB included use of a translator. Interviews were coded by theme. For a ten-month period, I spent hours reviewing field notes, questionnaire responses, and interview transcripts and developing analysis of the data. I also continued reviewing the literature. Final themes began emerging, and I continuously worked with interview transcripts to begin writing the project.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

It is 7 p.m. on a Tuesday. I decide to conclude my Independent Study class—Academic English for ESL Students—early, because the informants and their two other classmates have a project they must complete by the end of the evening. Which, in this case, means 9 p.m. I try to help them in as many ways as I can as their instructor and their compañera (friend). It is a joint assignment, and they divide it into parts like sandlot football players, everyone drawing their running routes in the dirt. Carolina has the introduction and conclusion, Marco has research point one, and the two other students have points two and three.

Carolina waits impatiently for the other sections; she reviews an intricate graph they have compiled for the assignment. I marvel at their technological skills, thinking, I really need to take a computer class. It is now 8:30, and their window of time is dwindling. Everyone sends his part to Carolina, who sure-handedly cuts and pastes the pieces into one paper. Someone notices that she's forgotten the graph, so she re-opens the document and adds it at the proper place. At 8:50 p.m., they send the project and relax, fist-bumping, before stepping out into the night for home.

Introduction

Chapter Four begins with an introduction to the informants, whose stories are at the heart of this research. The next portion of the chapter discusses findings from the data; quotes from the informants are interwoven in the text. Data appear in Spanish in the left-hand column, translated into English in the right column. This method was utilized to bring the informants' voices to the forefront of the data presentation. Multiple themes are considered that have emerged from the data, followed by a conclusion. These informants welcomed me into their lives, and each one's story is framed not only by country and culture but by who they are as individuals. Border crossers, doctoral scholars, each bring new insights into the study of the lives of transnational doctoral students in a U.S. higher education setting.

The primary research question this study examines is “How do two transnational doctoral students from Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, experience studying at an advanced level at a research-intensive U.S. university, and what does the transnational student experience mean to them?” This question—and many others—began germinating for me over two years ago. Not long after,

I conducted my first one-on-one interview. Having worked as a journalist for 10 years before turning to education, I felt that I could interview anyone, any time, to draw the pithy comments I needed for a story. But I was as nervous as a cub reporter the first interview I conducted for my thesis. Everything went smoothly, and reading the translation brought new questions to mind. Meanwhile, the situation in their hometown, war-torn Ciudad Juárez, grew deadlier by the day. I began to worry about them after class at night, holding my breath one night when it was announced that two university students from Juárez had been murdered after returning home from a class. Days passed. The ideas about interview questions kept turning in my mind. The significance of the border context was clear to me, but how to make the intricate connections that frame their stories within and outside of boundary lines?

Throughout 10 months of gathering data, I constantly read and re-read the transcripts, field notes, and documents. Two primary themes emerged as key themes of analysis: the informants' descriptions of the experience of 'culture shock', specifically, interactions within the U.S. graduate school environment as viewed through the following categories: interpersonal relationships; extensive use of technology in the educational setting; funds of knowledge; outsider/insider perspectives; personal and financial pressures; language; gender; and time. This description of culture shock was non-linear and multifaceted, which is in stark contrast to Oberg's (1960) work. A secondary theme that emerged from the data deals with the diverse ways in which the context of the unique border setting of this study impacts the informants' experiences as transnational doctoral students enrolled in a public university.

The following section provides an introduction to the informants, followed by a discussion of their experiences with culture shock. A secondary theme follows, dealing with the

diverse ways in which the context of the unique transnational border setting of this study impacts the informants' lived experiences.

The Informants' Educational Backgrounds

Marco.

Marco is 28 years old. He lives in Ciudad Juárez. He was single when the study began, his first semester of classes. He married the next semester, and his wife is an attorney. His educational background includes attendance in both private and public schools and universities in Ciudad Juárez. His academic passion is mathematics, a love that developed for him in middle school. He then attended a private academy that he likened to a military school; the dress code featured pressed pleats and shined shoes. He began to excel at math through a teacher who gave him extra assignments. Soon, he became known as "the mathematician," recognition that he enjoyed and worked hard to maintain. He even participated in Mexico's "Math Olympics." A portion of his motivation for studying for a doctorate came from his mother, who attended university but was unable to finish. During his master's program, he became aware that mathematics pedagogy in Mexican schools was antiquated; some calculus textbooks were 50 years old. He grew interested in pursuing an advanced specialization in the teaching of math. He then applied for the program at this U.S. border university with the help of two friends, including the other informant of this study. Carolina had searched for doctoral programs in mathematics education in Mexico that were close to Ciudad Juárez but none were found. When she discovered the fledgling program at this university, she informed Marco, who decided to apply. Both informants went through the complicated processes of securing student visas, finding employment as graduate assistants, and fully completing entrance exams and interviews to enter

the doctoral program. Marco's goals include completing his program and becoming a college professor in the United States or possibly in Europe.

Carolina.

Carolina is 30 years old. She, too, excelled at math at an early age, prompted by her father, who taught her to “find the ‘x’” and that it signified more than “*por*” or, multiplication. She made excellent grades all through her school years, though she doesn't remember studying very hard. She took extra courses in high school and learned computer programming. She also studied mechanical electronics. She loved calculus but flunked business administration. She has outstanding leadership qualities and, as the oldest of six children, was often called upon to assume responsibility for her siblings. She readily accepts this role, and now has two younger sisters, both also studying in higher education, living with her in El Paso. After completion of her master's degree in engineering—the only person in her extended family to receive a master's degree—she taught that subject at the university in Juárez before her doctoral studies began. She is married to an engineer who commuted to Juárez during their first year in El Paso. He is about to begin study for a master's degree in engineering at this border university. Carolina is the mother of three children: a 2-year-old daughter and two pre-teenage sons. A significant benefit of studying in the U.S., from her perspective, is exposing her children to American culture and to facilitate their English skills at formative ages. It is primarily for her children's sake that she is undergoing the travails and struggles of her life in its turbulent context. Carolina's professional goal is to finish her degree and become a university professor in the United States.

In 2009, the informants began their academic careers in the university as provisionally accepted doctoral students. This status required that they take six master's level courses in one year and, upon successful completion, be reviewed and officially accepted into the doctoral

program. In their first semester, they were immediately placed in a master's level Scholarly Writing class, which included production of a major research project and an oral presentation. The course also utilized the university's Blackboard online component, where students turn in assignments electronically, and receive feedback from the instructor and other classmates in the same manner. This particular course also met in person once per week.

As a graduate student, I was their tutor for this course, assigned to work with them for one hour per week. We met at the library, and I read their assignments for grammar and content. Between my lapsed Spanish and their English, our meetings were often frustrating, and we all tried our best to communicate and focus on their papers. Frequently, we needed more than one hour to discuss all four papers, but their time was limited because of their schedules in Juárez, the bridge crossing, and their evening classes. As I developed a deeper appreciation and understanding of their struggles, I began to think in terms of the initial stages of conceptualization of what their experiences were.

<p>Marco: <i>Pues, yo creo que todos imaginábamos a cierto nivel que las clases serían difíciles. Pero no imaginábamos tanto. Que tanto, o qué tendríamos que leer...el problema de cruce, de la línea. Tampoco pensamos que fuera tan pesado; sí lo es.</i></p>	<p>M: I think we all imagined to a certain level that the classes would be difficult. But we had no idea how much...that there would be so much that we had to read, the problems crossing [the bridge], the lines. None of us imagined how very difficult they [the classes] really are.</p>
<p>Carolina: <i>Para mí, fue un choque. El sistema educativo, la forma de llevar las clases y el uso de la tecnología...no estamos acostumbrados manejar una plataforma de Blackboard para llevar las clases a través de ella.</i></p>	<p>C: For me, it was a shock. The educational system, the way classes were conducted, the use of technology. We weren't used to utilizing a system like Blackboard to take our classes.</p>

Though I did not yet have access to the wealth of data and in-depth information that these intelligent professionals would share with me over the next 10 months, I could see that this experience merited further attention and study. Even though they lived and studied only a few

miles away from home, they were experiencing “the strange in the familiar” (Agnew, 2009). Despite the fact that the campus is located within a few miles of Juárez, they felt far away. From their vantage point, they were experiencing the unfamiliar. As weeks turned into months, through on-going data collection and continual review of themes, the study that had begun as a vague idea took on sharper focus. The next section provides a discussion of new perspectives on culture shock.

New Perspectives on Culture Shock: “*Choque Cultural*”

Before they arrived on campus for the first day of school, the informants faced a multiplicity of adjustment issues simultaneously: finalizing visas that allowed them to study and work, meeting professors, arranging schedules for their graduate assistantships, completing on-line registration, making tuition payments in U.S. dollars, buying books, and learning where to find scarce and remote student parking. Carolina, in particular, faced the pain-staking realities of relocating with her family from Mexico to the United States. That meant packing boxes and making numerous, time-consuming trips through U.S. Customs, during the heat of late summer.

This aligns quite well with what Xia (2009) and Church (1982) quote Oberg (1960) as saying about culture shock, that when people enter a new environment, they must face new cultural issues, which he defines as “content such as sight, smell, sound, value, tradition, custom, behavior, and ways of thinking” (p. 97). Church (1982) quotes Oberg as saying that culture shock is accompanied by an anxiety that is a product of losing all familiar signs and symbols of social interaction (p. 540). This is “especially true” when people are far away from home and immersed into a “new environment” (Xia, 2009, p. 97).

A unique finding of transnational graduate students in this border setting is that the informants were not “far away from home” nor were they “immersed into a new environment.” They had not lost “all familiar signs and symbols...” Undoubtedly they had crossed the border and returned to Ciudad Juárez any number of times in their lives. Carolina even participated in a workshop on the campus in 2004. They were adults making this transition both in long- and short-term ways, through physically relocating from Juárez to El Paso, and also by traversing day to day. Therefore, my research builds on Oberg’s work from the 1960s to contextualize the *choque cultural* concept to the Ciudad Juárez-El Paso border in the 21st century. Xia (2009) cast deeper insight into Oberg’s original work. Oberg’s linear four stages showed a stage-based approach that ranged from the initial “honeymoon” stage to the two-year terminus of the mastery stage. Data for this research, however, show that, in a setting with transnational doctoral students, the processes and outcomes are quite different. The stages described in earlier works on culture shock do not contemplate the unique experiences of highly educated, graduate-level professionals in these times of globalism and high-tech communications. The pressures are so different, it is as if these individuals had moved from one “planet” (Vila, 1999, p. 82) to another.

<p>C: <i>La presión económica en ese momento, aparte de que era aunque sea aquí... “cruzando el charco” como dicen ¿no? Que están Juárez y El Paso pegados. Pues sí era un choque de cultura, muy diferente, El idioma académico en la Universidad... pues el inglés. Entonces pues era eso ¿no? Cambio de casa, cambio de escuela. ¡Los niños cambiaron la escuela! ...y estar aquí sólo porque no tengo familia que vive aquí en El Paso. Entonces, era solucionar nuestros problemas nosotros nada más. Nadie nos podía venir a ayudar ni nada.</i></p>	<p>C: The economic pressure at this time, aside from and even though it was here...crossing the river, “crossing the puddle” as they say, right? That Juárez and El Paso are joined. Well, it was a cultural shock, very different. The academic language of the university, and of course, English. It was this, right? Another house, moving to another school. And the children changing schools! And being here alone because I don’t have any family in El Paso. So then it’s solving our own problems alone; no one could come and help us.</p>
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Carolina's and Marco's lived experiences expand upon what we already know about culture shock. Instead of four "stages" based on Oberg's 1960 research, these data have uncovered eight multifaceted, overlapping unique domains where culture shock was experienced in a contemporary time frame by the informants.

The next section provides further elaboration on the 8-pronged components described by Marco and Carolina.

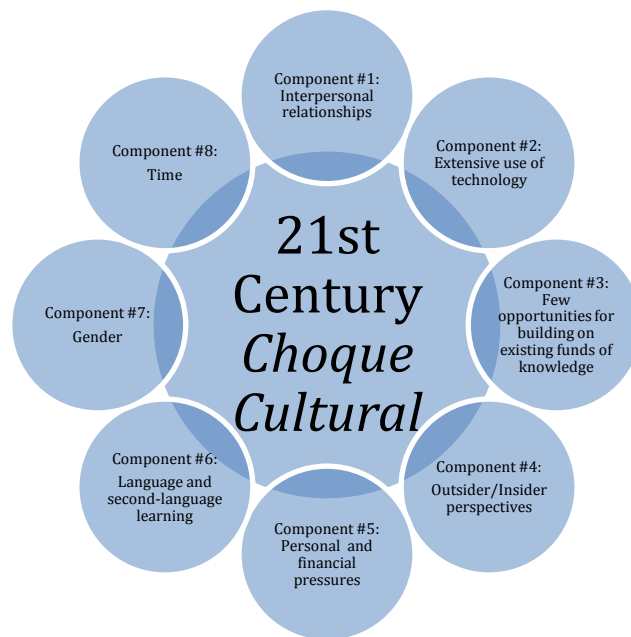


Figure 1: 21st Century "Choque Cultural" Model

Interpersonal relationships.

For Carolina, the relocation meant leaving her job and the home that she and her husband bought one year before, leaving behind her new furniture, the individual bedrooms for each child. All this she exchanged for a three-room apartment that was carved out of a once handsome home that had years ago fallen into disrepair. The apartment featured a kitchen barely big enough for a table and two chairs, a middle room that doubled as the boys' bedroom and her computer

workstation; a second room that served as the master bedroom and TV area. The apartment had no doors except the front and most clearly resembled a hallway.

The dynamics within her family changed as they encountered their first experiences of “*Choque Cultural*.” Money was scarce, since she and her family lived primarily on her salary as a part-time research assistant. Language was a constant reminder that they had moved from one country to another. Adjustments were made by Carolina, and each member of the family, to the new situations.

<p>C: <i>Recuerdo una vez que venía yo saliendo de una clase, iba por Gloria, ¡ah! No usaba el carro para no gastar gasolina. Entonces, venía caminando. Venía, agarraba la carriola, dejaba a la niña en la guardería, dejaba la carriola ahí y me venía a mis clases. Saliendo de mis clases, recuerdo un día que iba caminando y...decía yo: “No puede ser... es que no puede ser que no traiga dinero para comprarme una soda ¡Vivo en tres cuartos! ¡No traigo carro! No traigo dinero para ir a comprar algo...una hamburguesa, no, no puedo llevar a mis hijos...¿realmente...Estamos mejor?...¿Realmente fue un paso adelante? porque yo vivo peor.</i></p>	<p>C: I remember one time that I was coming out of a class, and I was going for Gloria. Ah! I wouldn't use the car in order to not use gasoline. So I would walk. I would get the stroller, leave her at daycare, then leave the stroller and come to class. Coming out of classes, I remember one day I was walking and I would say, “It can't be possible that I don't have enough money to buy a soda. I live in three rooms. I don't have a car, I don't have money to buy anything...a hamburger...I can't take my children anything. Really, are we better? Was it in truth a step forward, because I live worse.</p>
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The reality of the experience had begun to emerge for Carolina and her family. The pressure had begun. Xia (2009) found that “vague and indistinct events” cause more stress in a cross-cultural setting. I argue that the informants experienced these events on a routine basis, as I observed their actions in the 2009-2010 school year. Doctoral-level academic work, assignments to be read and completed in academic English, schedules to be organized. Many of their experiences encompassed vague and indistinct events within the tumbled world of the border environment.

Extensive use of technology in the educational setting.

The use of technology such as Blackboard, an online system that involves a portion of instruction and feedback and conversations and reviews of other students' work, was challenging to them. This is despite the fact that both Carolina and Marco had extensive prior computer experience. They both stated that the use of Blackboard made their first-semester transitions more difficult.

M: <i>En el principio la adaptación de estar checando el Blackboard. A eso no estamos acostumbrados...y cuando corrieron algunas semanas...</i>	M: In the beginning, we were not accustomed to checking Blackboard. And when a few weeks go by...
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It was the informants' reactions to the expectations that graduate students are academically prepared to handle the on-line system that made this component of their educational experience difficult to adjust to. They had to log on to Blackboard on a daily basis for assignments, messages from professors, changes to syllabi, etc. This contributed to the pressures they felt despite the fact that, as engineers and mathematicians in Juárez, they were highly versed in the use of advanced technology from their educational and work experiences. It was simply a transitional component of their lives which, combined with the other seven *choque cultural* components, complicated their doctoral student experience.

Funds of knowledge.

González and Moll (2002) describe funds of knowledge as the premise that “people are competent and have knowledge; their life experiences have given them that knowledge (p. 625).” Therefore, people of all ages bring that knowledge with them into the classroom setting. The findings of this thesis support this theory. Marco stated that he only brought computer training into his educational experiences. Carolina, too, felt that she brought this experience with her.

And, she also had the opportunity to talk with a professor at the university in Ciudad Juárez who had studied for a doctoral degree at a U.S. university. She said that he told her about the rigors of what she and her colleagues from Juárez were undertaking, though she said that she didn't believe him until the first semester ended. In addition, I argue that both informants have numerous funds of knowledge that they have relied on in an unconscious way. Both are highly educated, having earned master's degrees in mathematics (Marco) and engineering (Carolina). Carolina had also taken some master's level Education courses. Both have worked professionally. Both informants successfully completed their provisional year, and their first year's doctoral study has just ended promisingly. Both have strong support systems and were raised in families that valued education. Further research could be conducted to fully examine their funds of knowledge.

Outsider/insider perspectives in the doctoral program.

Research has been conducted on the experiences of K-12 students concerning outsider vs. insider perspectives. The findings of Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco and Todorova (2008) offered a view into the lives of K-12 public school students on the U.S.-Mexico border. Little research has been done, however, on the perspectives of the informants of a study self identifying as outsiders within their circle of community at the doctoral level at the university and in the Ciudad Juárez-El Paso border context.

The findings of this study indicate that the informants felt like outsiders within their own academic setting. They cited this "outsiderness" in their language interactions with fellow transnational peers and their professors within the doctoral program itself. They identified a lack of cultural networking, to which they felt their peers were more acculturated. A unique finding I

discovered was they said that the bridge crossing was a major contributor to the outsider perspective they perceived.

M: <i>Supuestamente nos tratan como iguales pero desde que tenemos que cruzar el puente, ya somos diferentes, estamos ocupando dos horas en algo que no es ni escuela ni trabajo. Ya desde ahí somos diferentes.</i>	M: Supposedly, they treat us like we are equals but since we have to cross the bridge, we are different. We are occupied for two hours in something that is not school or work. And from this vantage point, we are different.
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Studies have been conducted on the “alienation” that international students may experience in host countries (Klomegah, 2006; Seeman, 1959). The self identification of international students can become categorized by feelings of nationalism for the home country (Weiss and Ford, 2011). On the other hand, Rhee (2006) found in his research with Korean nationals studying in U.S. universities, that one respondent felt oppressed in Korea and liberated by her experiences in the United States. The findings of this research indicate that views of nationalism existed for the informants in part because of their transnational status on the Ciudad Juárez-El Paso area. In fact, the informants of this study related feelings of “being different” but not in the same way that international students do, meaning along the lines of nationalism or alignment with co-national ethnic groups (Weiss & Ford, 2011). Rather, the informants felt that they weren’t connected in the same way that their peers—who are predominately Mexican American—are in the academic setting of graduate work or language-wise. This was another unexpected finding of this research.

<p><i>C: Yo creo que ese es un buen punto de una de las preguntas que hiciste...de si nos sentimos de afuera...yo creo que es el algo que nos marca [with emphasis] mucho...las personas que tienen papeles, que son ciudadanos o residentes y han vivido aquí...conocen el mercado y conocen todo y ¿Qué es lo que hacen? No están trabajando aquí como estudiantes. Tienen una licenciatura en educación y ganan cuarenta y cinco mil dólares al año y son estudiantes de la maestría o acaban de terminar la licenciatura. Ellos saben lo que vale su profesión y lo que pueden pedir...y eso es lo que nos diferencia.</i></p> <p><i>Lo que pases es que... yo creo que no es cuestión académica...ellos están inmersos en el sistema...saben como moverse y nosotros somos extranjeros. Entonces, no tenemos las conexiones.</i></p>	<p>C: I think that's a good point concerning one of the questions you asked us about feeling like outsiders. I think this makes us...different [with emphasis]...very much. People who have papers, they're not necessarily citizens or residents, but they live here, they know the market, they know everything around them and what they are doing. They're not working here as students. They have their teacher certification, and they earn \$45,000 per year, as master's degree students, or just finishing their certification. They know...they know the profession, what it's worth and what they can ask for. And this sets us apart.</p> <p>What happens is...I don't think it's a question of academics. They are immersed in the system...they know the ropes and we don't. Therefore, we don't have the connections.</p>
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Further research is needed to expound on these experiences of difference between the Mexican national informants and the predominately Mexican American and Anglo higher education culture into which they entered.

Personal and financial pressures.

Both informants felt personal and financial pressures in their desire to succeed that many doctoral students experience. The findings of Kurtz-Costes et al., (2006) regarding stress as specific to doctoral students were supported by these findings. As a participant observer, I saw the students in highly stressful situations. Marco did not have a car at first that he could insure to drive in the U.S., so he walked over the bridge and to the downtown bus station, where he took a bus to campus. What sounds like a simple procedure often turned into uncertain hours and delays, due to the inefficiency of local public transportation. One night, I observed him arriving at the library, printing out his paper, sitting down in exhaustion—his neck scarf and sweater

askew—while awaiting feedback with three other students (including Carolina) in the hour we had set aside to work before their evening class.

For Marco and Carolina, an additional part of the pressure they described was the uncertainty of whether they would succeed in their provisional courses and be fully accepted into the doctoral program. This was a particularly tenuous position for them, and not one that all of their classmates faced. They had committed themselves to doctoral school work in El Paso, especially Carolina, who moved to the U.S. side of the border two weeks after her studies began.

<p>C: <i>Entonces, mucha presión y aparte que pues nosotros estamos...tenemos la presión de estar condicionado nuestro ingreso al doctorado... es más frustrante que cuando simplemente tienes una clase ya que la pasas o no...pero cuando de eso depende tu ingreso creo que hay mas presión.</i></p>	<p>C: In other words, it's a lot of pressure, and also we had the pressure of our conditional acceptance into the doctoral program. It was frustrating because, when you have a class, you pass it or you don't pass it. But when your acceptance into the program depends on it, I think there is more pressure.</p>
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Both Marco and Carolina experienced financial pressures as well. This appears to have been a greater problem for Carolina, since she had the extra expenses of her family. She won a national scholarship in Mexico that provided funds for tuition and books. She told me that, once they got settled into their first apartment, bills such as electricity and water started rolling in after the rent was paid. In addition, there was a one-month delay in the pay schedule for her work as a graduate assistant. So, it was October 1 before she took received her first month's salary during the fall semester, with expenses mounting since August. In addition, she is a mother with three growing children to feed and clothe, including her two pre-teenage sons. Thus, financial pressures were also part of her *choque cultural* experience and remain that way for her.

Language and second-language learning.

The findings of this study indicate a multifaceted experience with language that left the informants in the position of managing two languages—their native Spanish—and the English they navigated during their highly competitive doctoral-level coursework. On average, doctoral work consists of four hundred pages of reading, book and journal article reviews and at least one major project and presentation. I observed the informants writing single-word translations and extensive notes in Spanish concerning journal articles they were reading, with blocks of text highlighted in different colors. While this is normal for many transnational students, I argue that the informants' cases are unique because of the high level of text that they were negotiating in their second language. Carolina once remarked to me that it took them twice as long as their peers to complete their assignments. While Marco was the most advanced in speaking skills, both he and Carolina struggled with writing. As I observed when teaching their independent study course, they could recite grammar rules and conjugate verbs in English on paper but had problems making the transition into speech production. This became an added pressure for them, and an isolating factor. They told me that they often could not express their ideas about theory or other types of discussions in class because their knowledge exceeded their facility with the language. On occasions where they were allowed to speak Spanish, such as after class with a Spanish-speaking professor, they could fully express themselves, which allowed them increased feelings of self-esteem, because they could finally clearly state their ideas. Because of the border setting in which they live, Spanish also plays a role in their positioning among their peers. It is as if language itself enveloped them, presenting open doors in their ability to converse with many of their classmates, professors, and staff members outside of class but also leaving doors half open

because of the predominance of English as the academic language and their lack of facility with it.

<p>Q: How much of feeling like outsiders is because of language, and how much is because of other aspects of culture that are different?</p> <p>C: <i>Yo creo que es lenguaje sí porque por ejemplo, la mayoría de las personas que viven aquí son de origen latino, ¿no? Setenta por ciento por lo menos habla el Español...celebran la navidad como la celebramos nosotros, celebran el diez y seis de septiembre...tienen más o menos las mismas tradiciones y todo eso. Sin embargo, el idioma académico es inglés...no importa si tenemos tradiciones similares. Porque yo no vine solo a competir en conocimiento. Yo tengo que competir con gente que domina el idioma...</i></p> <p>Q: <i>Pues, ¿vale la pena?</i></p> <p>C: <i>Sí...por eso estamos aquí.</i></p>	<p>C: I think it is language because, for example, most people who live here are of Latino origin, right? Seventy percent, more or less, speak Spanish. They celebrate Christmas the way we celebrate Christmas, they celebrate Independence Day, they have more or less the same traditions. Nevertheless, English is the academic language. It doesn't matter that we have similar traditions. I didn't come here to compete, but it turns out that I have to compete with people who are fluent in the language...</p> <p>Q: Well, is it worthwhile to you?</p> <p>C: Yes, that's why we're here.</p>
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For Marco, language was also an issue that arose during our conversations. He grew more confident in his language skills as time passed during the research timeframe, but he still believed that it created a sense of hesitation regarding classroom participation. He did indicate that his “outsiderness” was decreasing to some extent. (Note: Marco chose to conduct the interview in English.)

Q: In an earlier interview, it was stated that you experienced feelings of not being accepted by your peers in the program because of your English. I just wondered, does it still seem that way?

Marco: Oh yeah, I feel more part of the program. I am...starting relationships with the students in the program, with my classmates, so I feel more confident, more part of the group. But at the same time, I do not speak with that...with my

other students...this pace...I don't know how to say...so I cannot participate so much in the class.

Q: Is that because of your English?

M: [He nods, yes].

Q: When you see your classmates outside of class, do you speak Spanish or English?

M: Oh, only Spanish (laughs).

Q: Are you more comfortable with your English?

M: Yes.

Q: The reading and writing...have they become easier?

M: Yes...I feel like we are practicing but not much. When we are outside of the classroom, we speak Spanish. When I am in my home, I speak Spanish, so it's difficult to improve my skills in English.

Second-language learning is another area of this research that merits further attention.

Gender.

For Carolina, her status as wife and mother created a more complicated situation both at school and at home. As we have seen, both Carolina and Marco were experiencing what researchers have already reported about academic stress situations for doctoral students.

However, as several researchers have found (e.g. Hudson & O'Regan, 1994; Kurtz-Costes et al., 2006; Raddon, 2002) findings from this study confirm that gender may exacerbate and heighten experiences of stress. As Raddon (2002) found, women in doctoral programs may be at greater risk for experiencing high stress because of the balancing act between personal lives and professional development. The data of this study indicate that gender did have an impact on Carolina's lived experience, more so than with Marco. She fulfilled the roles of wife, mother, sister, and daughter as well as full-time doctoral student and part-time employee. According to Kurtz-Costes et al. (2006), little research has been conducted on how female doctoral students' interpersonal needs are affected by their studying at the academy's highest level. Thus, further research is needed in this area, especially in border contexts.

During our second one-on-one interview, Carolina became more animated discussing this portion of her experience than almost any other time during the interviews.

<p><i>C: Es bien curioso porque hoy lo comentaba con una compañera que precisamente anoche no pude dormir muy bien porque estaba pensando en las lecturas y soñando...con las lecturas y con la clase y es una locura porque a veces es mucha la presión ... sí afecta emocionalmente porque... son muchos roles los que tengo que cubrir, ¿sí? No puedo dejar de ser mamá para ser estudiante de tiempo completo... no puedo ser estudiante de tiempo completo porque necesito trabajar...entonces, tengo que tratar de ejercer mis roles lo mejor posible. No puedo... no es una opción quedar mal en uno de ellos...</i></p>	<p>C: That's really funny because today I was talking about it to my friend that just last night, I wasn't able to sleep well because I was thinking about the readings and dreaming about the readings and the class and it's really crazy because sometimes it's a lot of pressure. It affects me emotionally a lot because there are many roles to play, yes, I can't stop being a mother to be a full-time student, I couldn't be a full-time student because I have to work. So then I have to try to play my roles as best I can. I can't, or should I say, it's not an option for me to mess up any one of them.</p>
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Building on Raddon's (1992) work on women feeling more pressure in their doctoral studies because of their personal lives, I extrapolate this to include equally greater experiences of culture shock (Church, 1982; Xia 1994) for Carolina because of her gender and the many roles she played in life. Carolina's stress was acutely noted during the initial stages of doctoral study but continued through the time period of this research.

<p><i>C: Creo yo que los primeros seis meses fueron muy difíciles... fueron muy difíciles. Por ejemplo, cuando nos venimos para acá, nosotros teníamos un año que habíamos comprado una casa, y...pues en comparación en Juárez...mi casa era...pues una casa bonita. No era una casa de interés social o del gobierno chica. Mi casa era una casa grande...mis hijos cada uno tenía...Gloria tenía su propia recamara. Todos los muebles eran nuevos, todo. Yo en Juárez era maestra del departamento de ingeniería [en la universidad de Ciudad Juárez] ...pues, vivíamos bien... vivíamos bien.</i></p>	<p>C: The first six months were very difficult...very difficult. For example, when we moved here, we had owned a house for a year and, in comparison, my house was...well, it was a pretty house. It wasn't a house of social interest or of the government, small. My house was a big house. My kids each had their own [bedrooms]...Gloria had her own bedroom. All of the furniture was new, all of it. I was a teacher in the Engineering Department [at the university in Ciudad Juárez]. So, we lived well...we lived well.</p>
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Carolina's maternal role brought with it some of her first instances of truly committing to life in United States. Whereas, the first six months, they left at "3:15 *en punto*" (on the dot) for the bridge and her family in Juárez, her children's adjustments to their academic and social lives in El Paso created changes for her as a mother.

<p>C: <i>Ya después empezaron los niños así, pues... los niños también estaban muy involucrados aquí, ¿no? "No, pues mis amigos fueron a tal lugar, ¿no? ¡A la pizza! O a un centro comercial...Entonces ellos querían hacer algo aquí en El Paso...entro Miguel el más grande a un equipo de soccer y entrenaba aquí. Ya conocemos todos los parques en la ciudad. Los sábados toda la mañana se nos iba en los juegos de soccer y luego íbamos a comer algo o a comprar la comida.</i></p>	<p>C: And later the children, because they were very involved here. They would say, "My friends went to such and such a place, to pizza or to the mall"...then they wanted to do something here. Then Miguel, the oldest, started playing on a soccer team, and they practiced here. (Now we know all the parks in El Paso.) So, during the morning [on Saturdays] we went to soccer games and then went to eat something or to buy something to eat.</p>
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Time.

According to the findings, I also discovered that the informants' experiences of time as doctoral students on the U.S./Mexico border is worthy of exploration. Avnet and Sellier (2011) quote Lauer (1981) and Levine (1997), who divide time into continuums: clock time and event time. As Avnet and Sellier state, Western societies are typically clock oriented. Carolina's and Marco's experiences uphold this finding, extending it to the juxtaposition between crossing the bridge (Marco's experience in Mexico and the United States) and living a life where multitasking is the norm (Carolina's life in the United States).

As their studies began, time was conceived of in a binary of wait: rush. After Marco obtained a car he could drive over the border, this experience entailed idling in the car up to two hours on the international bridge, then hurrying to school so as to arrive promptly. Several instructors, and I as their tutor, informed them of what seemed to me to be an academe caveat:

that keeping a professor waiting in a doctoral class signaled lack of respect for other students and the professor, lack of interest on the part of the informants, or even indifference, thus reinforcing the power of the initial time binary. Marco's experience continued in this pattern, though the personal stress he felt lessened eventually, as he grew more accustomed to the time spent in transit.

June 2010: A conversation I had with Marco at the university after a five-hour Saturday class:

<p><i>Q: Para tí, ¿cómo describes la experiencia de cruzar cada día?</i></p> <p><i>Marco: Para empezar, es muy desgastante...Por ejemplo, ya te comenté que fueron dos horas y media [hoy]...¡imagínate! por ser sábado, por ser fin de semana. Entonces, para empezar, es muy desgastante y ahorita, en tiempo de calor, aún más.</i></p>	<p>Q: For you, how would you describe the experience of crossing every day?</p> <p>M: Well, to begin with, it is very tiring. For example, I have already commented that it was two and a half hours...just imagine! Because it was Saturday, because it was the weekend. So to begin with, it is very tiring and now, in the season of heat, it is even worse.</p>
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April 2011: Our final conversation:

Q: Has that [crossing on the bridge] changed at all for you?

M: This will always be frustrating, but I think we manage better than before. We are now adjusted to this issue of crossing the bridge...so we feel more adjusted...more...adapted to this.

Carolina's experience of time began in the same way, yet changed after only two weeks, when her family moved to El Paso. For Carolina, time was conceived of as regimented once she moved to the U.S., as the clock time vs. event time research bears out.

A typical day in Carolina's life in the U.S. is as follows:

<p><i>C: Me levantó a las 6. Mi esposo lleva a mis hijos a la escuela, los deja a las 7 de la mañana. Yo me quedó con Gloria. Termino de peinarla, de alistarla, salimos a las 7:30... y dejo a mi hermana en la escuela [university]. Gloria tiene que estar antes de las 8:30 en el day care. Yo entro a trabajar a las 8:30 todos los días, de 8:30 a 1:30, pero casi siempre salgo como a las 2:15. A esa hora, salgo corriendo por Gloria porque nada mas tengo seis horas de day care. Entonces, la recojo, como a las 2:30 y llego a la casa. Tengo como media hora-cuarenta minutos para hacer algo de comer rápido. Los niños salen a las 3:15 y bueno voy por ellos. Vengo llegando a la casa otra vez como a las 4:00 y como algo. Si necesito imprimir algo, algún pendiente de la escuela lo hago. Le doy a comer a la niña y a las 5:00 me tengo que regresar a la escuela todos los días de 5:30 a 8:20. A veces nos quedamos aquí después de escuela y hasta las...hasta que terminemos o en la casa hasta la 1:00.</i></p>	<p>C: I get up at 6. My husband takes my sons to school, and leaves them off at 7 a.m. I stay home with Gloria. I finish combing her hair and getting her ready at 7:30. Then I leave my sister off at school [university]. Gloria has to be at daycare before 8:30. I go to work at 8:30 every day of the week, from 8:30 until 1:30, but I almost always leave at about 2:15. At this time, I hurry to get Gloria because we only have six hours of daycare. So, I pick her up at about 2:30 and then we return home. I have about 30 to 45 minutes to make something to eat, very quickly. The boys leave school at 3:15, and I go pick them up. I arrive back at home at 4, and I eat something. If I need to print a paper or have any work pending for school, I do it then. I feed my daughter and at 5:00, I have to return to school every day from 5:30 to 8:20. Sometimes we come back and stay here after school until...until we finish with our work, sometimes about 1:00 a.m.</p>
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These data expand the work done by previous researchers on clock and event time since it takes place on the bi-national, bicultural U.S. Mexico border.

It is important to note, however, that, at least for Carolina, daily life was also busy in Juárez before her doctoral studies began. She rose at 5:30 a.m. She took was taking master's classes and taught two courses at the university in Juárez. She also had responsibilities in her family's food business—a stand where they sell *gorditas* (handmade corn pockets like pitas, stuffed with ground beef, lettuce, tomatoes, and cheese). She not only prepared the food each day, she also cleaned up after the stand closed and recorded the daily accounting. In addition, she shopped for groceries (trekking all over the city, she told me, to find the best prices). She also had the duties of her three children, picking them up at school and running errands while also keeping the home operating smoothly. After she began her studies in the U.S., Carolina found

that time was a still a pressure, but it was compounded by the coterminous forces of *choque cultural*. For Marco, time was much simpler before his university studies began in the U.S. He had already completed his master's degree. He worked in industry from 6:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday; a single man then, the rest of his time was free. Thus, future research may examine time and gender roles in the transnational doctoral-level student experience.

Both informants experienced change in their experiences of time upon their entrance into the university in the U.S. In combination with other culture shock factors, time did play a significant role in their transnational student experience. According to Carolina, time became her chief pressure beginning in the first semester, surpassing even language. Clearly, additional research is needed to more clearly examine the complex time experience.

New Perspectives on Border Identity: Experiences of Doctoral Level Professionals

This study was conducted in unique times, in a context and setting that has impacted the informants' lives in profound ways. Border identity is a complex topic that has been addressed by scholars in many fields including education, anthropology, political science, communications, and humanities (e.g. Anzaldúa, 1997; Bustamante, 2002; Campbell, 2005; Heyman, 1994; Mendéz, 2010; Vila, 1999, 2000, 2003). Vila posits that there is no specific border crosser, no one central concept, for instance, Anzaldúa's *mestizaje*, who characterizes inhabitants of the Ciudad Juárez-El Paso border. He also states that sharing culture is not sharing identity (Vila, 2000) a salient point when one considers the findings of this study.

From the perspectives of the informants of this research, border identity is also complex, and a secondary question that this research considers. On one level, the sharing of culture between the United States and Mexico—between Ciudad Juárez and El Paso—is clearly evident

in areas such as language, music, food, and clothing styles. But Vila makes an excellent point that sharing of culture is not sharing of identity. These data confirm this finding.

<p>M: <i>Y cuando ya me encuentro de este lado de los Estados Unidos, aquí en El Paso, efectivamente las culturas a pesar de que estamos juntos, Juárez y El Paso, son muy diferentes las formas de pensar y de ver el mundo. Aquí son muy diferentes desde de que cruzas en tu carro o andas...para empezar con más seguridad, no tienes miedo de que te vayan a asaltar o algo así. La delincuencia como que está más... está completamente controlada...los Juarenses aquí en El Paso. La gente, según lo que he oído y he visto aquí ahora que estoy estudiando pues no es tan, tan sensible como allá en Juárez, no son tan amigable...no sé... se interesan más en ir al cine o a algún evento cultural, no sé. Es diferente.</i></p>	<p>M: And when I find myself on this side in the U.S., here in El Paso, and effectively cultures even though we are so close, Juárez and El Paso they are very different in the ways to think and to see the world. Here it is very different since you cross your car or you walk. For one, you feel safer, you are not afraid that you will be assaulted or something like that. It seems that delinquency is more, or completely controlled for people from Juárez here in El Paso. The people according to what I have heard and seen here now that I am studying are not as kind as they are in Juárez, not as friendly, I don't know...what they are more interested in is going out to the movies or going to a cultural event, I don't know. It is different.</p>
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Also related to findings about border identity, Carolina spoke to the “all poverty is Mexican” border trope that Vila (2000) identified through his research. In ethnographic interviews, Vila showed El Pasoans (from a variety of races and ethnic groups), photographs of unkempt houses and two aging cemeteries. Respondents in his research consistently identified the impoverished and neglected areas as being located in Juárez when they were, in fact, located in El Paso. In my findings, Carolina agreed that the litany is true for her. And in this way, border identity colors her experiences as a doctoral student at this border university.

<p><i>C: Creo que los mexicanos hemos sido estereotipados como personas que no nos comprometemos totalmente con lo que hacemos (estudiar, trabajar, al hogar) cuando llegamos a este país (en comparación con algunas otras culturas, como China, Japón y los mismos Americanos (Whites). Sin embargo las condiciones sociales a las que hemos sido expuestos (migrando de un país tercermundista) naturalmente no nos permiten (a aquellos que buscamos la superación) desempeñar un solo rol al 100%.</i></p> <p><i>Por ejemplo, para estudiar muchos de nosotros “mexicanos” tenemos que trabajar tiempo completo ya que primero, hay que llevar dinero a casa y segundo, para poder ahorrar para la colegiatura ya que el gobierno U.S. no nos financía nuestros estudios, entonces... como dedicarnos 100% a estudiar si tenemos que trabajar también para mantenernos.</i></p>	<p>C: I believe that Mexicans have been stereotyped as people who do not totally commit themselves to this country in comparison to other countries like China, Japan, and Americans (whites) even. Nevertheless the social conditions to which we have been exposed (emigrating from a third-world country) naturally, they do not permit us (those of us who wish to improve themselves) to play only one role 100%.</p> <p>For example, in order to study, many of us “Mexicans” we have to work fulltime since first we must take money home and secondly, in order to pay tuition, since the government does not finance our education, then how do we dedicate ourselves 100% to study if we have to work to support ourselves?</p>
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Experiences of the Context of Violence

The story of war-torn Mexico, 2006-2011, too often includes findings of mass graves, marauding military-like death squads, ski-masked-wearing federal police, ubiquitous army patrols and checkpoints, extortions (even of small businesses), and the murders of innocent people unassociated with the drug trade. The country is crippled, as Mexican fights against Mexican. Since 2006, it is estimated that 38,000 people have been killed nationwide (Ellingwood, 2011). Some estimates are higher, as many crimes go unreported. As the epicenter of the war, Ciudad Juárez has seen more than 8,000 deaths since 2008 (Martínez-Cabrera, 2011). This number is thousands more than the total number of deaths (6,026) recorded in U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan combined (<http://projects.washingtonpost.com/fallen>). The United Nations has not stepped in, even though the organization defines “major wars” as military conflicts that

inflict 1,000 battlefield deaths per year (www.globalsecurity.org). According to a report on displaced persons in Mexico, the Norwegian Refugee Council's Internal Displacement Monitoring Center stated that the current fatality rate in Juárez is equivalent to 200 homicides per 100,000 people, making it "the most violent city in the world." There are approximately 116,000 empty homes in Juárez, and 11,000 business closures since 2009, according to the report. In the same year, 11,000 school children did not return for classes throughout the State of Chihuahua, where Juárez is located.

For Carolina and Marco, the totality of everyday life, including experiences at the university, were affected by the violence in Juárez. These informants were emotionally affected by it, which impacted their performance in the doctoral program. Further research on this topic will examine the effects of transnational doctoral-level students living in a violent context.

<p><i>C: ¿Qué tenemos en esta situación? ¿Dos años que empezó? Dos años...y esa gente andaba entre nosotros... esa gente vivía con nosotros...no sé quienes estén peleando, quiénes está matando a quién...pero esa gente vivía entre nosotros tan felices en una comunidad tranquila relativamente..."</i></p>	<p>C: How long have we had to live with this situation? It started two years ago. Two years...and those people, they are among us, they live among us. We don't know who is fighting, who is killing whom, but these people live in our midst. Yet, we walk around so happily, living in a community that is tranquil...relatively."</p>
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Marco experiences the possibility that he might a victim of random violence any day. According to the findings, he felt that being at the university and in El Paso was a safe haven for him amid the chaos of contemporary Juárez. Carolina's concerns are for her parents, who run a small food business in Juárez. I observed that, as time passed during the research period, first one, then another, of Carolina's younger sisters came to live with the family in El Paso.

<p><i>C: Emocionalmente es lo que más me ha afectado, Ahorita pues, gracias a Dios, no nos ha tocado algo así, muy cercano a la familia pero por ejemplo mis papás tienen un pequeño negocio de comida que les da para vivir, no tiene dinero ni se hacen ricos con él...el año pasado empezaron las extorciones. Entonces mí mamá vive al día. No ha llegado ese momento pero por ejemplo mí mamá está con la idea de que si eso llega a suceder como con muchos otros negocios. La opción es cerrar.</i></p>	<p>C: Emotionally is what most affected me. Because now, well thanks to God, we have not suffered anything really close to the family. But, for example, my parents have a little food business that provides them with a livelihood, not something that they have become rich by...well, last year the extortions began. Now, my mother lives day by day. This hasn't happened, but my mother has it in her head that if that should happen, as it has to other businesses. The option is to close.</p>
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These data show that Freire's concept of dialogue, which he defined as a combination of love, trust, and hope (Freire, 1970) has dark overtones in Juárez. It has not broken down, but it is strained, which proves Freire's point that love, trust, and hope must exist for dialogue to exist.

Marco explained to me the ways in which he experienced dialogue in the violent desert city.

<p><i>M: Toda la gente suele salir, salimos a lugares donde sabemos que gente ha sido asesinada. La gente sigue visitando gente dentro de su mismo vecindario sigue platicando con la gente...pero igualmente la gente también ahora de lo que habla es “¿has visto cuantos han matado hoy? “¿Has visto que ayer mataron a un jovencito?” Son los temas de todos los días, ¡imagínate!</i></p>	<p>M: Everyone still goes out, we go to places where we know there's been an assassination, yes, people still visit with other people in their neighborhood. But also, right now what people talk about is “have you seen how many people were killed today?” “Have you seen that yesterday a young boy was killed?” These are the themes we discuss every day...just imagine!</p>
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Support Systems

In a unique showing of border unity, an organization was formed in El Paso, Texas, in 2010 called “La Red.” It consisted initially of nine friends from Ciudad Juárez who met for breakfast to discuss their businesses. As of early 2011, more than 300 people from various parts of Mexico were in the group, though it is composed mainly of people from the border area. The purpose of “La Red” is to aid Mexican professionals who want to move their businesses into the U.S. as a way to escape the ongoing violence in Juárez and throughout Mexico. The group is also

becoming a moving force in local and state politics, the *El Paso Times* reports. More than 70 percent of La Red's members are eligible to vote in the U.S. (Ybarra, 2011). The organization of businessmen and politicians is repeated over and over again in sectors of El Paso where significant numbers of people from Juárez live and work today, in temporary exile from the homes and families they know and love.

A support system also gelled for Carolina and Marco with two other doctoral students who studied with them and also commuted daily from Ciudad Juárez. During their first semester, they were "*inseparables*" (inseparable), as Carolina described them. I began calling them *Los Cuates*, or "friends who are as close as brothers." As a participant observer, I saw them joke with each other, lean on one another for support when assignments seemed overwhelming, generally standing by each other in their individual pursuits of academic success. When their provisional period ended, they began to go their separate ways. Carolina took a summer class that the rest couldn't make it over for; three of them had to make up an incomplete that the fourth one successfully completed during the semester. When they later shared classes again, they devised a way to continue communicating despite their decrease in personal time together. Carolina said they were "technological" study buddies—sharing readings, commenting on summaries, proof-reading papers—thus electronically continuing their academic and personal support of one another.

For Carolina, family has been and continues to be her personal support system. She says that her husband encourages her in everything she does. I observed that, after the family moved to El Paso, he began commuting to Juárez, so she wouldn't have to. While Carolina's husband provides the shape of her circle of support, her mother is at its heart. They talk via cell phone daily.

<p><i>C: No que para todo le pida consejo pero si trato yo de verla como un amiga ¿no? Que “hoy estamos haciendo esto o...ya siento que no puedo con la escuela, estoy muy desesperada.” Entonces así es como me desahogo. Y siempre está ahí cuando la necesito. Y...hablo con ella “No es que no puedo... ¡No voy a poder, no voy a poder! Tengo mucha tarea, los maestros, mí trabajo, mí escuela ¡Los niños! Y ella como siempre es confort ¿no? Siempre me dice, “No, mira... no te desesperes...ten paciencia, tienes tres niños yo tuve seis.” Entonces si es como que...después de que hablo con ella... es como que mi terapia...” ¡y no me interrumpan por favor!” ¡Ha ha ha!</i></p>	<p>C: It’s not that I ask her advice on everything, but I do try to see her as my friend. We are always doing something...when I feel that I can’t make it in school, when I’m desperate, then I find some relief. And she is always there for me when I need her. I say to her, “It’s that I can’t do it, I’m not going to be able to do it! I can’t...I have a lot of homework, the teachers, my work, my school, the children! And she is always a comfort. She always tells me, “Now, look, don’t get desperate, be patient, you have three children and I had six.” Then, yes, it’s as if after I talk to her, it’s like my therapy. And don’t interrupt me, please! [She laughs.]</p>
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Social Fields

As we have seen, scholars define transnationalism as the process by which immigrants build “social fields” between their countries of origin and the countries where they reside (e.g. Conway & Cohen, 1998; Glick Schiller, Basch, & Blanc-Szanton, 1992; Menjivar, 2002). Glick Schiller et al. (1992) state that immigrants who form such “social fields” are called transmigrants. They go on to state: “Transmigrants develop and maintain multiple relations—familial, economic, social, organizational, religious, and political—that span borders” (p. 1). This finding is notable for my study, as many cultural experiences between the U.S. and Mexico are blurred by the geopolitical boundaries within which people live, in this case, the informants.

In this research, I found that Marco saw that this “blending” of cultures—transnationalism—as Glick Schiller et al., and others define it—as advantageous. Pursuing his doctoral education in a binational setting had a positive effect on him.

<p>M: <i>Pues se abren muchas otras oportunidades. Una persona que aprende otro idioma, en este caso inglés, como te digo que es un idioma universal...simplemente, pues, tú, como estamos en la frontera, tú has visto que las películas son en inglés, el internet, la mayoría de las noticias relevantes son en inglés, los manuales están en inglés. La mayoría de las cosas están hechas en inglés...nacimos en una frontera con los Estados Unidos, pues es nuestra oportunidad de comunicarnos con nuestro país vecino. Entonces, sí se ve como una oportunidad, como una esperanza.</i></p>	<p>M: Well, it [English] brings many opportunities. A person who learns another language, in this case, English, as I commented to you before, it is the universal language. As you clearly see, since we live on the border, the movies are in English, the Internet, most of the relevant news is in English...user manuals are in English. Most everything is made in English. Thus, we know that living on the border with the United States is our opportunity to communicate with our neighboring country. Therefore, I see it as an opportunity, a hope.</p>
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Summary

After continuous review of the data, I asked myself the question of why Carolina and Marco continued in their studies after enduring so much stress in this venture of studying in the United States. Why keep at it since so many obstacles loomed in their way? Marco said quite simply: “I found this program, and I liked it. And finally, I made the decision because I knew that if I finished a doctoral program in the United States my opportunities to succeed would increase.” Carolina’s thoughts echoed Marco’s, along with her desire to expand her children’s life experiences and give them the opportunity to live in the United States.

Carolina’s and Marco’s experiences of 21st century *choque cultural* can be divided into eight overlapping sections. These are: interpersonal relationships in the graduate school setting; extensive use of technology in the educational setting; funds of knowledge; outsider/insider perspectives; personal pressure; language; gender; and time. As a qualitative researcher, I have seen the informants navigate these different facets of their lives while studying at the doctoral level in a U.S. university. We have seen how their experiences fit into their context along the U.S.-Mexico border between Ciudad Juárez and El Paso.

Chapter 5 follows with a discussion of the findings, limitations on the study, areas of future research, and conclusion, which includes implications of the research.

Chapter 5: Discussion

It is 5 p.m. on a Thursday. Los Cuates are removing Tupperware lids and pulling plastic wrap from bowls, alternately warming food in the microwave oven downstairs. The basement of the Education building is cut into halls, offices, and study carrels. Pulling their chairs together, they sit down to a potluck dinner before class. One brought salad, another made a casserole, Marco provided corn tortillas—soft and handmade—from Juárez, and Carolina made refried beans.

This is tranquility for them, though you wouldn't know it by the noise and laughter. Whenever I see them together outside of class, they are like this, seemingly free of care. I think that one of the only times I remember seeing them together and quiet was when I told them, in my teacher voice, that they couldn't be late to class anymore. Me, of all people...who better understood their situation?

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to provide a deeper understanding into the lives of two transnational doctoral students at a U.S. university on the U.S. Mexico border between Ciudad Juárez and El Paso, and what the transnational student experience meant to them. The goal of this in-depth case study that examined two transnational doctoral students, located in a unique context setting, was to help us better understand the lived experiences of transnational students from both global and local perspectives. The in-depth examination of these informants has also provided new questions about the experiences of doctoral students in the academy, especially those whose first language is one other than English.

The primary research question this study examined is: “How do two transnational doctoral students from Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, experience studying at an advanced level in a research-intensive U.S. university, and what does the transnational student experience mean to them?” A secondary theme also emerged regarding the context of the informants’ border identity in the unique transnational context between the cultures of Mexico and the United States and their academic lives. Therefore, the findings of research with Carolina and Marco have

produced evidence that provides deeper insights into the complex, multifaceted dimensions that the research question this study examined.

The data display in chapter four was divided into two sections: coterminous experiences of culture shock and new perspectives on the context of border identity. This final chapter concludes with discussion of the limitations of the study, recommendations for continued research, and an overview of the entire research project.

Discussion

While analyzing Carolina's and Marco's stories and considering the daily realities that I, as a participant observer, have seen them live at the university, the primary theme of *choque cultural* emerged. The findings of this thesis are emergent research on the experiences of transnational doctoral students studying at an advanced level in a U.S. university in a border setting. Research on culture shock originated from Oberg's work in the 1960s. His framework for the study of culture shock was structured, utilizing linear descriptions of step-by-step stages of culture shock and a mid-20th century definition of culture, which did not include perspectives of border crossers, nor of sociocultural contexts and dynamics of unique settings, such as the U.S.-Mexico border. Carolina's and Marco's experiences provided a preliminary outline for re-reading the stories of 21st century transnational students, a reconceptualization of the Oberg model (1960), translated into interrelated, coexisting existential experiences as a new model, composed of multifaceted overlapping components.

From the perspective of this study, the informants' experiences of culture shock fell into interlocking spheres. Their interpersonal relationships were affected both at home and at the university; extensive use of technology in the educational setting was an early roadblock for

them; they brought with them funds of knowledge that were helpful to them but often unrecognized; they experienced outsider/insider roles in the academy, even among Mexican-American fellow students; they underwent extremes of personal and financial pressures; they faced steep academic hurdles in the area of language; Carolina experienced gendered pressure; and they both wrestled with issues of time. Carolina and Marco shared aspects of their lives that related to each of these personal and professional areas. They also painted a picture of lifelong Juarenses navigating both the geographic border between Ciudad Juárez and El Paso but also the cultures of the United States and Mexico. Often, these cultures seem blurred because of their verisimilitude, yet remain distinct, as the findings of this research show.

In particular, Carolina's and Marco's navigation of time exemplified a complex, daily aspect of border life between Juárez and El Paso. As noted, their lives were juxtaposed between cultural monochronic and polychronic time (Ferraro & Andreatta, 2010), between clock-oriented and event-oriented time (Avnet & Sellier, 2011). Marco, who waited apprehensively on the bridge, wondering if he would arrive on time for class, something that was expected of him in his high-level academic setting. Carolina's life became segmented on the half-hour because of the many roles she plays in life on the U.S. side of the border. The reality of differences in the experience of time as part of *choque cultural* hit her immediately. Her first August in El Paso, the boys had to be enrolled in school, and then, her own classes were upon her. As a participant observer, I have seen her gather quarters from her purse and leave quickly at the end of a meeting to drop change into the hour-long parking meter behind the building, unable to afford a parking sticker. I have seen her at home, where people and events evolved around her as she made time for an interview. Carolina's and Marco's lives were a blend of today's high-level 21st century transnational culture shock. In the beginning, language was their chief barrier. However,

other elements such as time, interpersonal relationships, personal pressure, and outsider/insider status soon also affected them. Both assumed deeper and more involved forms as the first semester progressed; language becoming more of an issue in class participation (who wants to present research findings with someone who can't speak English well?), and time as an increasing pressure as their work-load became more apparent to them. That and, of course, the bridge.

The second theme of this research is the social and political context of the Ciudad Juárez-El Paso border. The informants themselves call their home country “*tercermundista*” or third world, Juárez should not be solely depicted as a burgeoning city of slums, devoid of lawful commerce or high-tech industry. It is also a place of art museums, cathedrals, a proud Mexican revolutionary history, traditional and majestic bullfighting, and an internationally competitive men's soccer team. The city is a departure point for excursions to Copper Canyon—larger and deeper than the Grand Canyon and populated by indigenous peoples. However, Juárez is currently in upheaval due to violence—sometimes between warring drug cartels, other times between petty thieves, teenage street gangs and, always, the innocent. Juárez is bleeding Mexican blood amid its global economic centers (including the *maquiladora* or manufacturing industry), the city's palatial but often empty homes, and its humble *barrios* (neighborhoods). Like all wars, the one in Juárez is characterized by man's inhumanity to man.

For both Carolina and Marco, familial ties to Juárez become intertwined with preoccupations concerning projects and presentations for these transnational students. Carolina said that, if she and her husband hadn't planned on moving to El Paso for the sake of convenience, they would have moved six months later because of the violence. As time progresses in their studies—and the conditions in Juárez worsen—this could become

increasingly important in their educational experience. Even when Carolina visits her family in Juárez over the weekend, she never knows if it could be the day that tragedy befalls her or one of her children. No one in the city ever knows.

Support systems have developed on macro and micro levels. In El Paso, citywide coalitions have formed between Juárez and El Paso businessmen, including those who closed their businesses on the Mexican side of the border to relocate in El Paso. Carolina and Marco are part of a peer group of four students who met during their master's programs at the state university in Ciudad Juárez. They were accepted into the second cohort of the doctoral program in Education at the U.S. university. In their first semester, three of them commuted from Juárez, often giving each other rides. Many in the department observed their camaraderie, and the support system they became for one another. Carolina's deeper ties extended to her mother, with whom she spoke via cell phone every day. She explained that she drew courage from these conversations; they became her manna in the desert.

Carolina and Marco are intelligent, highly educated Mexican professionals who faced rigorous academic challenges as transnational students at the doctoral level, while simultaneously facing a 21st century *choque cultural* that we are just beginning to understand. Considering the context of the border between the violent Ciudad Juárez and El Paso, Carolina and Marco have displayed the lived experiences of two persons in two worlds—sliced by a trickling border river—in extraordinary times.

As Denzin and Lincoln (2005) state, qualitative research is a “situated activity that locates the observer in the world...these practices transform the world” (p. 3). Carolina's and Marco's stories give us moments in their experiences as doctoral students on the U.S. Mexico border. We learn about their journeys from first-semester newcomers in a “strange land” to

doctoral students having successfully completed their second year of study. Their stories allow us to briefly enter their worlds, through the methodology of ethnography, within the qualitative framework.

Limitations

To more deeply understand the context of this study, my original goal was to spend a significant amount of time with the informants in Ciudad Juárez. I wanted to know more about their lived experiences amid the current situation in their native home. Given that the journey from El Paso to Juárez is less than five miles, this goal seemed feasible just a few short years ago. While my fluency as a Spanish speaker is limited, I know the language well enough to be able to move around, engage in conversations, and conduct fieldwork. However, over the last two years, travel restrictions have been put into place by the university that prohibit research gathering in Mexico. Therefore, future studies to be conducted in Ciudad Juárez will provide a deeper understanding of the current context in which these transnational students live, move, and have their being.

Additional issues that limited this study included time and resources. As a thesis student, I have had to keep in mind that time is marked off by semesters in universities like this one. As much as I would have wanted to extend this study over time to collect richer data, observe these informants in greater depth, follow up on some of the new questions and themes that have emerged, both time and funding require me to draw this phase of my research to a close at this point. A longer period of time for research would have allowed for deeper investigations into the eight prongs of culture shock in the informants' lives. Next steps will move in that direction.

Future Research

A plethora of opportunities for future research have been uncovered by this preliminary work. Culture shock in a high-tech, global world could be much more deeply studied, especially in the context of higher education, more so, at the doctoral level. The phenomenon of second language speakers of English engaged in high-level academic work is a topic that could be further plied. Experiences of time on the U.S.-Mexico border is a dynamic that warrants much deeper scholarly attention. Ethnographic studies of time on the border could lead to new insights in border scholarship in the humanities. The area of gender should be more deeply delved into. Layers of experience based on gender can be a rich area of future study. A longitudinal study involving the informants of this thesis research could be conducted, providing a panorama of their experiences throughout their doctoral study. These, and several other new questions, remain to be explored.

Conclusion

This thesis study has provided evidence indicating that doctoral students studying at a high level in a research-intensive U.S. university seem to experience a 21st model of culture shock—*choque cultural*—which in this study involves an 8-pronged model of expression. These are new findings both in terms of theory—additional research on culture shock—and in terms of context—the fact that this phenomenon can occur for people living in cities located within five miles of each other on the U.S.-Mexico border. Tradition might say that the cultures are so similar, in terms of language, food, music, economics, that there is nothing new here. Yet this research has proven that, while people fluidly cross borders, they may not unimpedingly immerse themselves into the culture of a different, albeit, neighboring country. The informants

knew that language would be a major factor in their academic progress, but they had not considered components such as gender, their funds of knowledge, the economic and personal pressures they would face, and their “outsiderness” among their doctoral student colleagues. An unexpected finding was Marco’s statement that “crossing the bridge every day” increased his experience of being an outsider. Support groups such as friends and several fellow students, who also commuted from Juárez and were in the same cohort as the informants, served as sources of encouragement and camaraderie for them. The unique context of Ciudad Juárez added to the experiences of culture shock, and the necessary adjustments that the informants faced, because it intensified already pressure-packed lived experiences for them.

Implications of the research include underscoring the importance of the voices of those students living the transnational university experience. Are their voices included in decisions made about international student life on university campuses? This is especially true on the U.S.-Mexico border between Ciudad Juárez and El Paso, where it is almost taken for granted that few cultural barriers would be faced by students who cross every day to study at the university. College professors who teach transnational students could become more aware of the concomitant experiences of culture shock that their students might undergo. Considerations could be made for transition helps such as mentorships between transnational students and their mainstream counterparts or multilingual study groups. Perhaps departmental orientations for doctoral students could be conducted to better prepare transnationals for first-year practical considerations such as online learning systems, financial counseling, on-campus daycare options, and academic expectations of study at the doctoral level.

The potential now exists for further research into the phenomenon of 21st century culture shock among doctoral-level students in U.S. universities, especially in border contexts. We know

now that this human experience is not bound by terrain, whether strange or familiar. Would new ethnographic research on other international borders yield similar results? Additional research could determine whether this type of culture shock is a phenomenon more specifically occurring in the environs of the Ciudad Juárez-El Paso setting. This study has uncovered new knowledge about *choque cultural*, with further horizons for research and a plethora of stories to tell.

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Appendices

Appendix A: IRB Documents

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
Office of the Vice President for Research and Sponsored Projects
Institutional Review Board
El Paso, Texas 79968-0587
phone: 915 747-8841 fax: 915 747-5931

DATE: May 10, 2010

TO: Lyn McKinley, MA

FROM: University of Texas at El Paso IRB

STUDY TITLE: [157956-1] Binational Students' Experiences on the U.S./Mexico Border:
Crossing Borders at the University Level

IRB REFERENCE #:

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: APPROVED

APPROVAL DATE: May 10, 2010

EXPIRATION DATE: May 10, 2011

REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research study. University of Texas at El Paso IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This study has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

Please report all NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this study to this office.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years after termination of the project.

Based on the risks, this project requires Continuing Review by this office on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate renewal forms for this procedure.

If you have any questions, please contact Athena Fester at (915) 747-8841 or afester@utep.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
Office of the Vice President for Research and Sponsored Projects
Institutional Review Board
El Paso, Texas 79968-0587
phone: 915 747-8841 fax: 915 747-5931

DATE: April 21, 2011

TO: Lyn McKinley, MA

FROM: University of Texas at El Paso IRB

STUDY TITLE: [157956-2] Binational Students' Experiences on the U.S./Mexico Border:
Crossing Borders at the University Level

IRB REFERENCE #: 157956-2

SUBMISSION TYPE: Continuing Review/Progress Report

ACTION: APPROVED

APPROVAL DATE: May 10, 2011

EXPIRATION DATE: November 10, 2011

REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

Thank you for your submission of Continuing Review/Progress Report materials for this research study. University of Texas at El Paso IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This study has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

Please report all NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this study to this office.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years after termination of the project.

Based on the risks, this project requires Continuing Review by this office on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate renewal forms for this procedure.

If you have any questions, please contact Athena Fester at (915) 747-8841 or afester@utep.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
Office of the Vice President for Research and Sponsored Projects
Institutional Review Board
El Paso, Texas 79968-0587
phone: 915 747-8841 fax: 915 747-5931

FWA No: 00001224

DATE: June 30, 2011

TO: Lyn McKinley, MA

FROM: University of Texas at El Paso IRB

STUDY TITLE: [157956-3] Binational Students' Experiences on the U.S./Mexico Border:
Crossing Borders at the University Level

IRB REFERENCE #: 157956-3

SUBMISSION TYPE: Amendment/Modification

ACTION: APPROVED

APPROVAL DATE: June 30, 2011

EXPIRATION DATE: November 10, 2011

REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

Thank you for your submission of Amendment/Modification materials for this research study. University of Texas at El Paso IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This study has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

The following request and survey were submitted for review and approved:

- Additional survey to be administered to previously enrolled participants

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

Please report all NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this study to this office.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years after termination of the project.

Based on the risks, this project requires Continuing Review by this office on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate renewal forms for this procedure.

Appendix B: Informed Consent

University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) Institutional Review Board

Informed Consent Form for Research Involving Human Subjects

Protocol Title: Binational Students' Experiences on the U.S./Mexico Border: Crossing Borders
at the University Level

Principal Investigator: Lyn McKinley

UTEP College of Education, Department of Teacher Education

1. Introduction

You are being asked to take part voluntarily in the attached research project. Please take your time making a decision and feel free to discuss it with your friends and family.

Before agreeing to take part in this research study, it is important that you read the consent form that describes the study. Please ask the study researcher or the study staff to explain any words or information that you do not clearly understand.

2. Why is this study being done?

You have been asked to take part in a research study of sociocultural barriers faced by adult Mexican doctoral students with limited English writing and comprehension skills who are enrolled in doctoral programs in Education at the University of Texas at El Paso. Approximately four students will be enrolling in this study at UTEP.

You are being asked to be in the study because you are an adult Mexican doctoral student studying education at UTEP.

If you decide to enroll in this study, your involvement will last until about December 1, 2010.

3. What is involved in the study?

If you agree to take part in the study, the researcher will: Interview you one time on a one-on-one basis and two times in a group setting. One to two interviews will be held on the UTEP campus; the third meeting will be held at a prearranged location on the outskirts of Ciudad Juarez. All interviews will be tape recorded. You will have complete access to the control of information obtained in the interviews. You will read all transcripts and have control over the information disseminated. All transcripts will be hand carried to you in a protective notebook.

4. What are the risks and discomforts of the study?

Physical and psychological risks are potential in this research because of its basis on the examination of sociocultural and physical boundaries and daily activities of respondents in Ciudad Juarez, El Paso, and along the U.S./Mexico border. Interviewing respondents solely in El Paso would be a less hazardous method of obtaining data. However, Freire's scholarship includes an analysis of the respondents in their natural setting. To limit potential risks, interviews will be held at a predetermined location on the outskirts of the city.

Another potential risk is that the respondents' identities might possibly be revealed.

However, the use of pseudonyms will prohibit this from occurring. Should any unanticipated problems occur, an Unanticipated Problem Form will be completed and submitted to the IRB office.

5. What will happen if I am injured in this study?

The University of Texas at El Paso and its affiliates do not offer to pay for or cover the cost of medical treatment for research-related illness or injury. No funds have been set

aside to pay or reimburse you in the event of such injury or illness. You will not give up any of your legal rights by signing this consent form. You should report any such injury to Lyn McKinley at (915-309-1707) and to the UTEP Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (915-747-8841) or irb.orsp@utep.edu.

6. Are there benefits to taking part in this study?

The results of this project will add to Freirean scholarship in the area of social science and education by utilizing concepts developed in the mid 20th century to 21st century respondents and their environments. The research will contribute to the completion of the respondents' doctoral studies in Education by allowing the respondents to re-evaluate and further understand their commitment to their educational goals. This work will encourage other international students to perceive goals that involve work in English as a second language. This project will further the respondents' personal goals of, after completing their doctoral degrees, returning to Mexico to improve the quality of Math Education in public schools and universities in their native country. This is one of Freire's tenets, that of improving one's environment and personal consciousness in the world around him through education.

7. What other options are there?

You have the option not to take part in this study. There will be no penalties involved if you choose not to take part in this study.

8. Who is paying for this study?

There is no internal or external funding for this study.

9. What are my costs?

There are no direct costs. You will be responsible for travel to and from the research sites.

10. Will I be paid to participate in this study?

You will not be paid for taking part in this research study.

11. What if I want to withdraw, or am asked to withdraw from this study?

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You have the right to choose not to take part in this study. If you do not take part in the study, there will be no penalty.

If you choose to take part, you have the right to stop at any time. However, we encourage you to talk to a member of the research group so that they know why you are leaving the study. If there are any new findings during the study that may affect whether you want to continue to take part, you will be told about them.

The researcher may decide to stop your participation without permission, if he or she thinks that being in the study may cause you harm.

12. Who do I call if I have questions or problems?

You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may call Lyn McKinley at (915-309-1707), or lamckinley@miners.utep.edu.

If you have questions or concerns about your participation as a research subject, please contact the UTEP Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (915-747-8841) or irb.orsp@utep.edu.

13. What about confidentiality?

Your part in this study is confidential. None of the information will identify you by name. All records will be held at the researcher's home under lock and key, including the researcher's laptop computer and all computer files. One USB will be used as a backup

and will remain in the researcher's home. All transcripts will be hand carried to you in a protective notebook. This study will be anonymous. Anonymity will be protected by the use of pseudonyms.

14. Mandatory reporting

No mandatory reporting is required in this research.

15. Authorization Statement

I have read each page of this paper about the study (or it was read to me). I know that being in this study is voluntary, and I choose to be in this study. I know that I can stop being in this study without penalty. I will get a copy of this consent form now and can get information on the results of the study later if I wish.

Participant Name: _____ Date: _____

Participant Signature: _____

Time: _____

Consent form explained/witnessed by: _____
Signature

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Universidad de Texas en El Paso (UTEP) Comité de Revisión Institucional
Forma de Consentimiento Informado para Investigación que involucra la Participación de
Sujetos Humanos

Título del Protocolo: “Las Experiencias de alumnos binacionales en la frontera Estados Unidos/Mexicana: Cruzando las fronteras en el nivel universitario”

Investigador Principal: Lyn McKinley

UTEP Colegio de educación, departamento de educación del maestro

En el presente documento de consentimiento, “usted” siempre se refiere al sujeto del estudio. Si usted es un representante legalmente autorizado (por ejemplo, padre, guardián o tutor legal) recuerde que la palabra “usted” se refiere al sujeto del estudio.

1. Introducción

Se le está pidiendo que participe voluntariamente en el proyecto de investigación abajo descrito. Por favor tómese el tiempo necesario para tomar su decisión y discutirlo con sus familiares y amigos. Antes de estar de acuerdo en participar en el presente estudio, es importante que usted lea la forma de consentimiento que lo describe. Por favor pídale al investigador del estudio o al personal del mismo que le explique o aclare cualquier palabra o información que no entienda.

2. ¿Por qué se está llevando a cabo este estudio?

Se le ha pedido que participe en un estudio de investigación respecto a las experiencias de alumnos binacionales en la frontera Estados Unidos/Mexicana: Cruzando las fronteras en el nivel universitario.

Se le está pidiendo que sea parte del estudio, porque usted es alumno adulto en el programa del doctorado en UTEP.

Si usted decide inscribirse en este estudio, su participación tendrá una duración del primer día de Diciembre, 2010.

3. ¿Qué es lo que involucra el estudio?

Si usted está de acuerdo en ser parte de este estudio, el investigador le pedirá que participe en alguna o en todas las siguientes actividades: hacer una entrevista en grupo y una entrevista

personal. Todas las entrevistas van hacer haciendo con grabadora. Usted tendrá todo acceso a la información colectada durante las entrevistas. Usted tiene el derecho de leer toda la información y dar permiso para usar en el estudio. Las transcripciones van hacer llevado a mano en cuaderno protectivo.

4. ¿Cuáles son los riesgos e incomodidades del estudio?

Los riesgos incluyen el situación de violencia que esta pasando in Cd. Juárez. Todas las cosas para asegurar la protección de los alumnos van a hacer haciendo.

5. ¿Qué pasará si me lesiono en este estudio?

Ni la Universidad de Texas en El Paso ni sus afiliados ofrecen pagar ni cubrir el costo de ningún tratamiento medico relacionado con ninguna enfermedad o lesión causada por esta investigación. No se ha asignado ningún tipo de fondo para pagar o reembolsar a ninguno de los participantes en el caso de que se presentara dicha lesión o enfermedad. Usted no cederá ninguno de sus derechos legales al firmar esta forma de consentimiento. En caso de presentarse dicha enfermedad o lesión, deberá comunicarse con Lyn McKinley al (915) 309-1707 y con el Comité de Revisión Institucional de UTEP (IRB) al (915) 747-8841 ó irb.orsp@uteo.edu.

6. ¿Cuáles son los beneficios de participar en este estudio?

No habrá ningún beneficio directo para usted por participar en el presente estudio. Sin embargo, este trabajo investigativo nos permitirá entender mejor el papel de Paulo Freire en investigaciones hoy en dia en Mexico, específicamente en Cd. Juárez.

7. ¿Existen otras opciones?

Usted tiene la opción de no participar. No habrá ninguna sanción para usted si decide no ser parte del estudio.

8. ¿Quién está cubriendo los costos de este estudio?

No hay ningún fondo interno o externo para financiar este estudio. El investigador asume todos los costos relacionados con el mismo.

9. ¿Cuáles van a ser mis costos?

No hay costos directos. Usted será responsable de los costos de traslado de ida y vuelta al sitio de la investigación y cualquier otro gasto incidental relacionado.

10. ¿Se me va a pagar por participar en el estudio?

Usted no recibirá ningún pago por participar en este estudio de investigación.¹¹ ¿Qué pasa si me quiero dar de baja, o se me pide que abandone el estudio?

El participar en este estudio es algo totalmente voluntario. Usted tiene el derecho de decidir no ser parte del mismo, y si no participa en el estudio, no habrá ninguna sanción.

Si usted decide participar, puede dejar de hacerlo en cualquier momento. Sin embargo le recomendamos encarecidamente que hable con un miembro del grupo de investigación, para informarle de la razón por la cual usted abandona el estudio. Si hubiera cualquier descubrimiento o resultado nuevo que pudiera afectar su deseo de continuar en el estudio, se lo haremos saber.

El investigador puede decidir interrumpir la participación de usted sin su permiso, si piensa que participar en el estudio pudiera causarle a usted algún daño.

12. ¿A quién debo llamar si tengo preguntas o problemas?

Puede hacer preguntas para aclarar cualquier duda que tenga ahora. Si tiene preguntas más adelante, puede llamar a Lyn McKinley o enviar un correo electrónico a lamckinley@miners.utep.edu.

Si tiene preguntas o preocupaciones acerca de su participación como sujeto de investigación por favor comuníquese con el Comité de Revisión Institucional de UTEP (IRB) al (915) 747-8841 ó irb.orsp@utep.edu.

13. ¿Qué hay de la confidencialidad?

Su participación en este estudio es confidencial. Ninguna porción de la información le va a identificar por nombre. Todos los archivos se conservarán bajo llave, y las grabaciones serán

almacenadas electrónicamente y protegidas con contraseña en la computadora del investigador principal. El acceso será permitido solamente para él y el asesor del personal docente. Los resultados del presente estudio de investigación podrían ser presentados en reuniones o publicaciones; sin embargo, la identidad de usted no será divulgada en dichas presentaciones.

14. Obligación de reportar

Si se llegara a revelar información sobre abuso a menores o negligencia, o algún riesgo potencial futuro a terceras personas, la ley requiere que dicha información sea reportada a las autoridades correspondientes.

15. Declaración de Autorización

He leído (o alguien me ha leído) todas y cada una de las páginas del presente documento sobre el estudio. Entiendo que la participación en este estudio es voluntaria, y he tomado la decisión libre de participar en el mismo. Sé que puedo interrumpir dicha participación sin temor a sanción alguna. Se me dará una copia de esta forma de consentimiento en este momento, y más adelante puedo recibir información sobre los resultados del estudio si así lo deseo.

Nombre de el/la Participante: _____ Fecha: _____

Firma de el/la Participante: _____ Hora: _____

Firma de el /la Participante o del Padre /Guardián/Tutor Legal: _____

La forma de consentimiento ha sido explicada/ atestiguada por: _____

Nombre en letra de imprenta: _____ Fecha: _____

Hora: _____

Appendix C: Sample of Data Collection Instruments

1. What is it like to cross every day?
2. Can you give me an example of what the crossing is like? (i.e., what time you get there, how long it takes the line to move, what you do while you're waiting etc.)
3. How did you get the idea to study for the PhD at UTEP?
4. Please give me the steps you had to take in order to apply...visas, etc.
5. What was the first semester like?
6. What coping skills did you use to get used to school your first semester?
7. What was the toughest class you had to take your first semester?
8. What were your experiences with English? Had you studied before? What was it like to sit through a class all in English? Were you able to participate?
9. What is it like to research in English? How do you accomplish this?
10. Tell me about your friendship...how did you get to know each other, etc.
11. Did you experience culture shock? How? Did this surprise you, since CJ and EP are so close?
12. For Carolina:

How often do you return?

What was it like to move the whole family over? How did you accomplish the actual move?

Was it something you had thought about before?

After you had been over here for a few weeks, could you tell the difference between the crossing and being over here?

How do you handle playing so many roles in life?

- What are your thoughts on your children learning English. How are they doing in school?
13. Do you feel like you are accepted by the other students in the program? Why or why not?
 14. As native Juarensens, how do you feel about what is now happening in the city?
 15. Do you feel like the government is taking the right approach to dealing with the violence?
 16. Has it affected you personally? Please describe.
 17. What are your goals with your PhDs?
 18. What was your educational background like when you were a child? Please describe
 19. Is language still your “barrier” here?
 20. Is it any easier for you now that you have been fully accepted into the doctoral program?

Please describe the difference between the provisional year and once you were accepted.

Appendix D: Translator's Biography

Translator: Edward A. Endlich

Mr. Endlich is a long-time El Paso-area educator. He has served as an assistant professor of education at New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM. He was a principal in the Ysleta Independent School District (YISD) in El Paso for eight years. Prior to that, he taught Spanish in YISD. He holds a Master of Arts degree from the University of Texas at El Paso in bilingual education and English. He received his Bachelor's degree in secondary education from Texas Western College.

Mr. Endlich was born in El Paso and is fully fluent in Spanish. He has translated for Kodak, other area businesses and extensively for YISD. Spanish was the language of Mr. Endlich's home as he grew up. Though fluent in English, his parents only spoke Spanish with him. He only spoke Spanish with them; he learned English in school. Mr. Endlich said, "I kept Spanish because it was part of me, like my heart or head or my feet."

He has deep roots in the Ciudad Juárez-El Paso border region. Mr. Endlich's maternal grandmother moved to El Paso from Guadalajara in 1900. His paternal grandmother came to El Paso from Chihuahua during the Mexican Revolution, fleeing Mexico in 1911. His paternal grandfather came to El Paso from Sonora during the revolution.

He is currently director of the English Speaking Center at St. Clement's Church in El Paso.

Curriculum Vita

Lyn McKinley holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism/history from Texas Tech University. She graduated *magna cum laude* in 1984. She worked for 10 years as a journalist at various Texas newspapers and at both *Field & Stream* and *Runner's World* magazines, as well as New Mexico State University. She began work in the College of Education at the University of Texas at El Paso in 2008. She presented the early stages of her thesis work at the 2011 32nd Annual Ethnography in Education Conference, College of Education, University of Pennsylvania; the 2010 Student Research Symposium on Latin America and the Border, Center for Latin America and Border Studies, University of Texas at El Paso; and the 2010 Re-Imagining the Americas: (Im)migration, Transnationalism and Diaspora. Syracuse University/Cornell University. She is a member of Alpha Chi National Collegiate Honor Society and The Honorary Society of Phi Kappa Phi.

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