

THE STATE OF EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS OF MEXICAN DESCENT ON THE
TEXAS/MEXICO BORDER: THEN AND NOW

A Dissertation

by

WALLY D. THOMPSON

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

DOCTOR of PHILOSOPHY

in

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION/READING

Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi

Corpus Christi, Texas

August 2012

Wally D. Thompson

All Rights Reserved

August 2012

ABSTRACT

Much of the territory from the Sabine River, the border between present day Texas and Louisiana, to the Pacific Ocean was occupied by persons of Mexican descent long before it became part of the United States. There are still many persons of Mexican descent in that area, and it is the education of their children, as well as the education of students of Mexican descent in the entire United States, which is the focus of this investigation.

There are two principal reasons for singling out this population. The first is that persons of Mexican descent compose a very large segment of the population of this country: just over ten percent of the population of the entire United States (Ennis, Rios-Vargas, & Albert, 2010, p. 2) and almost forty percent of the population of the state of Texas (Texas Quick Facts, 2010) are of Mexican descent. The second is that there is an extraordinary need. Nearly all indices of educational problems; absenteeism, retention, and attrition, to name but a few indicate that students of Mexican descent have greater difficulties than their Western European descent counterparts (Arias, 1986; Kohler & Lazarin, 2007; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2003). These obstacles possibly contribute to the discrepancy between the academic performance of students of Mexican descent, and students of other ethnicities (Hess, 2000; Matute-Bianche, 2008).

To approach this problem, the researcher investigated the total educational milieu of students of Mexican descent of two periods of time which are separated by thirty years: 1975 and 2005. Researching documents, reading school board minutes, and talking to students from those eras developed a picture of the educational environment of those times and allowed for a comparison.

The analysis of the assembled data revealed two significant findings. The first finding is that factors external to the Mexican-descent community, such as racism and segregation, have been affected by federal regulations, and no longer are present in the educational system to an ascertainable degree. The second finding is that several components of the community's culture have survived and appear to be influencing the education of Mexican-descent students both positively and negatively. The primary societal value which is present in the interviews of all of the time periods which are included in this study is *familism*. It is this feature of the community which appears to have a lasting impact on education.

These findings will benefit classroom teachers across America who teach students of Mexican descent. Knowing what aspects of the Mexican descent culture relate to their educational success, or lack thereof, is important and will contribute to teachers being better prepared to teach this large and growing population.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to members of my family: my sister Sue, my daughter Andrea, my son Andres and his children, Amber and Joseph, who have endured my hermitage these last several years and who have been supportive of me during this process.

I would like to include my dear friend from the B.A. days at Stephen F. Austin State University, Dr. Donald Fry (1947-2011). It was a chance meeting with Don, and the subsequent conversation which served as an impetus for propelling me onto the trajectory which has led me here. It saddens me that he will not see the journey completed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

No one accomplishes anything of significance alone, and I would like to acknowledge those who have supported, guided and helped me through this process. Every day of teaching is a day of learning, and I thank the many principals, faculties, and staffs of the high school, middle schools, and the elementary school in which I have taught for their support and guidance. A teacher cannot be a teacher without students, so as I write this I am remembering some of the thousands of the faces of the children and young adults who have sat before me over these many years, and provided the experience which is so valuable to me now.

Experience is a very important part of who I am professionally, but so is the knowledge I have amassed. To my professors in the master's program at the University of Texas at Brownsville (UTB), and the doctoral program at Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi (TAMUCC), I thank you for your work. I am sometimes astonished at how much I have learned in such a short time.

The purpose of this journey was to position myself to teach teachers and to contribute to the knowledge of teaching. My bosses, Dr. Dan Pearce, TAMUCC; Dr. David Freeman, UTB; and Dr. Judith McConnell-Farmer, Washburn University (WU) are to be acknowledged for working with me and developing me as a teacher of teachers. Others who are to be acknowledged for their indispensable support and assistance are Dr. Gayle Brogdon, Associate Dean, UTB; Dr. Yvonne Freeman, Professor, UTB; Dr. Corinne Valadez, Associate Professor, TAMUCC; and Dr. Gloria Dye, Professor, WU.

Finally, this process could not have been completed without the work and patience of my committee: Dr. Sherrye Garrett, Chair; Dr. Evan Ortlieb, Co-Chair; Dr. Jack Cassidy, and Dr.

Javier Villarreal. Others who were directly supportive of the research and helped with the meetings were *mi ahijada* (my goddaughter) Rossy, and her husband Jerry.

This list of those who have been in some way instrumental in my accomplishing this goal may seem long, but it is just a few of those who have helped me along – Thank you all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| CONTENTS | PAGE |
|---|------|
| ABSTRACT..... | iii |
| DEDICATION..... | v |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS..... | vi |
| CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW | 1 |
| Rationale..... | 1 |
| Establishing Nomenclature and Incisive Language | 2 |
| Statement of the Problem | 4 |
| Purpose of the Study | 7 |
| Research Questions | 9 |
| Significance and Benefits of the Study | 10 |
| Limitations of the Study | 11 |
| Identifying researcher bias | 11 |
| Literature Review | 13 |
| Theoretical foundations | 14 |
| More recent scholastic works | 17 |
| Conclusion to review of the literature | 17 |
| Methodology | 18 |
| Historical study..... | 18 |
| Oral history..... | 18 |
| Focus groups, mini-focus groups and interviews | 19 |
| Data analysis..... | 20 |
| Ethical considerations..... | 21 |
| Conclusion..... | 21 |

| | |
|--|----|
| CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE | 24 |
| Theoretical Foundations | 24 |
| Social space, habitus, cultural capital, reproduction, and discourse | 24 |
| Ethnicities | 28 |
| Colonialism, contact zones, transculturation, and hybridity | 29 |
| Cultural ecological model..... | 33 |
| Explicit criticism of Ogbu's theories..... | 39 |
| Implicit criticism of Ogbu's theories..... | 41 |
| Sociocultural theory..... | 42 |
| Sociocultural reproduction | 42 |
| Review of Scholastic Literature | 45 |
| The achievement gap..... | 46 |
| Family economic status | 47 |
| Family effects on educational achievement | 48 |
| Familism..... | 50 |
| Immigrant and societal issues..... | 52 |
| Self-esteem and multicultural factors..... | 59 |
| Language issues..... | 62 |
| Children of migrant workers | 64 |
| Conclusion..... | 67 |
| CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY | 69 |
| Historical Research | 69 |
| Oral history..... | 70 |
| Research Design..... | 71 |
| Postmodern world-view..... | 72 |
| Epistemological concerns..... | 74 |
| Qualitative research paradigm..... | 74 |
| Naturalistic inquiry | 75 |
| Grounded theory | 76 |
| Research Site | 81 |

| | |
|--|---------|
| Demographics, Borderlands High School | 83 |
| Conclusion to research site | 87 |
| Data Gathering | 88 |
| Focus groups..... | 88 |
| Documents | 97 |
| El Arroyo | 98 |
| Data Analysis | 99 |
| Focus groups..... | 101 |
| Numerical data..... | 109 |
| Memoing..... | 110 |
| Conclusion to Methodology | 110 |
| CHAPTER 4. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA..... | 111 |
| Forces Acting on the Primary Theoretical Domains | 113 |
| Acculturation/Assimilation..... | 113 |
| Changes-over time..... | 114 |
| Primary Theoretical Domains | 116 |
| Colonialism..... | 116 |
| Habitus..... | 132 |
| Conclusion..... | 148 |
| CHAPTER 5. CONCLUDING REMARKS..... | 149 |
| Acculturation and Assimilation..... | 150 |
| Limitations of This Study..... | 151 |
| Recapitulations of the Research Questions | 151 |
| Procedure..... | 152 |
| An Enigma..... | 155 |
| Recommendations for Future Research | 155 |
| Practical Applications | 157 |
| Ways and means | 158 |
| Conclusion..... | 159 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| REFERENCES | 161 |
| APPENDIX A: AN EXPLANATION OF THE PROCESS | 179 |
| APPENDIX A 1: SUMMATIVE CODING | 180 |
| APPENDIX A 2: INITIAL CATEGORIES | 183 |
| APPENDIX A 3: INITIAL CATEGORY DISIGNATION | 184 |
| APPENDIX A 4: CATEGORY COMPILATIONS | 187 |
| APPENDIX A 5: CATEGORY SUMMARIES | 189 |
| APPENDIX A 6: THEORETICAL CODES - REVISED | 191 |
| APPENDIX B: LETTER FROM H.E.W., DECEMBER 19, 1972..... | 197 |
| APPENDIX C: CIVIL ACTION 5281 | 202 |
| APPENDIX D: LETTER FROM H.E.W., 1974 | 212 |

TABLES AND FIGURES

| TABLES | PAGE |
|---|-----------------|
| Table 1: Annual Dropout Rates, Grades 7-12, 2009/10..... | 6 |
| Table 2: Annual Dropout Rates, Grades 9-12, 2004/5..... | 6 |
| Table 3: NAEP Data Regarding the Achievement Gap..... | 46 |
| Table 4: Ethnic distribution at Borderlands High School..... | 84 |
| Table 5: Ethnic Distribution by Classification..... | 85 |
| Table 6: Initial Coding Categories..... | 103 |
| Table 7: Preliminary Theoretical Codes | 106 |
| Table 8: Theoretical Domains..... | 108 |
| Table 9: Primary Theoretical Domains and Forces | 112 |
| Table 10: Ethnic Distribution of Borderlands' Administrators | 122 |
| Table 11: Courses of Study, 1974..... | 126 |
| Table 12: Borderlands High School Clubs and Organizations, 1975-2005..... | 129 |
| FIGURES | PAGE |
| Figure 1: Ethnic Distribution at Borderlands High School, 1975-2005 | 85 |
| Figure 2: Borderlands High School's Clubs and Organizations, 1975 | 128 |
| Figure 3: Borderlands High School's Clubs and Organizations, 2005 | 129 |

Chapter One

Introduction and Overview

There is, and there has been a long-standing difference in the levels of academic achievement between children of Mexican descent, and those of Western European descent. The problem exists not only along the border between Mexico and the United States, it also exists wherever students of Mexican descent are found. The following chapter will introduce a study which will address this disparity. There will be brief discussions on the main elements of the study such as the *rationale*, the *purpose of the study*, the *research questions* to be addressed by the study, the *literature* germane to the study as well as the *methodology* to be applied to the study.

Rationale

This study addresses the asymmetrical distribution of educational success for students of Mexican descent compared to students of Western European descent. To begin to understand the achievement gap, which encompasses a broad area and affects millions of people, the research will examine the educational environment of one specific community which is located near the Rio Grande River in the southern most section of Texas.

The investigation is justified both quantitatively and qualitatively. To understand the forces at work in the education of students of Mexican descent would be important if but a few were involved, but understanding that people of Mexican descent comprise approximately ten percent of the national population and nearly 40 percent of the population of the state of Texas (Ennis, Rios-Vargas, & Albert, 2011; Texas Quick Facts,

2010), makes it imperative to know all that can be known about the educational experience of people of Mexican descent.

Qualitatively, the educational milieu of Mexican-descent students in Texas is in a dire state. When compared to the students of Western European descent, students of Mexican descent exhibit disproportionately high rates of retention, attrition, absenteeism; and, generally, a lack of motivation to be successful in the educational system. (Kohler & Lazarín, 2007; Matute-Bianche, 2008; National Center for Educational Statistics, 2003). To further exacerbate the situation, the educational gap between the students of Mexican descent and the politically and educationally dominant Western European-descent students is stubbornly resistant to change (Hess, 2000; Matute-Bianche, 2008).

Educational success is reflected in assessment scores, but it is also manifested in dropout rates. Succinctly and emphatically quantifying the current educational woes in the Mexican-descent community in Texas, Martínez and Martínez (2002) stated, “[m]ore than 70,000 Hispanic students who had started high school in Texas four years before were missing from graduation ceremonies last year” (p.35).

Establishing Nomenclature and Incisive Language

Because this study deals with residents of the United States whose ancestry can be traced to Western Europe, Spain via Mexico, as well as the indigenous people from this continent, there is a need to clarify the nomenclature which will be used to refer to the two principal groups involved in this study. Currently, people of Mexican descent are referred to as Latino/as, Hispanics, Mestizas/os, and Chicanas/os, among others. Each has a subtle nuance, but it is not pertinent to discern those differences here. The most incisive of these terms is *mestizo* for it designates a person whose lineage can be traced to both

European and indigenous American ancestors (Allatson, 2007), and that description accurately depicts the nature of many people of Mexican descent in the Southwestern United States today.

However, a closer look into the origin of the term *mestizo* reveals that although it appears neutral on the surface, many consider the word to be pernicious, prejudicial and degrading (Rinderle, 2005). The genesis of that negativity can be seen to lie in the fact that the first *mestizo* is considered to have been the son of Hernán Cortez, the Spanish Conquistador, and Malinche, his Mayan translator (Berg, 2005). For many, the conception of this child represents a violation of the indigenous peoples of Mexico by the interloper Cortez, and the sense of being violated is still reflected in the term *mestizo*. Therefore it will be avoided.

Possibly the most inclusive and culturally sensitive term to refer to those whose lineage originates in Mexico is that which was quoted earlier and is attributed to Matute-Bianche (2008). For the remainder of this project, the researcher will use the term *Mexican-descent* to refer to the people of the Rio Grande Valley who, regardless of their present circumstances, are of Mexican ancestry.

The term *American* is equally problematic. Members of the politically and economically dominant ethnicity involved in this research have been referred to as Anglos, Gringos, and simply *Americans*. The citizens of the nation of Mexico are not only Americans by definition, they are also North Americans, so for clarity, the researcher will refer to those who gained political control of the Rio Grande Valley region by the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo in 1848 as persons of *Western European-descent*. The term is a bit cumbersome, but is necessary to achieve precision.

In addition to an explanation of the nomenclature applied to the populations involved in this study, the use of the word *history* requires discussion. *History* is a complex concept which requires precise and explicative language because it is not a simple, mono-dimensional phenomenon. Any given time period will be captured, archived, and eventually retold in many concurrent histories; some will be written and published, others will be oral and retold. Speaking of the varieties of history, Saíd (1993) said that we should “reread [history] not univocally but *contrapuntally*, with a simultaneous awareness both of the metropolitan history... and of those other histories against which (and together with which) the dominating discourse acts [italics original]” (p.51). To reflect the duality of the history involved in this research, the researcher will either specify the version of history to which he is referring, or he will use the plural *histories* to refer to both.

Additionally, to establish anonymity of the town, the school district, and the participants, pseudonyms will be used. The town will be referred to as *Borderlands, Texas*, and the high school will be called *Borderlands High School*. The names of the individual participants will be given in the *Methodology* section of this document.

Statement of the Problem

It was documented earlier that there was a large number of people of Mexican-descent in the State of Texas, and that this group is considered an educationally low-performing minority (Matute-Bianche, 2008). The problem is thoroughly delineated in the literature, and is expressed through comparisons with other groups of students. One such comparison revealed that there were more people with less than five years of school in the Mexican-descent community than in the Western European-descent community

(Medina & Luna, 2004). The results of another comparison indicated that, “students of Mexican origin are not succeeding academically in the same proportion as the rest of the U.S. population (Castro-Salazar & Bagley, 2010, p.23).

Of special concern to this study, Hess (2000) disaggregated the data related to the dropout rate for the Hispanic community and reported:

dropout rates are not the same for all Latino subgroups ...the findings suggest that Mexican Americans have nearly the highest number of dropouts, with a high school completion rate of 44% compared to 51% for all Hispanic groups and 80% for Whites (sic). (p. 268)

To evaluate these statements, the report of the Texas Education Administration (TEA), Secondary Schools Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools for the years 2009/10 and 2004/5 were reviewed. These data reflected the dropout rates in grades 9-12, and the results for three Rio Grande Valley school districts are reported in Tables 1 and 2. These districts are located geographically from the east to the west, and cover the area known as the “Lower Rio Grande Valley.” The manner of calculating dropout rates used in these data is known as the *longitudinal dropout rate* which TEA began using in 1997. The longitudinal dropout rate is distinguished from other statistical methods in that not only does it collect extensive data, as the name suggests, but it also involves data over a long period of time. Another feature of the longitudinal method is that it makes allowances for circumstances such as retentions and moving from one school to another as well as counting a General Equivalent Degree (G.E.D.) as a regular high school diploma (Martínez & Martínez, 2002).

Table 1
Annual Dropout Rates, Grades 7-12, 2009/10

| Independent School District | Hispanic | White |
|-----------------------------|----------|-------|
| Lower Valley | 6.9% | 1.7% |
| Borderlands | 8.9% | 1.4% |
| Upper Valley | 13.3% | 3.2% |

Note. Adapted from “Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools, 2009-010”, *Texas Education Agency, 2009/10*, pp. 226-373.

Table 2
Annual Dropout Rates, Grades 9-12, 2004/05

| Independent School District | Hispanic | White |
|-----------------------------|----------|-------|
| Lower Valley | 8.3% | 5.1% |
| Borderlands | 6.2% | .6% |
| Upper Valley | 6.7% | 1.2% |

Note. Adapted from “Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools, 2004-2005”, *Texas Education Agency, 2004/05*, pp. 103-171.

These three schools represent the area in which Borderlands is located, and the disparity in educational success, not only in Borderlands, but in the entire area, is apparent.

The problem is more profound than simply the dropout rate. A report by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) (2003), *Status and Trends in the Education of Hispanics*, reports on aspects of education beyond dropout and completion statistics. They report that there is a higher rate of absenteeism for some secondary levels of *Hispanics* (sic) as compared to *whites* (sic), and that the suspension and expulsion rates for *Hispanics* students are greater than those of whites. Other alarming aspects of the report are that *Hispanics* in kindergarten are less anxious to learn, less focused on the lessons, and in general are less concerned about and involved in school. The sum of these data present a picture of students who are not as connected to the school as an institution as Western European-descent students are.

In this section of the NCES report, it is also stated that “Hispanic students’ National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading scores in the three grades tested were higher in 1999 than in 1975...but remained lower than that of white (sic) students” (p.48). The report went on to explain that the gap between the two groups has remained approximately 25 points. Jiménez (2000) stated that regardless of intensified efforts to increase opportunities for literacy development of *Latina/o students*, their literacy levels remain less well developed than students from other ethnic groups.

Jiménez, Smith, and Martínez-León (2003) encountered a similar lack of interest in reading while doing a study of the literacy of elementary students in the interior of Mexico. They attributed the aliterate attitude to “*layered colonialism*” (p.492), and posited that essentially the colonizing Europeans had stripped the indigenous Mexicans of their inherent literacy, i.e. Nahuatl, Mayan, Zapoteca, etc., and in doing so had stripped them of their intrinsic motivation to read.

Data from the NCES report combined with the dropout data from TEA paint a grim picture of the educational milieu of the students of Mexican descent. When these data are considered together, one could surmise that Mexican-descent students are less connected to or interested in school as their Western European-descent counterparts.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the educational gap between students of Mexican descent and students of Western European descent. The means to that end is to know the educational milieux of the Mexican-descent population of a specific public high school at two specific points in time, 1975 and 2005, and to understand how each of the two environments shaped the respective students’ views of both education and literacy.

To fully understand the educational situation of a particular people at a specific time, several factors must be considered. The events and socio-political ambience which shaped the Mexican-descent society must be known as well as the factors which affected the development of the educational system. The specific educational policies which impacted this community during the two respective years must be known, as well as how members of this community during those years related to and regarded education. Finally, the results of the education received by these students as manifested in terms of high school graduation, and entrance to institutions of higher learning must be investigated.

To address the various facets of this study, a *historical research* paradigm with an *oral history* element was employed. Historical documents regarding both the local and regional histories were sought and analyzed as were the public school district's documents which were related to the Mexican-descent students. To fully understand the educational milieu of this community, it was necessary to hear the testimony of witnesses to their history. The method of hearing the voices of those who lived this story was to conduct interviews, group interviews, focus group discussions, and mini-focus group discussions.

In order to assess the change of the situation over time, the researcher conducted research into two distinct time periods: 1975, and 2005. The first year, 1975, was chosen because it is far enough back in time to reveal distinct differences in social and educational values, yet it was not so long ago that locating interviewees would have been an insurmountable problem.

Additionally, the researcher was able to find the public school records from that period, whereas selecting an earlier year might have proven to be problematic. The

second year, 2005, was chosen because it was recent enough to be representative of more modern social and educational concepts, yet long enough ago to allow the researcher insight into the success of the high school graduates of that year.

Research Questions

To accomplish the purpose of this study, the following research questions will be answered:

1. In 1975, what was the educational environment of Mexican-descent students in Borderlands High School, and how did it shape their view of education and literacy?
2. In 2005, what was the educational environment of Mexican-descent students in Borderlands High School, and how did it shape their view of education and literacy?

For each of these questions, the following sub-questions will be asked:

1. What are the views of education and literacy held by the participants of each of the respective years?
2. What were the official school policies in each of the respective years which related to Mexican-descent students?
3. What was the nature of the school environment in each of the respective periods for members of the Mexican-descent community?
4. What were the attitudes of the Mexican-descent community regarding education in each of the respective years?
5. What have individual members of the Mexican-descent community in each of the respective years done with their education?

Significance and Benefits of the Study

As has been documented, there is a large population of persons of Mexican-descent in the State of Texas, and many educational problems exist in their community. By understanding the educational milieu of this community in 1975, and then comparing it to the same situation in the same community 30 years later, educators can learn much about how to proceed in the future when dealing with these populations. It was also hoped that by making these comparisons, the researcher could isolate elements of the educational milieu which impacted the educational success of the students.

In an official Homeland Security document, Hoefer, Rytina, and Campbell (2006) stated that there was a significant increase in the volume of immigrants coming into the United States from Mexico, and there was no sign of any significant decrease in the rate that they would be arriving. However, since 2006 the Mexican economy has improved while the economy in the United States has not. The reversal of economic opportunity has resulted in a *reverse* immigration; i.e., many Mexicans are returning to Mexico (Horsey, 2012). It is not the intent of this study to become embroiled in the immigration debate, which in many ways is emblematic of the foundational problems of this study, but data gathered here will be applicable to future populations of Mexican-descent students.

Many of the people of Mexican descent in this study became immigrants without leaving their homes when the treaty of Hidalgo was signed in 1848, and much of what they have experienced and endured is being experienced by newly arriving groups of immigrants today. This study will shed light on the inequities of being a subjugated people and will be useful to educators who teach children from this population. To understand the public education policies in this study and to see the results of such

policies as reflected by both the success and dropout rates will prove relevant to educators across the United States who work with minority groups. Observing the changes over time will also be invaluable when working with students in similar or parallel situations.

Limitations of the Study

There are several inherent limitations to this study. The first is that it involves but a small group of individuals from a large population in a specific place at two specific points in time. It cannot be ascertained that the data gleaned from the interviews are representative of the community as a whole.

Additionally, this study spans 30 years, an expanse of time in which many changes have occurred. It began with documents being manually recorded and physically stored, and ended with data being electronically recorded and stored. The longitudinal nature of the study has led to decay in the archived data, and much of the demographic information needed for the study has been lost. The passing of time has also brought changes in the nature of the school district: a new high school was opened, so data from 2005 reflects only a portion of the district, whereas the 1975 data were district-wide. Finally, the high school student body was expanded from three grades to four, altering the perception of attrition and dropout rates.

Identifying researcher bias.

All research is initiated, designed, controlled and interpreted by the researcher; therefore, there is a subjective element even in quantitative research which seeks to insulate the researcher from the research (Yow, 2005). Because the primary instrument of data gathering and interpreting in qualitative research is the researcher, it is necessary to

acknowledge the central role of the investigator and develop a system of dealing with unintended bias. In this study, understanding the need for cultural clarity becomes even more intensely important because the investigator is of Western European descent and is researching a Mexican-descent culture. To avoid having his schematic foundations influence what he perceives in this investigation, he must identify his preconceptions of anything related to this investigation, isolate them, and keep them apart from his experiencing. This process is referred to as *bracketing* and is critical to the believability of the study (Schwandt, 2007).

By making the following disclosure, the investigator reveals the possible foundations of his subjectivity and, by doing so, promotes his objectivity. The investigator has a long standing personal and professional relationship with members of the Mexican-descent community, both here and in Mexico. He began his teaching career in the 1970s in a high school which was located in a Mexican-descent community in a major city in Texas, and he has spent his entire career in schools which were predominately populated by students of Mexican descent. Although the researcher is a Western European by birth, his professional and personal experience give him what might be called an adopted pro- Mexican bias.

In addition to teaching in Texas, the investigator taught for three years in a private, English-speaking elementary school in the city of Veracruz, Mexico. Following the years teaching in Mexico, he maintained a residence in Piedras Negras, Mexico for three years while teaching in a major city in Texas. The level of his Spanish is best described as *domestic*, or *interpersonal*, but on occasions, he has functioned professionally using the Spanish language. Throughout the investigations, the

investigator will be mindful of these connections so as to not allow them to interfere with his phenomenologically perceiving the situation.

Literature Review

The intention of this investigation is to explore the educational achievement of Mexican-descent students in a town near the border between Mexico and America by understanding what has been the educational milieu in the past, and how incorporating this cultural artifact into the shared schema has affected that community's view of education and literacy. The educational milieu of the Mexican-descent community is a complex, multifaceted situation with a wide variety of possible, theoretical explanations. To achieve the stated purpose, a review of the literature of all of the areas related to this multifaceted situation will be conducted.

The review of the literature will be divided into two main sections: seminal, theoretical works and more current scholastic writings and studies. The long respected theoretical works include the areas of the social dynamics of groups, colonialism, inter-cultural exchanges, and the concept of the effects of perceived discrimination, which is also known as the *Cultural Ecological Model*. The subsequent review of scholastic writings and studies will examine present-day situations and phenomenon which can be seen as related to and, in some cases, causal elements of the achievement gap between the academic achievements of students of Mexican descent and those of Western European descent.

In subsequent sections, the researcher will discuss the fact that the data analysis best suited for this investigation is *Grounded Theory*. There are two aspects of grounded theory related to the review of the literature which are important here. The first is that an

initial review of the literature be conducted to justify this study by demonstrating that a gap exists in the literature suggesting that there is a need to expand what is known about education of Mexican-descent children near the Texas/Mexico border (Benton, 2000).

The second is that an extensive review of the literature be postponed until late in the process. Limiting the initial review of what has been written regarding similar situations is important to prevent the investigator from being predisposed to accept extant theories as valid and applicable to the situation being investigated prior to the conclusion of the thorough research of the situation (Glaser, 2004).

Furthermore, in some methodologies, the literature review is not an integral part of the investigation, merely evidence of what has been written on the subject. On the other hand, research which employs grounded theory, which incorporates the *Constant Comparative Method* of data analysis, considers what has been previously written as but another source of information to be compared to all of the incoming data in this study (Glaser, 2004). Therefore, the bulk of the review of the literature which deals with information related to similar situations will be sought in accordance with a method resembling a *theoretical sampling* model, i.e., seeking information which the data indicate are needed (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Knowing that a portion of the literature review will be deferred, it is not only appropriate, but also important to briefly preview the literature which relates to the theoretical underpinnings of this study.

Theoretical foundations.

The study involves groups of people, their cultures, their societies, and the dynamics associated with groups. Therefore, the review of the literature germane to this

study will start with understanding the theoretical composition and functioning of groups. Because much of what was investigated involved the students' connection with their society, it was appropriate to review the works and concepts of noted sociologists such as Bernstein (1996) and Bourdieu (1991, 1998). Their concepts of how society is arranged, and how power shapes, maintains, and perpetuates values and attitudes will be very important throughout the process. Especially important will be the concepts of *social space*, how niches are carved into the social landscape; *habitus*, the set of values, dispositions, and tastes which are inculcated into the inhabitants of the social spaces; *species of capital*, the symbolic value of attitudes, actions, and accomplishments which hierarchize those who subscribe to the domain to which the specific species of capital is related, e.g. cultural and educational capital; and *fields*, the arenas in which members of various spaces compete for different types of capital.

Examining the concepts of *space* and *habitus* from a more theoretical, philosophical perspective, the researcher will discuss the idea of discourse as posited by theorists such as Gee (2005), Foucault (1972), Mills (2004) and others. It will also be necessary to discuss the nature of groups on a more practical, mundane level, so the concept of *ethnicity*, especially how it is distinguished from the concept of *race*, will be explicated.

This study is located where two nations and two cultures meet at a physical border. It is a place where different, often antipodal attitudes and world views collide. To the multicultural aspect of the study, ideas and concepts related to what happens when different cultures come together will be examined and explained. Most notably, the works of such writers as Saíd (1993), Bhabha (1994), Pratt (1992), and Bartlett (1923) will be

included. These works will give us insight into many of the dynamics of cultural exchanges and clashes which occur when groups with different, often divergent approaches to life interact, either willingly or unwillingly. Understanding the concepts of *colonialism*, *transculturation*, *cultural hybridity* and *mimicry* will give us a perspective to understand some of what the data indicate. Knowing these concepts combined with knowing the aforementioned sociological theories, will help us understand and analyze the data related to the societal aspects of the educational milieu in which these students are found.

Also, it will be necessary to consider the ideas and concepts of Ogbu (1983, 1987, 1990, 1998) to deal with aspects of the data which point out a glaring paradox: in many cases, those who have recently arrived in this country achieve higher levels of educational success than those who have been here for generations. Ogbu's work presents a possible explanation, and therefore should be reviewed.

Finally, as a constructivist educator in the 21st century, thinking of the theoretical foundations of society without considering the theories of Lev Vygotsky (1978) is difficult. The ideas embodied in the sociocultural foundations of a society's collective schema and how the collective memory is instrumental in the development and functioning of the individual's schema clearly connect to the concept of *habitus*, and therefore are the underpinnings of that which both connects and differentiates groups in a society.

These theoretical foundations will be discussed further in Chapter Two, and will be used to explain and understand the data in subsequent chapters.

More recent scholastic works.

To fully explore the educational milieu of the Mexican-descent students in this specific study, the researcher will present what has been written about the achievement gap and various factors which generate and maintain it. Because this study includes the entire educational environment, including the family and the culture, studies which investigated the relationship between the home culture and education will also be important. The works of Portes (2005) and Suárez-Orozco (2010) among others will be included. Half of the Hispanic population is either an immigrant, or the child of an immigrant (Kao & Thompson, 2003), so aspects of immigration related to education will be reported as well.

Because the complete review of the literature was completed after the interview process was completed, unanticipated areas of the investigation were included in the review of the literature in response to what was learned from the interviews. Primarily, the extensive participation of former migrant workers in the focus groups indicated the extent of the affect migrant workers have on the educational milieu of Mexican-descent students in the Rio Grande Valley. Therefore, the limited research concerning migrant workers as related to the educational achievement gap was reviewed.

Conclusions of the literature review.

The theoretical framework discussed clearly indicates that this study falls within these parameters and should be seen in relation to these principles. The information contained in the *More recent scholastic works* section of this document suggests that there is a significant connection between causal elements of the achievement gap which were studied and reported in the literature, and the social dynamics of the Mexican-

descent community which justifies this study. However, there is nothing in the literature which relates specifically to the effects of colonial and post-colonial forces on the education of Mexican-descent children living and being educated near the Texas/Mexican border. This underscores the need for this investigation.

Methodology

In this section, the researcher will discuss the ways and means to be employed to achieve the goal of comparing the educational milieu of Mexican-descent children along the border between Texas and Mexico in 1975 to the educational milieu for the same population in the same school district 30 years later in 2005.

Historical study.

To accomplish the goals of this research, a historical study will be conducted. This will involve locating and analyzing historical records and other data sources from the respective time periods. Interviews with students from those same periods will be coupled with the data from the documents to generate pictures of the educational milieu of the Mexican-descent students of each period in time. These pictures can then be compared to develop an understanding of the persistence of the achievement gap which has endured 30 years of change.

Oral history.

This research involves knowing both the well-recorded, practically canonized version of history as told from the point of view of the power elite, and the history as lived by the subjugated, the colonized, whose story was seldom told. Henry (2006) referred to the history of the subjugated as being characterized by “silences and invisibilities” (p.333), so it is expected that there will be few documents, little written

evidence to explain or support the point of view of the Mexican-descent community. An ideal way of seeing their picture, hearing their story, and including them in their own history (Raikin, 1993) is by hearing the testimony of the witnesses to their history. Therefore, an *oral history* component is essential to accomplishing the goals of this study (Yow, 2005).

The use of the oral history component will allow the researcher to perform a comprehensive review of the situation by becoming aware of another, parallel, history accompanying the published histories written by established historians who, for the most part, report the world of and for the dominant society (Saíd, 1993).

Focus groups, mini-focus groups, and group interviews.

This study is to present a comprehensive picture of the educational environment of the Mexican-descent community in a specific location on the border between Texas and Mexico at two specific points in time. To achieve the aforementioned comprehensive perspective, it is imperative to hear from the witnesses to those histories.

The preferred method of mining the memories, thoughts and emotions of those who participated in the histories under investigation is *focus group discussions*. Focus groups, six to ten people, and mini-focus groups, four to six people, are distinguished from *group interviews* by the fact that in group interviews, the interviewees simply respond to the interviewer's questions individually. A focus group is structured to generate interactions between the participants, and those interactions not only expose unanticipated information, they also have the potential to reveal a side of the situation which goes beyond the data (Barbour, 2007; Krueger & Casey, 2009).

Data analysis.

In this section, the mechanics of converting the raw data to analyzable information will be presented.

Grounded Theory.

Earlier it was stated that the historical research paradigm as explained by Henry (2006) would be the model used in this investigation. Although Henry explains the nature of a historical research project as it relates to the oppressed and those involved in asymmetrical relationships of power, she is quite vague about the specific method of data analysis. Related to the lack of specificity, Kaestle (1992) tells us that there is no method of data analysis tailored specifically to historical studies, and that traditionally, historians borrow from existing methods to answer the question, “how do we know when we know?” (p.32).

Having considered various methods to analyze the data in this historical study, the concept of *grounded theory* as posited principally by Glaser and Strauss (1967), offers the most systematic way of integrating the interviews, documents, and novel data sources which will make up the data pool (Charmaz, 2006; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). In her book, *Recording Oral History: A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences*, Yow (2005) discussed the value of “using the approach of grounded theory – the examination of a large sample of recorded life histories, the multiplicity of incidents that makes ‘thick description’ possible – to make generalizations about a society” (p.18). Another aspect of grounded theory as it relates to the study of the various aspects of the educational environment of Mexican-descent students and its change across the years is that the system is designed to not only understand the non-numerical, qualitative data, but also to

reveal the dynamics involved between the various sets and categories of data. The ability to identify and compare data and their changes allows the researcher to ascertain how theoretical concepts and their relationships to other theoretical concepts begin, change, and/or are preserved over time (Charmaz, 2001). This suits it well to an investigation which will be identifying characteristics of social relationships in education, and then tracking them over time.

In subsequent sections, the mechanics of grounded theory, which are involved in generating a theory, will be discussed as well.

Ethical considerations.

This is a study of people, their culture, and their attitudes. It is critical that the people in the study are respected and their privacy protected. Nothing of an invasive, personal, or harmful nature is involved, yet it is personal, and every effort must be made to protect the identity of the individuals, the school, and the town. Related to this, the data will be safeguarded by the researcher for three years and then destroyed.

Additionally, it must be uppermost in the mind of the investigator that one from the oppressive side of this equation is investigating those from the oppressed side. The investigator must constantly guard against stereotyping the participants, their community, or the culture of which they are a part. Although the investigator has a strong affinity for the Mexican-descent community and culture, the previously discussed bracketing factor must constantly be employed.

Conclusion

This study occurs on a border, a place where the trajectories of divergent cultures have set them on a collision course. Therefore, it is important to be mindful that

“[M]obility defines the species as much as settlement does” (Pieterse, 2004, p.116):

people are always moving, always colliding, and are always either forcing relationships of subjectivity, on the one hand, or willfully moving under the dominating influence of others. The resulting colonialism, contact zones, interstices and barrios are not new and can be expected to be part of the educational landscape ad infinitum.

The *Border* between those of Western European descent and people of Mexican descent is not confined to the Rio Grande River in Texas, or the chain-link fences and barbed wire of New Mexico, Arizona, and California. It is found on the perimeters of every ethnically homogeneous barrio in every major city and, increasingly, in smaller towns across the United States. We educators can expect to be teaching children from these situations for the duration of our careers; therefore, it is imperative that efforts to understand the educational dynamics involved here be made. Looking at the changes in the educational milieu of such a longstanding product of colonial inequities is designed to shed light on this situation.

To investigate these borders, collisions, the resulting asymmetrical relations of power and its relation to the asymmetrical levels of educational success between the conqueror and the conquered, the following structure will be established. First, the literature related to other aspects of the achievement gap will be explored to gain a perspective of the situation. Then the afore-mentioned theoretical underpinnings will be expanded upon in preparation for subsequent chapters. In those subsequent chapters, the data in the documents, interviews and novel data will be analyzed and considered. To gain perspective and clarity, the theoretical concepts will be remembered and utilized to provide meaningful nomenclature as well as a studied perspective through which aspects

of this milieu can be viewed. Finally, when the various aspects of the situation have been identified and discussed to some extent, they will be put into a chronological relationship so as to allow an analysis of the dynamics of this situation.

The following chapter will provide an academic and theoretical backdrop against which the remainder of the investigation will unfold. The literature and theoretical concepts germane to the study of the educational milieu of children of Mexican descent will be visited.

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

The purpose of this study is to understand the educational milieu of students in 1975 and 2005 in order to draw comparisons which might be helpful in understanding the current achievement gap between students of Mexican descent, and students of Western European descent. The research is not occurring in a void; there are connections to other studies of the achievement gap and to well established theories of society and education. The purpose of Chapter Two is to explore those connections.

Theoretical Foundations

This study involves groups of people, their cultures, their societies, and the dynamics associated with groups. Therefore, the review of the literature germane to this study will start with understanding the theoretical composition and dynamics of groups.

Social space, habitus, cultural capital, reproduction, and discourse.

Education never occurs in isolation, in a vacuum; it occurs within and between groups. Therefore, it will be necessary to study the aspects of both inter- and intra- group dynamics. The discussion will be divided as follows: first, the researcher will discuss the concepts of *social space*, *habitus*, *fields* and *cultural capital* as posited by Bourdieu (1991, 1998) and Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992); then the concept of discourse as formulated by Foucault (1972), Gee (2005), and Porter (1986) will be discussed; and finally the researcher will indicate some of the concepts which are shared by both sets of theories. A discussion of these concepts is needed not only to understand the concepts as they relate to the educational milieu of those of Mexican descent along the Rio Grande, but also to establish a lexicon which will be helpful in subsequent discussions.

The first consideration is how a person considers him- or herself, and what criteria are used when contemplating allying with other people, and when allied, how these groups will relate to other groups. The sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1998) approached the concept of group formation, which he referred to as “social space” (p.6), in a manner reminiscent of the way in which the Structuralist/Post-Structuralist Saussure approached explaining definitions of words. The key word for Saussure and other Post-Structuralists was *difference*, i.e., “meaning is differential, not referential” (Belsey, 2002, p.10).

Describing *social spaces*, Bourdieu (1998) followed the *difference* model and essentially said that people congregate together because they like the things, want the things, and respect the things which other congregations of people do not like, want, or respect, at least not to the same degree. Their difference is their defining characteristic.

Before continuing to explain the concepts of Bourdieu which are relevant to this study, it is necessary to explain the Bourdieuan concept of *capital*. The term capital as used by Bourdieu can be defined simply as *units of value* which are earned or awarded in a specific arena and can be exchanged for units of value earned in different arenas. These units of value can be the stereotypical fiscal capital, i.e., money, or they can indicate a unit of value of a nonmaterial nature, such as educational capital (Thompson, 1991).

To explicate how and why different groups are different, Bourdieu (1998) posited that distinctions are founded on the two most basic forms of distinguishing, “economic capital and cultural capital” (p. 6). *Economic capital* is self-explanatory; it represents the units of value in the economic arena, i.e. fiscal capital. *Cultural capital* can be defined as the things we know or can do which are valuable in the cultural sense (Thompson, 1991).

One can be exchanged for the other. If I have enough fiscal capital, I can buy a *Renoir*, a painting with great cultural capital in some social spaces.

Bourdieu (1998) introduces the term *habitus* in relation to capital and space. Habitus is basically the bundle of styles, tastes, and values possessed by people who occupy a specific social space. To explain the concept of habitus using other Bourdieuan terminology, I will use a high school campus allegorically. The sum total of the social milieu for the students on a particular high school campus is partitioned into various social spaces, such as (in today's world) *Goths*, *Jocks*, *Bandies*, *Preppies*, and *Nerds*, among others. Each group defines itself by what it is not, and has a shared bundle of styles and tastes which encompass its manner of speech, dress, and social outlooks, i.e. their habitus. Each group has a rate of exchange for educational capital, and a unique definition of cultural capital.

Another Bourdieuan theory which is germane to the study of the education of the colonized in the schools of the colonizer is the concept of *fields*. When discussing Bourdieu's fields, it is almost appropriate to discuss them as fields of play, or fields of battle, because, in Bourdieu's theory, for a field to exist, there must be a struggle. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) explain that an important aspect of a field is "the distance, the gaps, the asymmetries between the various specific forces that confront one another" (p.101) in the struggle. The purpose of the confrontations, what is at stake in the struggles, is the right to determine the nature of the capital related to that field and the exchange rate between that capital and other species of capital.

As it relates to this study, the *field* is education and the agents involved in the struggle are the various subcultures of the colonized and colonizing groups. What is at

stake in the field at Borderlands is the nature of education, what will be taught, how it will be taught, and the exchange rate that educational capital has. An example of a currency exchange is exchanging educational capital for desirable employment: an exchange in which educational capital is exchanged for economic, and/or social capital.

In subsequent sections, the concepts discussed here, *habitus*, cultural capital, social space, fields, etc. will be very useful when discussing the groups involved in the educational milieu of the Mexican-descent community, and the cultural capital each group places on education.

Considering the same situation from a different perspective, the word *discourse* is frequently used. It is necessary to include an understanding of *discourse* in the *Theoretical foundations* section because it is frequently seen in the literature in relation to groups, and the interaction between groups. Simplistically stated, a discourse is a naturally formed association of people based on common attitudes and ideas. The defining principle of a discourse is *difference*, and there are unwritten rules which provide the parameters of the discourse (Gee, 2005, Porter, 1986, Foucault, 1972). Discourses are reifications of the principles around which they are formed. If the organizing principle of a discourse is racism, those who are inscribed in the discourse are racists, etc. (Foucault, 1972). Of all the ways to talk about discourse, or for that matter, *habitus*, probably the simplest and clearest is Gee's (2005) statement, "ways of being in the world" (p. 7).

The above discussion is germane to the overall investigation as this study will be talking about the various *discourses* and *social spaces* related to the educational environment of those of Mexican descent, and in those discussions, it will be necessary to

consider the aspects of the groups involved, their relationships to each other, the nature of those relationships, and both the social and educational capital involved. In these future discussions, the above mentioned concepts and terminology will prove to be invaluable.

Ethnicities.

In the above section, various theories were discussed relating to the formation and maintenance of groups. The specific kinds of groups with which I will be working have stereotypically been labeled as ethnic groups. Before proceeding to further discussions about the nature of the particular *ethnic groups* being investigated, it is important to define the term *ethnic group*.

In his seminal work on ethnicity and boundaries (Emberling, 1997), Barth (1969) describes ethnic groups and refutes various aspects of the stereotypical descriptions which are often ascribed to them. Clichéd notions of ethnic groups often incorporate the ideas that they are essentially racially based groups which are socially sequestered to the extent that there is little meaningful interaction or few cultural interchanges with other groups. Barth counters each of those points and says that in fact members of the groups have chosen that identity, and that there are extensive interactions with other groups, and that these interactions tend to reinforce and strengthen group identities. However, it can be said that a biological association, shared values, and cultural traits are involved with the concept of ethnicity. For example, Americans of Mexican descent and Mexican *Nationals* (a term coined to distinguish those who were born in and still live in Mexico) can be said to be of the same race, but not necessarily the same ethnic group. The reverse is shown by Werner (2005), who contends that North American Mennonites comprise an ethnic group, yet the members frequently have divergent ancestral, racial roots.

One of the more important sustaining attributes of an ethnic group is the concept of *otherness*. In other words, as was stated in previous paragraphs, ethnicities exist in the midst of society, but have carved out a place in that society based primarily on their *difference* from those around them. (Barth, 1969; Emberling, 1997). Comaroff (1987) contends that the very genesis of ethnicity lies in reaction to external threats which challenge the identity of the community. Without such threats from the ubiquitous *others*, there would be no need for ethnicities to exist. In total, the explanation of ethnicity is reflective of a social space, but on a grand scale. This study, therefore, will be concerned with understanding the educational situation of those who have assigned to themselves the image and identity associated with the Mexican-descent community and its extended culture, as opposed to those who arrogated political and social power to themselves during the last century and a half, i.e., the Western European-descent community.

Colonialism, contact zones, transculturation, and hybridity.

The groups involved in the study represent people of different traditions and cultures inhabiting the same area and the resulting asymmetrical relationships of power. Therefore, it is necessary to consider what has been written about the movements of people, results of their contact, and the nature of colonialism as it relates to the educational milieu of the Mexican-descent community in Borderlands, Texas.

Recently the term *globalization* has entered our vocabulary and our consciousness, and we regard globalization as if it were a unique product of our inventive, modern, technological society. However, a quick review of world history will remind us of China's Silk Road, the conquering Roman legions, and, more recently, the

European expansion into the Western Hemisphere which was supposedly initiated by Columbus, but actually may have begun much earlier. It takes but a moment to realize that we are apparently an innately migratory species. Pieterse (2004) tells us that “we are all migrants because our ancestors have all traveled to the places where we have come from” (p.32).

Like all lands, the area concerned in this study has seen occupants from many different places. It is not clear where the indigenous, Pre-Columbian people who once controlled the Texas/Mexican border region originated, but since the European incursion onto the American continent, the banks of the Rio Grande River have been controlled politically and militarily by first the Spanish, then the French, then the Mexicans, and now, north of the Rio Grande River, persons of Western European descent. Because each of these occupations can be seen as a result of the avarice of a distant, more powerful empire wanting to incorporate said territory for the purpose of extracting its material wealth and establishing a center from which to exercise its political and military power, these occupations can be seen as examples of colonial, imperial expansion (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 2000; Saíd, 1993).

According to that description, it can be said that the banks of the Rio Grande River were absorbed in to the United States by an act of colonialism. Anzaldúa (1999) explains that the Mexican-descent population in the Lower Rio Grande Valley was appropriated in “1848 with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo [which] left 100,000 Mexican citizens on this side, annexed by conquest along with the land” (p.29).

Discussing colonialism and the resulting collisions of cultures, Pratt (1992) uses “the term ‘contact zone,’ ” (p. 6) to refer to an area where colonizer and colonized have

collided, bringing together peoples of different geographical and cultural origins. Such a cultural collision usually is manifested with power being employed to oppress, dominate, and finally subjugate the occupants of the colonized lands, resulting in the establishment of asymmetrical political and social relationships. Saíd (1993) expands the idea of inequity and conflict by saying that colonialism involves more than taking territory and treasure; the colonizer justifies what otherwise would be considered theft by feelings of beneficence towards the colonized: their lives will be improved under the colonizer's control and tutelage. The concept that the colonized is really being benefitted by the colonizer is reminiscent of ideas expressed by Rudyard Kipling (1899) as taking "up the White Man's burden." The literature of 19th century colonialism is replete with references like "inferior or 'subject races,' 'subordinate peoples [etc.]," (Saíd, 1993, p. 9).

Simply acknowledging the existence of asymmetrical relations of power in the realm of colonialism is of little value to a study of the educational situation of the Mexican-descent community. It is understanding the dynamics of those relationships and how they affect the self-esteem and self-efficacy of the colonized which will inform the investigation of the total educational environment on the frontier between Texas and Mexico. Bonafil Batalla (1996), a Mexican anthropologist, explains the detrimental effects of colonialism on the colonized people of Mexico:

traces of Mexico's colonial past ... carry us back to the colonial situation, to prohibited identities and proscribed languages, when the colonized finally accepted internally the inferiority that the colonizers attributed to them, renounced their own identity, and assumed another and different one. (p.20)

The adverse effects of colonialism are amplified when it is remembered that the indigenous inhabitants of this area were subjected to colonialism by Spain, France, Mexico, and the United States.

However, there are potentially positive aspects of cultural contact as well. Pratt (1992) uses the term “transculturation” to express how the colonized would use and reinvent from materials and ideas borrowed from the colonizer. When Bhabha (1994) discusses those places where different peoples and cultures collide, he speaks of both the physical and metaphysical borders. He refers to these *places* as “‘in-between’ spaces” (p.1), and it is in these in-between spaces where the formation of a hybrid culture occurs. Bhabha does not see borders as places which invariably separate; rather he sees them as places where new forms and concepts have their beginning. In other words, contact zones, places where different cultures come together, are not exclusively places of conflict and differentiating, but are places which offer the possibility of blending, of hybridity, of producing something new and unique. Such is the culture of the Lower Rio Grande Valley.

To see the effects of cultural contact from a different point of view, and a different era, the works of Bartlett (1923) will be reviewed. Bartlett’s concern was to investigate how cultural artifacts from one culture are transmitted to another through the processes he called “*transmission by contact*, transmission by *borrowing*, and transmission by contact (sic) intercommunication [italics original]” (p. 136).

The first of these involves one migrating people encountering another group of people. The second situation arises when members of one group who have been in contact with another group of people return home bringing traits of the other group with

them. The third situation is when two or more groups live in close proximity to each other and simply exchange values and or types of artifacts. Knowing these concepts will give us a better understanding of how cultural artifacts, such as pedagogical styles and educational motivation, are transmitted from one society to another, i.e., from colonizer to colonized, and vice versa.

This research will be conducted in a society which can be categorized as post-colonial, and in which the school system attended by the colonized was founded by the colonizers. Therefore, it is necessary to review the literature pertinent to theories related to those groups which did not join the United States willingly, but were conquered, enslaved, or colonized.

Cultural-ecological model.

This study requires an exhaustive and comprehensive theoretical analysis of both inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic group dynamics; therefore it would be negligent to omit a discussion of the *cultural-ecological model*. The researcher will first discuss the basic tenets of the *Cultural-Ecological* model, and then he will look at the criticisms of it.

Basic tenets.

The cultural-ecological model, as posited by John U. Ogbu (1983, 1987, 1990, 1998, 1999, 2008) is a set of theories which in many ways combines, reflects and synthesizes aspects of the theories of Bourdieu, Foucault, Bhabha, and Pratt. This model interrogates the problem of why some minority groups are more successful educationally and occupationally than others (Livingston & Khan, 2002). As it relates to this study, the question would be: why are children of the Mexican-descent community who have been in America for generations not closing the achievement gap between their educational

performance, and that of children of Western European descent, while some newly arrived Mexican-descent children are performing well (Gándara & Contreras, 2009, Matute-Bianche, 2008; Ream, 2005)? Ogbu (2008) explains the situation as a dichotomy composed of the intrinsic factors: “the ‘system’ [and] ‘community forces’” (p.11). To achieve a clearer understanding of Ogbu’s concepts, the researcher will first examine these two parts separately, and then he will look at the results which occur when they intersect.

The system.

The *system* is composed of forces and factors in both the society, and the schools which reflect the influence and control of the politically, economically, and socially dominant Western European-descent society. The system dictates the educational policies to be enacted, the cultural and social capital attached to educational accomplishments and the policies which govern the treatment of the various groups in the educational system. (Ogbu,1998). To state it more frankly, to speak of the system is to speak of the sum total of the educational establishment within a community, and “the white (sic) people who control it” (Ogbu, 1987, p.333).

Community forces.

The second side of the equation, *community forces*, reflects the attitudes and actions of members of the minority community regarding education policies and how they are enacted on public school campuses. When these attitudes and actions are factored in, race and ethnicity are no longer seen as the predominant factors in determining the nature of these community forces. What is more influential are the accumulated histories of the group, and the nature of their initial historical relationship to

the politically, economically, and socially dominant society; i.e., did that historical relationship begin as an equitable relationship of equals, or an oppressive relationship between conqueror and conquered, owner and owned? (Ogbu, 1987, 1990, 1998)

Voluntary minorities.

Although he identifies three distinct types of minorities, “autonomous, immigrant, and involuntary, or castelike [minorities]” (p.46), Ogbu elaborated only the concepts related to the *voluntary* and *involuntary immigrant groups*. The first to be discussed is the voluntary immigrant group whose members made conscious, deliberate decisions to leave their ancestral homes and come to America in search of a better life for themselves and a better future for their children.

Involuntary minorities.

The second group of immigrants described by Ogbu is the involuntary immigrants, to whom he sometimes refers as “castelike minorities” (Ogbu, 1983, p.76; 1987, p. 321; 1990, p.46; 1998, p.157). Unlike the voluntary immigrants, the involuntary immigrants did not choose to join America; *it* chose to incorporate them. For example, African Americans were brought here in slave ships and had no option or choice in the matter and, as has been stated, the ancestors of those of Mexican descent in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Colorado, and California were conscripted with the land on which they had been living for generations by the signing of the Treaty of Dolores Hidalgo in 1848 (Anzaldúa, 1999). Following their conscription, these peoples were assigned stations of inferior social and occupational status, which were to be reinforced by subsequent policies and prejudicial social attitudes (Ogbu, 1987).

The interactions between the system and different community forces.

The question remains, why do some minorities successfully engage the educational system and others do not? All cultures which are not the dominant Western European-descent culture will have some issues with the language, traditions and culture, but why do some work cooperatively with the system to overcome these obstacles, and others react oppositionally? Ogbu postulates that it is not only the histories of oppression and subjugation which are important; it is the way in which the minorities express their agency and respond to those histories which predicated their relationship to the established system and its schools.

The concept of the inextricable agency of minorities is echoed by Bourdieu (1991) in both the idea of *symbolic power* and *symbolic violence*. Symbolic power is a situation in which a subjugated person, or group accepts as legitimate the claims of power of a controlling person or group. The power is *real* only because the person being subjected to it accepts it as valid and *chooses* to comply; it is simply expressed; it is symbolic (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Of *symbolic violence*, Bourdieu (1991) stated, “symbolic violence ...can only be exerted on a person predisposed (in his habitus) to feel it...” (p.51). As it relates to this study, it can be said that a historical situation which involved an extremely asymmetrical relationship of power changed over time as laws and regulations supporting that inequity changed, and the residual relationship became oppositional when the once oppressed no longer accepted the legitimacy of the now symbolic power and expressed their new found agency through opposition to what had once oppressed them.

The *voluntary immigrants* chose to come here, and, in many cases, sacrificed to come here. They had a tacit respect, faith, and trust in the American way, and in many cases a memory of a system which wasn't so good or trustworthy (Ogbu 1983, 1987, 1990, 1998, 2008). No relationship of extreme inequity or oppression ever existed between them and the American *system*, so symbolic violence was never perceived by them. Therefore, when they encountered difficulties with the language, culture, or even prejudice, there was no foundation for opposition, so they found ways to work with the system and overcome the obstacles.

When the system required that English be learned, and that American culture and traditions be observed, it was not seen as a threat to the cultural identity of the voluntary minorities, but as necessary conditions to achieve their ambition of assimilation into this society. However, the practices of slavery, apartheid, and racial discrimination have established a belief in the minds of the involuntary minority populations that their race, culture, language, and very identity were devalued, and under attack. Therefore, they feel the need to maintain and defend those aspects of their lives, e.g., language and culture, which denote their *difference*, and they react oppositionally to the symbolic power and violence of the dominant culture which they believe is intent on establishing social homogeneity through subtractive education, by erasing the symbols of their *otherness* (Ogbu, 1987, 1990, 1998, 1999; Matute-Bianche, 2008; Valenzuela, 2008).

Positive attitudes towards society and education cannot be expected from communities which have endured conquest, colonization, and slavery at the hands of those who constitute "*the system*" (Ogbu, 1987, p. 333). It is unrealistic to expect trust and harmony to flourish in an educational situation whose genesis is characterized by a

total lack of respect for the subjugated and an extreme imbalance of power between the colonized and the colonizer. Even today in the African American community for example, “blacks do not believe that the public schools can be trusted to educate black children as well as they educate white (sic) children” (Ogbu, 1983, p.78).

Conclusion to the discussion of the cultural-ecological model.

Ogbu (1983, 1987, 1990, 1998, 2008) spent his entire career developing and expanding the cultural-ecological model which posited that there are three elements which determine success or lack of success for minority students in school: “society, school and community” (Ogbu, 1987, p. 317). He further stated that it is not simply a matter of what the *system* does to a minority which determines the success of the minority student; it is also the specific minority community’s opinion of and reaction to the system which is important. In other words, Ogbu was concerned with how the nature of past relationships between the system and a minority community affect the way community members express their agency in reaction to their treatment by the dominant Western European-descent establishment (Ogbu, 1998).

Translated to Bourdieuan terms: in the *field* of struggle for control of educational *capital*, the agents possessing the greatest amount of political and economic capital, i.e., those of Western European descent use that capital to control the field of education. Those who have recently immigrated acquiesce with that control and follow rules imposed by the dominating society with high expectations of bartering their educational capital for financial and social capital to secure a better future.

However, in the same field there are those whose immigration to America was beyond their control, and violated their self-determination. The ensuing struggle has

resulted in the development of an anti-capital in opposition to the ‘coin of the realm.’ The ensuing oppositional-capital is sought either overtly, as in the case of the previously mentioned behavior problems which lead to students being disciplined or suspended or tacitly as is the case of children who do not connect to or show any interest in school (NCES, 2003).

Ogbu polarized these “differing histories,” into the *voluntary* and *involuntary or castelike* minorities, yet he did, albeit briefly, explain that in fact, in reality the situation is not so simple: “the distinguishing patterns of beliefs and behaviors of voluntary and involuntary minorities are more of a continuum than a strict dichotomy” (Ogbu, 1998, p.168).

Explicit criticism of Ogbu’s theories.

In the following section the explicit criticisms of Ogbu’s work will be discussed. The researcher will discuss three basic areas of criticism: deficit thinking, the over-importance of *community forces*, and his insistence on using the term *caste*.

Deficit thinking.

Scholars such as Foley (2005), have expressed a concern that in many aspects of his writing, Ogbu, an African-African, has adopted an attitude of *deficit thinking* toward African-Americans. As you read his work, it is clear that in the bulk of Ogbu’s writings, he sees only the negative aspects of the involuntary immigrant’s educational endeavors (O’Conner, 1997). It could be said that in Ogbu’s analysis of the situation, it is impossible for a member of the involuntary immigrant group to be a high achiever for reasons related to intrinsic motivation. It is simply not possible for members of this group to want to achieve for all the right reasons (Foster, 2004). It is difficult to say anything in

defense of deficit thinking, but Foley (2005) pointed out that Ogbu's deficit-like thinking involved analyzing "adaptations [to discrimination and segregation] *not* inherent cultural traits" (p.648).

Community forces.

Another area of concern is that Ogbu assigns much of the responsibility for the minorities' academic failure to the minority groups themselves. In his previously discussed dichotomous view, he sees two mutually opposed forces, the *system*, and *community forces*, which determine the extent to which minority students can succeed. Ogbu agrees that the *system* is fraught with obstacles to the minorities' educational opportunities (Ogbu, 1987), yet insists that greater attention be paid to the part played by *community forces*. An example of focusing on community forces is the statement: "school performance is not due only to what is done to or for the minorities [by the *system*]; it is due to the fact that the nature of the minorities' interpretations and responses makes them more or less accomplices to their own school success or failure" (p.317). Ogbu has received criticism from the academic community for such remarks because these histories, which stretch back for centuries, were replete with instances of incredible brutality and savagery against involuntary minorities who were essentially dehumanized by their oppressors, yet Ogbu would say that the minorities were the architects of their own deficiencies, and not the victims of wretched racial injustices (Gould,1997). In other words, Ogbu would contend that although the system is responsible for generating a society which is struggling educationally, it is the adaptation to that situation which is holding the minorities back.

Caste vs. class.

Finally, there is criticism about Ogbu's avoiding the word *class*, and using the more negatively connotative word *caste*. Both *class* and *caste* systems are based on a hierarchy, but the caste system is very rigid and is based on birth; whereas a person is not necessarily born into a class and has the opportunity to move from class to class (Foley, 2005). There is no evidence to suggest that Ogbu believed in a rigid caste system based solely on heredity, but it is clear that he did have "a rather fixed notion of race/ethnicity as an inherited historical tradition" (p. 646). It is interesting that Ogbu valued individual agency to the extent that he refused to accept the power of *the system* to subjugate the individual without the involvement of the *community forces*, e.g. *symbolic power*, yet he has no problem seeing past the power of agency in the issue of caste vs. class.

It should be noted in concluding this segment that these are but some of the more salient explicit criticisms. It should also be acknowledged that all of these critics were openly respectful of Dr. Ogbu, and complimentary, if not of all, of the essence of his work.

Implicit criticism of Ogbu's theories.

The above criticisms of Ogbu's theories are explicit and theoretical in nature. There is also an implicit, practical question: how do Ogbu's theories account for the many groups such as the Pennsylvania Dutch, the Amish, and the Mennonites who came here voluntarily and yet maintained their language, their culture and their religion while being surrounded by the dominant culture for a long period of time? (DeYoung, 1987; Werner, 2005).

Whether or not the theory of Cultural Ecology is applicable in whole or in part to the social-cultural situation being studied is yet to be seen, but because an involuntary minority is involved in this research, it must be considered.

Sociocultural theory.

To this point, the researcher has discussed the concepts of colonialism, hybridity, sociological aspects of groups and group dynamics. What is the concept which brings all of these to bear on the educational milieu of a child on the Mexico/United States border? For this, the work of Lev Vygotsky and others in the area of sociocultural theory will be reviewed. Vygotsky (1978) stated:

Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first *between* people, then *inside* the child ... This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. (p.57)

It is because we internalize external cultural ideas that the literacy of a child of Mexican descent is affected by the Spanish destruction of the indigenous Mesoamerican's writings more than 500 years ago, and also explains why the resentment of being conscripted into a colonial relationship more than 150 years ago still affects the Mexican-descent student's self-esteem and self-efficacy in a school system which was established by and for the colonizing Europeans.

Sociocultural reproduction.

Vygotsky's statements concerning society's self-perpetuating tendencies come from a developmental psychologist's point of view. Bourdieu approaches the discussion from a sociologists' perspective, and sees that there exists both a natural, unexpressed,

nonconscious way in which our cultural values are passed from generation to generation,; and an explicit, intentional, institutionalized process of reproducing targeted values in our society. In the *natural* model, parents unconsciously teach their children the values, principles, and ideas which their parents taught them. Children are reflections of their parents. It is neither intentional nor malicious, but social values are passed on; reproduced. There are also situations in which explicit attempts are made to guide and direct the nature of social reproduction.

Bourdieu (1998) discusses an intentional, purposive facet of reproduction which can be seen by some as subtractive and malicious. Explicit reproduction exists in the schools and intends to maintain the status quo by reinforcing the “gap between pupils endowed with unequal amounts of cultural capital” (p.20). Is Bourdieu saying that the educational institution consciously engineers a situation which is favorable to the children of *the system* at the expense of children from marginalized minorities?

Bernstein (1996) also has strong views on the subject of the schools’ active involvement in the process of social reproduction. His concern is that the social structure outside the school is reflected in the social structure within the school. Those children whose families are leaders in the communities will be leaders in the schools, and those children whose families are at the lower end of the social continuum outside the school will be in a relative social position within the school. He contends that:

A school metaphorically holds up a mirror in which an image is reflected... The question is: who recognizes themselves as of value? What other images are excluded by the dominant image of value so that some students are unable to recognize themselves? (p. xxi).

In studying a minority population in a school setting owned and operated by the political majority, this is a poignant image which provokes and necessitates incisive questions.

Bernstein extends the idea of reproduction beyond the students' affective experiences in school, and includes the privileging of types of knowledge as well. Relating these images and concepts to the social reproductive function of education, Bernstein succinctly states that he regards social and cultural reproduction to be an integral part of the functions of "pedagogic practice" (p. 3). In other words, designing mirrors which will maximize some reflections while minimizing others is an inherent function of a pedagogical system.

This concept becomes troubling when we revisit the previously discussed drop-out statistics. The data previously presented in Table 1 and Table 2 show that the gap between Western European-descent and Mexican-descent students does not become more narrow over time in the Rio Grande Valley. In the *National Center for Education Statistics report on The Educational Progress of Hispanic Students, 1995*, Smith (1995) relates that this gap is not confined to performance in high school, but extends to college as well.

The question is what in the society or the school is maintaining the gap between the educational accomplishment of Mexican-descent students and their Western European-descent counterparts? Could it be that the gap is a result of unconscious, sociocultural reproduction? Is it either intended or unintended consequences of the policies of the schools, or elements of both?

In the preceding section, theoretical foundations of the structure of groups, movement of groups, and the results of divergent groups colliding were explored and

presented. Many of the works discussed here are seminal and are reflected in much of the current literature relating to the multifaceted subject of the achievement gap between students of Mexican descent, and those of Western European descent.

Review of the Scholastic Literature

In the following section, a review of the current literature concerned with the academic achievement gap between students of Mexican descent, and students of Western European descent will be discussed. The *academic achievement gap* per se, is a very extensive field which can include “psychological, social –contextual, and emotional factors” (Lee & Shute, 2010, p.186) as well as pedagogical and specific learning strategies. Because the parameters of this study limit the nature of the achievement gap to the specific asymmetrical levels of achievement between a socioeconomically dominant group, and a group which can be characterized as recently immigrated and colonized, the literature reviewed will be that which is germane to this very specific achievement gap.

Prior to beginning the discussion, it is necessary to preface what is to be stated with an explanation of *immigration* as it relates to an examination of the achievement gap between students of Mexican descent, and students of Western European descent.

A review of the literature on the subject cannot be done without recognizing the distinctions of groups of students from various regions and countries of origin who are students in American schools, because one in five children in America’s educational system today is either an immigrant, or the child of an immigrant (Kao & Thompson, 2003; Schmid, 2001; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010). Within that immigrant population, the largest growing minority is Hispanics (Good, Masewicz & Vogel, 2010), and of that

population, the largest identified group is Mexican Americans (Carranza, You, & Hudley, 2009). In subsequent discussions, frequently the data will be related to *immigrants* and *immigrant communities* because it is inevitable when discussing the phenomenon of the educational achievement gap in the United States.

The achievement gap.

The achievement gap refers to difference in the performance of different groups on national standardized assessments. Results of the specific assessment which is referenced in relation to the achievement gap are published in *The Nation's Report Card*, the highly respected publication of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (Lee, 2002). The assessment relevant to this study is the assessment of reading, and the data support the claim that the achievement gap in reading persists.

Table 3

NAEP Data Regarding the Achievement Gap

| | Age 13 | |
|------------|-------------|-------------|
| | <u>1975</u> | <u>2008</u> |
| White | 262 | 268 |
| Hispanic | 232 | 242 |
| Difference | 30 | 26 |
| | Age 17 | |
| | <u>1975</u> | <u>2008</u> |
| White | 293 | 295 |
| Hispanic | 252 | 266 |
| Difference | 41 | 29 |

Note. *National Center for Educational Statistics, 2009, p. 17*

The range of scores for the NAEP assessment is from 0 to 500, and according to these data, the gap between the reading scores of 13 year olds has narrowed four points over the past 33 years. Although there was greater improvement for the 17 year olds, the gap between those of Mexican descent and those of Western European descent was still significant. Not only is there a deficit between the scores of Hispanic students and Anglo

students, “Latino students continue to achieve at rates lower than ...African-American students” (Bae, Holloway, Li, & Bempechat, 2007, p.211).

When data related to studies of Hispanic students are disaggregated, it reveals the extent of the problem. Reardon and Galindo (2009) explain:

The development of achievement gaps varies considerably among Hispanic subgroups. Students with Mexican and Central American origins – particularly first – and second-generation immigrants and those from homes where English is not spoken have the lowest math and reading skill levels at kindergarten entry but show the greatest gains in the early years of schooling. (p. 853)

In the following sections, scholastic writings and studies related to many facets of this multi-faceted phenomenon will be explored.

Family economic status.

An important element in a child’s achieving educational success is the economic status of the family (Lee, 2002; Palacios, Guttmannova, & Chase-Lansdale, 2010), which applies to all of the various immigrant groups (Kao & Thompson, 2003). There are both direct and indirect relationships between the parents’ income level and the child success. Simply being able to provide all of the material aspects of school is an advantage for the children (Suárez-Orozco, et al. 2010). Schmid (2001) reported on a longitudinal study of second generation children and stated that the findings indicated that the factor of being in a stable home with adequate resources was a positive factor in the children’s educational success.

On the other hand, when children “lived in a world dominated by poverty and uncertainty” (Good, Masewicz & Vogel, 2010, p.333) parents’ were less concerned about

education, and more concerned about finding employment. Ojeda and Flores (2008) report that there is a social reproduction factor involved in the attitude of some of first generation high school aged immigrants from Mexico who did not see that education was necessary in order to have the capability to provide for their family. In the same study, it was reported that at the far end of the spectrum, adolescents in migrant families were encouraged by their parents to drop out of school, get a job, and help the family financially.

A factor related to economic status is family *mobility*. Reporting on a five year study, Suárez-Orozco et al. (2010) stated that many of the children in the study changed schools two or three times during the study, and disrupting a child's education by changing schools so frequently was detrimental to their educational success. Gándara and Contreras (2009) report that children of Mexican descent change schools twice as frequently as do children of Western European descent, and that such a rate of change was both related to family income, and poor academic performance. Equating poverty to mobility, Reardon and Galindo (2009) stated that "[b]ecause Hispanic children are three times more likely than White (sic) children to grow up in poverty... and one third more likely to have moved within the past year, they have, on average, fewer educational resources and opportunities than White children do" (p.857).

Family effects on educational achievements.

Just as there is a positive correlation between the parents' economic status and their children's educational success, the literature clearly makes a connection between the parents' attitudes toward education and their children's educational motivation and subsequent educational attainment. The literature is divided into two areas on this

subject: parental educational achievement, and parental involvement in the children's education.

In the first area, there is clearly a connection between the parents' educational achievement and the educational achievement of the children. Succinctly stated, parents who had a higher level of educational attainment had children who had either higher educational achievements, or higher educational aspirations (Carranza et al., 2008; Esparza, & Sánchez, 2008; Ojeda & Flores, 2008; Suárez-Orozco et al, 2010).

There is also a correlation between a parents' level of educational attainment and the degree and manner in which they are involved in their child's educational situation (O'Bryan, Braddock, & Dawkins, 2008). Simply stated, the higher the educational achievement, the more direct is the parent's involvement. Jun-Li Chen (2005) reported on a study conducted in Hong Kong which was very specific about the relationship between the parents' level of educational achievement, and their involvement with their child's education. She agreed with the previously stated idea that parents with higher educational achievement appear to be more involved in their children's education, but cautioned that:

Although little evidence has been found to suggest that parents with low SES are less involved in their children's education than are parents with higher SES... there may be qualitative differences in the nature of parental involvement among varying socioeconomic backgrounds. (p. 115)

Extending the idea of different kinds of parental involvement, Larocque, Kleiman and Darling (2011) discuss some of the possible barriers which might inhibit parents with lower levels of educational attainment from being directly involved with their children's education. For example, if a person who is now a parent had had a negative experience in

school and was not successful, it could be difficult for them to be involved in activities at the school. Parents in these situations might simply feel unqualified to support their children's education. Another reason why parents who are supportive of their children's education, but do not get personally involved with the school could be a distrust of the establishment. For example, for parents to distance themselves from the school would be especially understandable if the parent were an undocumented immigrant. Larocque et al. list reasons for a parent being hesitant to be directly involved in their child's education, but then reiterate the importance for parental involvement and call on educators to find a way to address these concerns. Good et al. (2010) concurs with the dire need for parental involvement regardless of their level of education attainment, because without it "the achievement gap for Hispanic ELL students will continue to widen" (p. 334).

Familism.

The preceding sections deal with aspects of the family as related to the educational achievement gap between students of Mexican descent, and students of Western European descent. The information to be presented in this section is quite different from the economic and educational resources of the family, yet is intrinsically connected to the family and the educational achievement of the children. *Familism* is defined as a phenomenon in which members of a family have very close, interwoven connections to not only the other members of the family individually, but to the family as a unit. When a person exhibits a strong sense of familism, the needs of the family precede the needs of the individual, and individual members will support the family financially and emotionally (Calderón-Tena, & Knight, 2011; Kao & Thompson, 2003; Valenzuela & Dornbusch, 1994).

As a cultural artifact, familism is associated with the Mexican culture and is potentially beneficial personally and educationally. Familism is considered to be included in the area of social capital, and involves strengthening connections with other members of the family (Valenzuela & Dornbusch, 1994) which in turn leads to elevated self-esteem which is beneficial to immigrant youth when dealing with the acculturation aspects of learning a new school and societal culture (Smokowski, Bacallao, & Buchanan, 2009). Familism is also beneficial educationally because students who exhibit familistic tendencies consider that “academic success reflects positively on the family and contributes to family pride” (Flores, Ojeda, Yo-Ping, Gee, & Lee, 2006). Esparza and Sánchez (2008) report that the direct positive effects of familism on educational achievement are that students show increased effort in their studies, do their homework more consistently, have better attendance, as well as participating in class discussions and activities. An interesting aspect of familism is that, like the area of academic achievement, there is a strong relation to other aspects of the family’s situation. The positive effects of familism on student’s academic achievement are greatest when there is a history of academic achievement in the family (Esparza & Sánchez, 2009; Valenzuela & Dornbusch, 1994).

There is also evidence that familism can serve as a distraction academically. Fuligni, Tseng and Lam (1999) report that “[y]ouths who believe strongly in their filial duty may have more difficulty in school, because the effort they spend fulfilling their obligations takes away from the time needed for homework and studying for tests” (p. 1031). It was also suggested that as a result of spending time in activities which earn money for the family, they experience low academic achievement. Ojeda and Flores

(2008) report the extreme side of the negative effects of familism in that “fathers who were migrant workers encouraged their adolescent children to drop out of school to help the family reach financial goals (p. 87).

Immigrant and societal issues.

In this section, those aspects of immigration which are directly related to social issues, but are indirectly related to education and the educational gap will be discussed. These include the concepts of *colonialism*, as manifested in discriminatory and racial situations; the theory of *segmented assimilation*; and the *oppositional cultural explanation*.

The theory of segmented assimilation

A recent theory of immigration/assimilation, the theory of segmented assimilation, was posited primarily by Portes and Zhou to explain the changes in the conventional model of immigration/assimilation which Livingston and Kahn (2002) referred to as the “linear assimilation hypothesis” (p.1003). These changes began occurring after a wave of immigration from Asia and Latin America in 1965. In the conventional model, a group of immigrants would arrive from wherever, struggle for a generation or two, and finally assimilate into the greater American population (Hirschman, 2001). Portes et al. (2005) explain that it is not so much a question of whether or not recent immigrants will assimilate as it is a question of “*to what segment of that society it will assimilate [italics original]*” (p. 1000). The Theory of Segmented Assimilation states that there are a series of pre-existing conditions which will significantly influence the level of society to which an immigrant will assimilate, and it will be that level of society which will to a great extent determine the educational future

of the children of the immigrants (Portes & MacLeod, 1996; Schmid, 2001; Suárez-Orozco, et al., 2010).

There are three major factors which indicate the trajectory for the future assimilation: *human capital*, *social capital*, and *modes of incorporation* (Portes & MacLeod, 1996). The first of these, human capital, is what the individual has accomplished in his or her life. This set of identifying factors includes educational levels, language abilities, and skill sets related to occupations. If an immigrant has a high level of human capital, they have university degrees, or are certified as being skilled in some occupation which the receiving society values at that time, they are wanted by the new community and have an opportunity to advance quickly and assimilate to a higher level of society. However, if the immigrating group arrives in search of farm labor, or other forms of manual labor, they are relegated to lower paying jobs and a lower level of human capital (Portes & MacLeod, 1996).

The second indicator, social capital, is the more complex web of family and social connections that the immigrant can draw on as a resource to connect them to, and sustain them in the new society as they are adjusting (Kao & Thompson, 2003; Portes & MacLeod, 1996; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010). When those arriving in this country have an extended family who are established at a higher level of the social hierarchy, those social connections can be useful in ushering the newcomer into that same level of society (Schmid, 2001). When those who are arriving have family and ethnic connections at the more impoverished levels of society, those groups tend to gravitate to the lower socioeconomic end of the spectrum.

The final predictor of the level of society to which an immigrant might be assigned is the mode of incorporation (Portes & MacLeod, 1996), which is often called the *context of reception* (Reardon, & Galindo, 2009; Schmid, 2001; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010). This factor refers to the opinion of the society to which they are immigrating concerning the immigrant group to which the individual immigrant belongs. These modes of incorporation are determined by the governmental immigration policies and the perceptions held by the citizens of the country which the immigrant is entering. Portes and MacLeod (1999) give the example of Korean immigrants and Mexican immigrants. Because Koreans have a history of being industrious and come from an Asian culture, they are generally welcomed; i.e., they have a high level of *context of reception*. On the other hand, “Mexicans ... confront a social context marked by widespread discrimination and a hostile official reception” (p. 376).

The confluence of the three results in the assignment of the newly immigrated family to a predetermined place in society. Because Mexican immigrants’ social and personal capitals are frequently low, and because of the perception of illegal immigration, their context of reception is also low, therefore Mexican immigrants are frequently assimilated into a lower level of society (Suárez-Orozco et al, 2010). The level of society to which an immigrant is assigned is especially relevant for the second generation:

Other groups with fewer resources may not be able to find stable employment or wages that allow them to successfully sponsor their children’s education and upward mobility. Indeed the second generation may be exposed to the adolescent culture of inner-city schools and communities which discourages education and aspirations for social mobility. (Hirshman, 2001, p. 319)

In this section, the theory of segmented assimilation was examined, and can be used to understand why some immigrant groups seem to be immediately launched onto a trajectory which will result in opportunities to secure a place at a higher level on the social continuum for themselves and their children, yet other groups follow a predetermined trajectory which can be described as “downward socioeconomic mobility” (Hirshman, 2001, p. 317). Segmented assimilation is clearly connected to recent-immigrant students’ achievement, and can be seen as a factor in explaining the disparity between the educational achievement of various groups. In the following section, another theory of predetermined immigrational trajectories will be discussed.

Oppositional culture explanation.

Previously, the theories of Ogbu were discussed in the *Theoretical Foundations* section of Chapter Two. Because there is a significant amount of material in the current literature related to these theories, it is necessary to briefly discuss them here as well. In the theoretical section, Ogbu’s theories were referred to as the *cultural-ecological model*. In the more current literature, the same theories are called the *oppositional culture explanation*. Whereas the theories of Portes and others related to *segmented assimilation* deal with the family and the societal environment into which the family immigrates, the oppositional culture explanation is concerned with the genesis of the immigration process of specific groups. The distinction of *voluntary* and *involuntary* immigration has been discussed, and is at the center of the oppositional culture explanation (Good, Masewicz, & Voge, 2010; Kao & Thompson, 2003). Discussing the same concept, but using different terminology, Palacios, Guttmannova, and Chase-Lansdale (2008) refer to “the

‘immigrant paradox’ hypothesis, which posits that first generation immigrants have better health and educational outcomes than individuals born in the United States...” (p.1381).

Without using the terminology, or referencing Ogbu or other proponents of the oppositional cultural explanation, Gándara and Contreras (2009) discuss the phenomenon of newly arrived immigrants from Mexico and South America and the fact that frequently they out-perform native-born Mexicans and South Americans. They refer to the success of newly arrived immigrants as “immigrant optimism” (p.3).

Discussing the work of Ogbu, Ainsworth-Darnell & Downey (1998) concede that at that time, 1998, Ogbu’s theories were shining so brightly that they were blocking out all other possibilities of an explanation for the behavior of various immigrant groups. They disagree primarily with the idea that no *involuntary* immigrant has high motivation to succeed educationally. They “used the 1990 wave of NELS [National Education Longitudinal Study]” (p. 551) to refute the theory. Whether aspects of Ogbu’s theory, or the entire theory should be discredited is not within the scope of this work, but it is irrefutable that to a noticeable degree, recent immigrants have greater success than do native-born citizens of Mexican descent (Gándara & Contreras, 2009; Palacios et al., 2008).

Colonialism.

As with the *oppositional culture explanation*, the concept of *colonialism* as it relates to the current achievement gap between students of Mexican descent, and students of Western European descent has been presented in a previous section. However, the frequency with which the topic occurs in the current literature makes it necessary to address colonialism in this section as well.

In the previous section, colonialism was looked at from a historical world view perspective that manifests itself in the current situation along the Texas/Mexican border. In this section, the residual effects of colonialism, racism and discrimination, will be the focus of the discussion. It may seem that to make a connection between colonialism and racism requires an incredible stretch, but Castro-Salazar and Bagley (2010) explain that colonialism is in fact racism manifested against one group of people who have been conquered by another group:

The conquered group is dominated and controlled through various means, including violence and more subtle attacks on the subordinated group's culture, language, religion, and history. Racism as a central component of colonialism refers to practices which restrict the chances of success of individuals from a particular racial or ethnic group, and which are based on, or legitimized by, some form of belief that this racial or ethnic group is inherently morally, culturally, or intellectually inferior. (p. 24)

This statement clearly connects the colonial past of the Rio Grande Valley to discrimination and racism that lingers today.

The distinction which marks the racism of today is subtle in its application. Instead of the overt dual school system of the early 1970s, racism has become institutionalized, and as such, it is often not intended overtly by those who are perpetrating it, yet distinctions are made, and hierarchies are established based on racial and ethnic distinctions. Often the racial distinctions are unconscious and unintentional. For example, selecting only the canonized writings which reflect the values of Western

European civilization for use in a literature class is an example of subtle racism of which the perpetrator is often unaware. (Weissglass, 2001).

These distinctions frequently limit educational equality and as a consequence, occupational equality. Large segments of the colonized ethnic group show outward signs of social failure, and as a result, their culture and language are devaluated and marginalized (Castro-Salazar & Bagley, 2010). Kao and Thompson (2003) concur that discrimination “plays a significant role in creating and maintaining inequalities in educational attainment” (p. 428).

Discussing aspects of the low academic achievement of students of Mexican descent, Valencia and Black (2002) explore two concepts: *deficit thinking* and the *Mexican American cultural model* which they describe as a stereotype. According to this stereotypical explanation, education is not valued greatly in the Mexican culture. However, *familism* is a strong component of Mexican culture, so education is not stressed in the familial discourse, and the child has a low motivation for educational success. On a more racist level, those who demonstrate characteristics of deficit thinking contend that “students, particularly those of low-SES background and of color, fail in school because they and their families have internal defects, or deficits, that thwart the learning process” (p.83). It is then stated that the genesis of the deficit thinking mind-set is rooted in colonialism. The problem with both of these aspects of colonially generated racial perspectives is that they mask the real cause: “oppressive and inequitable schooling arrangements” (p.81).

The literature is replete with explanations for the educational achievement gap which have their roots in broader immigrant and social issues. Some account for the

educational difficulties of immigrants and their descendants by seeing that the motivational cause for being in the United States determines the extent to which they relate to and believe in the possibility of success in this country, the *oppositional culture model*. Others relate immigrants' trajectory of high or low assimilation to the human capital of the individual immigrant, the cultural capital of the community to which the immigrant will belong, and the pre-existing attitudes of the government and society at large to which the immigrant will immigrate. There are still those who simply blame the individual and account for their lack of success on their innate deficiencies and the cultural artifacts they possess. These are but three of the main channels which contribute to the explanation of the achievement gap between descendants of immigrants and those who constitute the dominant society.

Self-esteem and multicultural factors.

Self-esteem essentially is a person's feelings of self-worth, or the lack thereof, and is very important because it plays a significant role in a child's development during the teenage years. There is also a strong correlation between positive self-esteem and academic resiliency which leads to academic achievement. Carranza et al. (2010) reported that Mexican-descent students who had recently arrived in the United States had a high level of self-esteem which had contributed to their academic success. Relating self-esteem to newly arrived immigrants establishes a connection to the *immigrant paradox* concept as well. In the discussion on *familism* it was stated that in families where there is a high familism factor, there is a high level of self-esteem as well.

An area where self-esteem has yet to be discussed which is very important in the study of students of immigrant descent is the area of multiethnic situations, and

multicultural studies. Ethnic identity can be related to *habitus*, *social space*, and Discourse. It is a strong feeling of being connected to a specific set of cultural artifacts and traditions. Chang and Le (2010) report that although it may appear to be “counterintuitive, greater ethnic identification has been linked to students’ perceptions of multiculturalism” (p.486). For whatever reason, social contexts in which multiple ethnicities and cultures are valued strengthen their own positive sense of ethnicity. Chang and Le also report that there is a positive relationship between a multi-ethnic environment, a higher sense of self-esteem, and greater academic achievement.

When discussing multicultural or multi-ethnic situations, it is necessary to discuss the probable sharing of cultural artifacts which was previously discussed in the works of Pratt, Bartlett and others. First, the terms *assimilation* and *acculturation* are to be differentiated. *Acculturation* is achieved when attributes of a second culture are *added* to a person’s heritage culture. *Assimilation* is the process of replacing aspects of one culture with those of another (Carranza et al., 2009; Korzeny, 1999). Whereas acculturation can be seen as an additive and enriching process, assimilation is subtractive. Some of the sources in the literature use these terms interchangeably, so when the researcher is using a reference which is ambiguous, it will be clarified.

The distinction is important because, as Berry (2010) explains, when individuals have a “differentiated social network and are more differentiated psychology, their wellbeing [self-esteem] is superior to when they have a limited (one culture or the other) or no social engagements” (p.101). As was explained in the previous section, increased self-esteem leads to improved academic performance, and in this case there is also a direct connection between self-esteem and a multicultural identity. Carranza et al. (2009)

report that the academic achievement of students of Mexican descent is significantly improved by acculturation. They further explain that assimilation, the wholesale adaptation of “Anglo-American values” (p. 315) is not as important as the combining of elements of the dominant culture, and the individual’s heritage culture.

Berry (2010) reports that the best way to achieve being bi-cultural is through integration; not simply in schools, but in neighborhoods and society. Unfortunately, not all students of Mexican descent live in positive multicultural environments. As we saw in the discussion on *segmented-assimilation*, one of the results attributed to this theory is that immigrants whose context of reception is low tend to gravitate to homogeneous neighborhoods which are characterized by lower SES residents and a less ethnically diverse population.

For many, the term *segregation* is associated with the condition of African American students in the 1960s, but the condition of segregation involving Hispanics has increased during the last 30 years. It has reached the point that Hispanic segregation is now greater than African American segregation in education (Lee, 2002; Reardon & Galindo, 2009). Lee also connects segregation to the existing achievement gap between the academic performance of students of Mexican descent, and those of Western European descent.

Suárez-Orozco et al. (2010) concur with Lee that because of principles related to *segmented assimilation* many children of immigrant families are relegated to schools which are segregated both ethnically, and racially. These schools have access to fewer educational resources, which results in lowered school outcomes. In addition to being racially segregated, Suárez-Orozco et al. state that “children of Latino origin, face an

added burden of attending linguistically isolated schools that place them at particular academic risk” (p.603).

There is, however, the possibility of a negative consequence of immigration and acculturation. Simply changing countries is a stressful experience. To be at home and known in your neighborhood one day, and a stranger in a strange place the next can be very difficult. There is often resentment towards the parents for breaking up relationships and friendships. As time passes and the child is faced with decisions of giving up cultural artifacts of his *home*, feelings of guilt and depression can occur (Smolowski, Bacallo, & Buchanan, 2009; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010), and can lead to lowered self-esteem and lower educational motivation.

Language issues.

When the issue is the achievement gap of a group of students who are considered an immigrant group, the issue of language will become important. Several states have adopted policies which reflect the thinking that if you just teach all of the children English as quickly as possible, the achievement gap will disappear. However, Padilla and González (2001) report that the idea that greater acculturation culturally and linguistically alone have not shown results. Gándara et al. (2003) relate that children who had begun school with the classification of *English Learner*, but because of their successfully learning English had been reclassified as *Reclassified-Fluent English Proficient* (R-FEP) had not experienced the academic success which was expected. The situation is complex.

Not only does the situation involve the children, the parents are part of this situation as well (Reardon & Galindo, 2009). Good et al. (2010) report that parents had reported that their lack of proficiency with English was a problem. They were unable to

assist their children with school work, and they were unable to communicate with teachers concerning the school environment, their children's needs, or other concerns related to their children's education. Ojeda and Flores (2008) agree with the above comments and add that the language barrier creates a cultural barrier which also impedes the parents' effectively participating in the education of their children.

When one begins to consider the phenomenon of a child learning a new language to the depth of understanding necessary to use that language in an academic setting, one must go beyond simply teaching English syntax and vocabulary, and consider the extent to which the child has learned their heritage language prior to beginning to learn academic English. Among the theorists known for their work in learning English as a second language, Cummins (1979) is probably the most prominent. His theory, "the developmental interdependency hypothesis" (p. 222) states that there is a correlation between a student's proficiency in their heritage language, and their ability to learn content in a new language. Suárez-Orozco et al. (2010) report that although the ability to communicate in informal and casual situations can be acquired rather quickly, "the level of language skills necessary to be competitive... in the classroom takes, on average, 5 – 7 years to acquire" (p.604). We are also reminded that understanding English is not only required to learn the content, but it is also necessary to feel included in and connected to what is occurring in the classroom.

The contributions to the scholarly literature regarding the need to learn English in order to be successful in American schools are unanimous (Gándara et al. 2003; Good et al. 2010; Padilla & González, 2001; Palacios et al., 2008; Schmid, 2001; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2010). However, Gándara et al. (2003) inform us that there is little agreement on

how to address the problem. There are a wide variety of programs which range from a rather straight forward *English as a Second Language* (ESL) approach to the very comprehensive *Bilingual Cultural, Language, and Development* (BCLAD) certification which addresses an entire range of issues related to language such as culture and traditions. However, when considering language as it regards the achievement gap between students of Mexican descent and students of Western European descent, two things are obvious: (1) Proficiency in English is necessary to be successful in American schools, and (2) some means of achieving that proficiency needs to be employed.

Children of migrant workers.

Pursuant to the preferred procedures in the grounded theory method, the review of the literature was suspended until all of the interviews and focus groups had been conducted and analyzed. The intended purpose of this procedure was to insure that the researcher was not predisposed to forming opinions before hearing the evidence. There is another valuable reason for suspending reviewing the scholarly literature until the conclusion of the investigation. It is impossible to foresee all of the facets of the phenomenon before knowing the stories of the witnesses to the history. The inclusion of this brief section on the literature related to migrant workers was initiated by learning that many of the participants in this study were personally involved in the migrant experience.

It has been stated in various ways, citing many scholars that of all the children of all the major groups of students in the United States, students of Mexican descent are the least likely to succeed educationally. Gibson and Bejinez (2002) concur with that statement, and extend it by saying that of all of the Mexican-descent students, the “children of Mexican farm workers are among the most educationally disadvantaged”

(p. 156). The disadvantage comes from four areas. Three of which have been previously discussed, and the third will be introduced. Earlier it was stated that among the causes for the achievement gap, the parents' financial status is one of the more influential factors. Migrant farm workers, as a group, can be considered to be in the lower SES (Gibson & Bejénez). It has also been discussed that family mobility is a negative factor in a child's educational success. Simply the title *migrant worker* is indicative of the level of mobility of these families. Some migrant workers are American residents who spend the growing and harvesting season following the crops and are where labor is needed to either plant or harvest the food that we eat, and some are Mexicans who spend the growing season in the United States and return to Mexico in the off season. All have children in American schools (Gibson & Bejénez, 2002).

Gibson, Bejénez, Hidalgo, and Rolón (2004) report that even in schools where there are programs which support migrant students, encounters with mainstream peers, who "neither accept or respect them" (p. 130) because of their migrant status, are detrimental to their school experience. Acts of discrimination were earlier expressed as manifestations of colonialism against subordinated peoples, but these acts are often perpetrated as intra-ethnic prejudice.

The one area which has not been discussed is the area *self-fulfilling prophecies* as presented by Guyll, Madon, Prieto, and Scheer (2010). According to this concept, because of their mobility, their low SES, and their limited English proficiency, many teachers perceive that they will fail. The manner in which the teacher treats the student is indicative of a self-fulfilling prophecy and in response to the teacher's treatment, the student becomes disengaged, and fails.

Remarkably, and paradoxically, in spite of this list of reasons why migrant students are the most disadvantaged of the Mexican-descent students, the data indicate that migrant students are currently more successful than other non-migrant students of Mexican descent (Gibson & Bejéne, 2002; Gibson et al., 2004). The reason for migrant student's success is given as the "Migrant Education Program (MEP) ... [e]stablished by the federal government in 1966" (p.156). The stated purpose of this program is to address conditions which negatively impacted the educational success of children of migrant workers. In addition to implementing a variety of programs directly aimed at the structural problems in a migrant student's education, the program went deeper and addressed the affective elements of the problem. Knowing that most of the children were of Mexican descent, the program took a very pro-Mexican stance, and embraced their culture and traditions. Additionally, whenever possible, MEP hires teachers whom they entitle *migrant teachers* who have a history as a migrant student.

Connecting the migrant student to their heritage culture and to their school culture is done in recognition of the previously discussed concept of *social capital*, the social network of family and friends who understand the system, and can help the student be successful in it. Migrant students naturally have very low social capital, so MEP provides it through the migrant teachers and other staff members who help the student navigate the system. Another important aspect of the program reflects an understanding of the value of the student's feeling connected to the educational system. Much of what MEP does is explicitly designed to create a sense of belonging to the school which the student attends (Gibson & Bejéne, 2002).

Gibson et al. (2004) explain one such program, the *Migrant Student Club*. This club is established following guidelines in the *MED Handbook* by members of the migrant teacher staff. However the students run the club. It conducts both academic and social functions and is designed to engage the migrant students in the educational community of their school. Investigating The Migrant Student Club further, the researcher learned that Borderlands High School, the site of the research, has what appears to be a very active migrant club which conducts activities, and offers college scholarships to migrant students. Further investigation revealed that the University of Texas at Austin (UT) sponsors *The University of Texas at Austin Migrant Student Graduation Enhancement Program* which is designed to support the local migrant clubs. The program at UT was initiated in 1987 and offers programs and classes for high school migrant students. (<http://www.utexas.edu/ce/k16/migrant/overview>)

Through all of the support and encouragement, one of MED's goals is to assist their students with learning both Spanish and English, and in acculturating to the dominant culture in which they live. In keeping with their position of supporting the students' heritage language and culture, the approach to acculturation is entitled "additive acculturation" (Gibson & Bej nez, 2002, p.172). The purpose is not to strip away students' Mexicaness as if it were a hindrance to their progress, but to add aspects of the dominant culture to the existing culture to enhance the students' success, and thereby narrow the achievement gap.

Conclusion

Reviewing the established theories and the more current scholarly literature related to the many, societal , historical, economic and educational factors which have

created and maintained the educational gap between students of Mexican descent and those of Western European descent has underscored both its complexity and the urgency for addressing it. In the following chapter, the theoretical foundation of the research design to be used to investigate the educational milieu at Borderlands High School will be discussed.

Chapter Three

Methodology

The problem being investigated is easily stated: children of Mexican descent do not perform as well academically as do children of Western European descent, but the phenomenon in which the problem is embedded is complex. As was stated previously in the research questions, it is the intent of this inquiry to deconstruct the milieu in which the achievement gap between students of Mexican descent, and students of Western European students existed in 1975 and stubbornly persisted in 2005 in an attempt to identify the constituent attributes inherent in the educational environment at Borderlands. In the following section, the researcher will discuss the design of and rationale for the research which will investigate the educational milieu of Borderlands High School in the 1970s and 2000s.

Historical Research

The ultimate purpose of this study is to investigate the persistent, intractable achievement gap which exists between students of Mexican descent, and students of Western European descent. The asymmetrical level of educational achievement existed in 1975, in 2005, and it persists today. When so many other aspects of our world have changed significantly over the past 30 years, the gap between the educational achievement of students of Mexican descent and those of Western European descent remains virtually the same. To identify and contrast the problem's constituent elements in eras separated chronologically by 30 years and contextually by the evolving and innovating which 30 years inevitably brings, *historical research* of the educational environment in two specific periods in history, 1975 and 2005, will be conducted.

There are two fundamental reasons for conducting a historical research project. The first is to understand what happened in the past; the second is to use that knowledge of the past to understand how to proceed in the present. (Johnson & Christian, 2008; Kyvig & Marty, 2000; Rury, 2006). To reconstruct the past as fully and credibly as possible, the researcher must avail him or herself of a wide variety of sources (Okihiro, 1996; Rury, 2006). In subsequent sections, the fundamentals of historical research will be discussed in greater depth, but to complete this project, historical documents, minutes of school board meetings, as well as novel documents such as the high school yearbooks will be perused. However, documents alone cannot tell this tale. It needs the voices of the participants in the history to be complete. Therefore, an *oral history* component will be required.

Even with all of the available documents and testimonies, it will be impossible to construct an absolutely complete picture. Rury (2006) explains that because historians cannot go back in time to get all that is needed to tell the entire story, theirs is the art of gathering data from as many sources as possible, and then using interpretation and inference to supply that which time has eroded.

Oral history.

Minutes from the meetings of Borderlands' school board will give the researcher access to the official workings of the school district, historical documents and letters from state agencies will provide further information about policies related to education in the respective eras, and the inferred data from the novel sources will provide information of the social and extracurricular activities of the school, but to know the thoughts, feelings and perspectives of those who were there, an oral history component is required.

The socio-cultural, political-economic environment is the product of the commingling of the cultures, ideas, values and traditions of persons of Western European descent with the cultures, ideas, values and traditions of persons of Mexican descent. Within each of these two divergent racial/ethnic groups reside members of many sub-groups such as Irish-Americans, Spanish-Mexia, [Mexia is the name of the indigenous group to which the Aztecs belonged] Indigenous Americans, Indigenous Mexicans, poor, middle class, rich, Catholic, and Protestant, just to name a few, and each group has its own distinct set of ideas, values and traditions. This could be the description of any community in the “American melting pot,” but people in Borderlands have been brought together by a divergent set of political, social and economic forces, some of which have been violent and oppressive. The result is a larger community in which the smaller, racially and ethnically identifiable communities’ coexistence is marked by asymmetrical levels of political, social and economic power: conqueror/conquered, leader/led, subjugator/subjugated. To understand how this collage of values, ideas, cultures, traditions, and relationships relates to education, and the asymmetrical levels of achievement, we need to recall *habitus*, which Bourdieu (1991) defined as “products of history” (p. 248) which we acquire incidentally, unintentionally through enculturation to the point that they are internalized and define who we are, how we behave, and how we deal with every aspect of society. Each of these distinctly different habitus is brought into confrontation on the *field* of public education. It is a complex situation.

Research Design

To assure the successful outcome of research in such a complex field of many moving parts the researcher needs guide-lines to keep the research moving linearly,

progressing logically through the process while being true to the purpose of the project, and the essence of the context. Guba and Lincoln (1982) have provided those guidelines: “[p]roblem, paradigm, method(s), and context must be congruent ... with each other to produce meaningful findings” (p. 239). Having introduced the problem, in the following sections, the researcher will discuss the paradigm, methods, and contexts, and will explain how each is appropriate to the inquiry of the unique problem being studied.

Postmodern world view.

A *world view* can be said to be an all-encompassing concept which involves not only the intellectual and philosophical approach to reality and the world, but also mankind’s relation to the world and himself (Spirkin, 1983). The philosophical world-view best suited as the foundation for the study of the totality of such a complex, and longitudinal phenomenon is *postmodernism* and its epistemological connection to *postpositivism*. To understand postmodernism it is necessary to first grasp the meaning of the terms *modernism* and *positivism*. Modernism championed man’s ability to control his place in this world through an understanding and manipulation of science and reason, and brimmed with the positive, optimism of the Enlightenment. (Friedman, 2001). Modernism espoused the positivistic world-view which was founded on a belief in the supremacy of reason and science. The world and truth could be objectively known, and the primary vehicle for knowing was experimental research which rigidly adhered to the scientific method as developed from the teachings of Augustine Comte in the mid-1800s. (Breen & Darlaston-Jones, 2010; Connelly & Anderson, 2007).

The phenomenon to be studied is uniquely human and requires a method of inquiry which understands and assays human conditions, conflicts and struggles. Lincoln

and Guba (1985) relate that “[p]ositivism has produced research with human respondents that ignore their humanness, a fact that has not only ethical but also validity implications” [italics original] (p.27). Clearly, positivism and its larger world-view of modernism are not appropriate for this study.

Postmodern ideas and attitudes began coalescing after World War II and are marked by a distinctive criticalness and questioning of man’s rationalism and progress (Cooper & Burrell, 1988). Where modernity’s optimism allowed for the metanarrative explanations and their claims to absolute truth, Leotard (1979) succinctly “define[d] *postmodern as incredulity toward metanarratives* [italicizes original].

The certainty that science would reveal unitary truths waned in light of developments in areas such as quantum theory and microphysics, and truth was increasingly seen as embodying multiple possibilities. Whereas modernism sought to understand just the factual nature of existence (Breen & Darlaston-Jones, 2010), postmodernism became concerned with “both existence and essence” (Dybicz, 2010, p. 29). It is postmodernism’s constitutional, ontological acceptance of multiple truths, histories, and approaches to culture, and its desire to see beyond what obviously exists in order to understand the spiritual essence of a situation which makes the postmodern perspective suitable for the study of the persistent achievement gap between students of Mexican descent, and those of Western European descent. These attributes align the postmodern perspective epistemologically with the manner in which the investigation will be approached.

Epistemological concerns.

Of special concern will be the epistemological subdivision of how knowledge is acquired. In this study, knowledge will be seen as being acquired *postpriori* as opposed to *a priori*. A priori knowledge is that which is known independent of sensual or experiential input, or as Kitchner (1980) put it, “a priori is an item of knowledge.” Because the researcher will be learning from the situation, the participants, and the documents, he will be learning by experiencing that which exists in the world. The research will be developing a posteriori knowledge (Muller-Merbach, 2007).

The second epistemological concern will be that knowledge is gained through *constructivist* methods. *Construction* occurs in learning when new stimuli interact with the learners’ prior knowledge (Spivey, 1997). Construction occurs in research when information is gleaned from experiences and relationships with those who are participating, as well as from a variety of kinds of data (Charmaz, 2006). Because the researcher will be developing knowledge personally by adding new experiences and information to his pre-existing schema, and by using this constructed knowledge to contribute to the theory of the inquiry, this project is epistemologically constructivist in nature.

Qualitative research paradigm.

The option of research paradigms is limited to *quantitative* and *qualitative*. The research paradigm most suited to the ontology of postpositivism, and the epistemological qualities of postpriori knowing and constructivism is the qualitative research paradigm. Quantitative research rigidly, objectively follows the scientific method of producing numerical data, measurements and comparisons. (Mitchell, 2003; Poon, 2003; Charmaz,

2006). However, qualitative research expresses human experience in words (Duffy & Chenail, 2008), and is sufficiently flexible to allow the design to develop in response to the data, and positions the researcher as the instrument of data gathering (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Poon (2003) explains that these qualities allow qualitative research to be concerned with the “social construction of meanings” (754), and therefore it functions harmoniously with the epistemology and ontology of this study.

Naturalistic inquiry.

From beneath the broad umbrella of *qualitative studies*, the researcher opted to design the research in a manner reflective of the *naturalistic inquiry* principles as posited by Lincoln and Guba (1985), and Blumer (1979). Naturalistic inquiry strives to observe the phenomenon being studied in a natural, uncontrived way, and it is accomplished by the researcher’s personal involvement with the communities and data associated with the study. Because naturalist inquiry sees reality as multifaceted and dynamic, it approaches the study holistically and constructivistically, not experimentally or rigidly adhering to a scheme which reflects the scientific method. Therefore, the research is allowed to follow the inquiry where the data lead, what Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to as “[e]mergent design” (p. 41). These attributes are essential for the methodological paradigm to be functional and productive in an inquiry into a milieu marked by the extreme complexity previously described.

To accomplish the stated purpose of the study, it is essential that the researcher reacts directly with the participants, the environment, and the data under investigation. The investigator not only serves as an instrument of data gathering, but, remembering the constructivist nature of learning and research, contributes to shaping and framing the

research. All of this aligns naturalistic inquiry with the ontology of postmodernism, and the epistemology of constructivism and postpriori knowing.

Grounded theory.

Although naturalistic inquiry specifies a posture and an approach to research which will generate data reflecting constructivist, postpriori knowing of a natural human phenomenon, it but suggests specific systems for the analysis of those data. One suggested system is *Grounded Theory*. Glaser and Strauss (1967) are credited with its development, and it was initially intended to be used in sociology to provide a method for “the discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research” (p.2), i.e. developing knowledge posteriori. The data from which the theory will be generated are gleaned from analyzing historical documents, school district records, high school yearbooks; observing the participants and dynamics of the milieu in which the phenomenon occurs; and interacting through conversations with the actors in the environment which comprises the inquiry (Charmaz, 2006). In short, all possible natural, non-manipulated ways and means of knowing the phenomenon at hand are acceptable.

There are explicit, intrinsic procedures in grounded theory which enable it to function holistically, serve as an emergent design, and provide the researcher flexibility with the process. Grounded theory is dynamic and responsive partly because of the principle which dictates that as the data are being gathered, they immediately enter the analysis process. These procedures in grounded theory allow the researcher to understand the situation as it is unfolding and respond to it (Charmaz, 2006).

Theoretical sampling.

As the data begin to give form and substance to the emerging theory, the researcher can know where there are gaps in what is known, and what additional information is needed to fill those gaps. He/she can then conduct purposive data gathering to discover those missing data and add them to the existing information (Marshall, 1996). These are components of what Glaser and Strauss (1967) referred to as “theoretical sampling” (p.45).

In an earlier paragraph the researcher referred to Kaestle’s (1992) comments that there is no set method preferred by historians, but there is evidence of processes used by historians as they research. The historian E.H. Carr (1963) gives us an insight into his process:

For myself, as soon as I have got going on a few of what I take to be the capital sources, the itch becomes too strong and I begin to write ...Thereafter, reading and writing go on simultaneously. The writing is added to, subtracted from, re-shaped, cancelled, as I go on reading. The reading is guided and directed and made fruitful by the writing: the more I write, the more I know what I am looking for, the better I understand the significance and relevance of what I find. (p.33)

In other words, Carr employed a form of theoretical sampling to produce his historical writing.

Memos

As the data begin to speak, the researcher keeps notes of the interpretations, understandings, opinions, and questions which the emerging data elicit (Glaser, 1978). These *notes* are referred to as memos, and through the process of memoing, the

researcher is involved not only in gathering the data, but in processing them mentally and theoretically. Earlier Lincoln and Guba (1985) were cited supporting the involvement of the researcher in the process of data gathering and analysis. Memoing provides the opportunity for the researcher to be involved.

Constant comparison process.

At the heart of the grounded theory approach is the *Constant Comparative Method*. Benton (2000) succinctly explains the process:

This method of analysis entails the comparison of incidents with incidents, allowing the generation of categories. Incidents are then compared with categories – a strategy which allows you to identify the properties of the categories ... This process then progresses to the comparison of category with category, category with construct, and construct with construct. (pp. 159 -160)

It is the constantly comparing which gives the constant comparative method its inductive quality (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; see also Boeije, 2002; Charmaz, 2006; Glaser, 1965) and will allow the researcher to integrate data from many sources to establish the picture of the educational milieu which is sought.

Coding.

To understand and interpret the information in a document, the information needs to be reduced to single units of meaning, extracted and named. The process of taking selected, meaningful units of data and giving them a name for the purpose of creating analyzable, comparable, combinable entities of information is called *coding* (Charmaz, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994). The size of the unit is determined by the unity of the

information, and can be “words, phrases, sentences, or whole paragraphs” (Johnson & Christensen, 2004, p.503).

It is this process which renders raw data analyzable. In qualitative research, there is no attempt to fit the data into predetermined categories; decisions related to grouping and categorizing are made extemporaneously based on the information in the unit (Charmaz, 2006). By allowing the data to freely speak, and by interacting with them through the process of coding, the information obtained in interviewing and reading documents becomes data which will contribute to the formation of a theory of the nature of the educational environment of Mexican-descent children along the Texas/Mexican border. However, it must be understood that the essence of grounded theory is subjective; simply selecting what is to be coded is affected by what the researcher brings to the project. Earlier the researcher spoke of the need to *bracket* his personal schemata to limit the possibilities of his biases entering the research; that function needs be employed in the coding processes as well. Therefore, as the researcher goes through the coding process, as well as all of the other parts of the research, he must bracket his subjectivity.

Because the coding process is essential to the success of a grounded theory analysis, grounded theorists focus intently on the process, and have developed various levels of sorting and categorizing data. In this study, three forms of coding; initial, focused, and theoretical coding will be employed to analyze the data.

Initial coding.

In the initial coding phase, it will be critical to keep an open mind and see what is there. At this point in the process, emerging codes are to be compared to previously coded data to begin to form patterns, and show the nature of the situation being studied.

Charmaz (2006) recommends that initial coding be done quickly, precisely, and remains close to the data. It is also recommended that initial codes are short and keep the sense of action given by the source of the data.

Focused coding.

A second phase of the coding process is *focused coding* which occurs after the initial coding begins to reveal a clear and distinct analytical direction, and can be used to bring together larger amounts of data. After reviewing the initial data, decisions will be made about the direction the data are taking, and these decisions will be the foundations for the concentrating, focusing phase of analysis.

Theoretical coding.

Boeije (2002) referred to the analysis process as “fracturing and connecting” (p. 63). The initial coding process is a good example of *fracturing* the data. After the document has been broken into units, they are analyzed to determine their substance, and then they are *connected* to other focused codes of essentially the same substance (Charmaz, 2006). Often these theoretical codes are predetermined. Glaser (1978) has identified various “Coding Families,” and among them are: “Causes, Contexts, Contingencies [as well as] *Process... Degree... Dimension... Type*” [uppercase and italics – original]. This final step can be seen as shaping the raw data into a theory which will address the educational milieu of the indigenous Mexican-descent children of this region.

Conclusion to Grounded Theory.

For the conclusions of an inquiry to be strongly trustworthy, they must be the product of research whose design has a high degree of integrity; the constituent parts,

both theoretical and functional, are integrally related. The research design for this study proceeds from the broad, all-encompassing world view of *postmodernism* to the actionable grounded theory. Each aspect of the design is aligned with both the preceding and the following aspects generating a high degree of design integrity.

Research Site

The research will be focused in the geographical area known as the Lower Rio Grande Valley, Texas which borders the state of Tamaulipas, Mexico. To establish and maintain their anonymity, pseudonyms are to be used to designate the specific town and high school in which the research will occur, as well as the names of the persons involved in the research. The exact location of the investigation will be Borderlands High School (BHS), the first of two high schools in Borderlands, Texas, a town located approximately twenty miles from the Rio Grande River, the border between the United States and Mexico. The principal source of revenue for this geographical area is agriculture. Summer crops include cotton, corn, sugar cane and maize. In the winter, the moderate climate permits the growing of cabbage, onions, carrots, and other vegetables. Citrus orchards which produce primarily oranges and grapefruit flourish throughout the area. Although the area is rich agriculturally, Maril (1989) reported that as recently as 1989, “The Mexican Americans of the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas are among the poorest people in the United States” (p. 4).

In recent years, regard for the situation of commodities and people entering this country illegally from Mexico has prompted the federal government to increase the number of Border Patrol and Customs agents stationed in Borderlands. Employment by federal agencies has become another significant source of income.

The primary sources of the local history, the Cameron County Historical Commission, and The Border Lands Preservation Society, will be briefly reviewed here, and presented more extensively in succeeding sections. The first record of this land being controlled by Europeans was a “Spanish land grant called Concepción de Carricitos awarded (1781) to Eugenio and Bartolome Fernández” (Rozeff, 2009 n.p.). In 1836 the political control of what was to become Borderlands was assumed by European Americans after the Texas War of Independence. However, there were very few inhabitants until the 1900s.

In the year 1905 the founding father of Borderlands (Rozeff, 2009,n.p), Lon C. Hill, who had recently arrived from Beeville, Texas, built a small school house for his seven children, and the children of his extended family. Although the Borderlands Independent School District had its organizational meeting in 1909, the city was not incorporated until “February 24, 1927” (Charter of the City of Borderlands, 2006, p.4). The first school board was composed of John E. Snavelly (chairman), C.F. Perry, H.N. Morrow, J.A. Card, R.S. Chambers, W.E. Hollingsworth, and W.H. Kilgore. (Rozeff, 2009): Western European-descent men all.

In 1907, Mexican-descent students were being taught separately, and in 1910 the first “Mexican School” was built. The lower grades remained segregated for many years, but the first Mexican-descent student graduated from Borderlands High School in 1921. In the American Community Survey’s (ASC) estimate of 2009 (U.S, Census Bureau. 2010), the total population of the town was 63,366. Of that number, 46, 871(74%), are listed as Hispanic or Latino and of the designated Hispanics, 44,064 (69.5%) listed their race (sic) as Mexican. A total of 14,532 (22.9%) listed their race as white.

More important to this study is the population of Borderlands, Texas in 1975 and 2005 respectively. According to the Borderlands Economic Development Corporation (<http://www.harlingenedc.com/EconomicDevelopment/Demographics/Population>) the population of Borderlands in the 2000 census was 57,564. The population in the 1970 census was 33,503. There are no race distribution statistics available for 1975. However, the U.S. Beacon website lists the population of Borderlands in 2005 as 62,318, and lists the racial percentages in 2000 as 72.76% Hispanic, and 25.03% white.

(<http://www.usbeacon.com/Texas/>)

Demographics, Borderlands High School.

To understand the educational milieu of both 1975 and 2005, it is necessary to understand the student body demographics of both eras. Analyzing the data is needed to know the total population, the size of the individual classes, e.g. senior, junior, sophomore, and freshman, and the ethnic distribution within each class. It is also useful in ascertaining the rate of attrition, and the dropout rate for the classes involved in the study. Therefore, it was necessary to gather data for the years 1971-1975 and 2001-2005 which was a diverse and difficult task.

Complications with gathering data.

The process of gathering data was diverse because of the necessity to research a variety of sources to obtain the needed information. There are no electronically filed data available from the 1970s, and there are no records from that era available at the district level (Harlan Howell, Director of Research and Evaluation, BCISD, personal communication, 10/15/2010). Therefore, to obtain any demographic data for the years 1972- 1975, it was necessary to use the only available data, the high school yearbooks.

The data were collected by manually counting the students in each class. The method for assigning ethnicity was simply surname identification. This is not a precise method, but it is the only one available.

Much of the required data for the class of 2005 were available through the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Specific class sizes and campus-wide ethnic distribution was available through the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS), and the longitudinal dropout rates were obtained from the Secondary School Completion and Dropouts in Texas Public Schools 2004-5 report. However, the ethnic distribution of the individual classes was not available through either electronic source, or through district records, so it was necessary to extract the ethnic distribution data from the yearbooks as well.

Population and ethnic distribution.

The data in Table 4 show the campus-wide population and ethnic distribution. There are two significant things in these data. The first is that the population increased significantly during the time span which is covered by this investigation. The second is that the percentage of Mexican-descent students went from 62% in 1975 to 87.1% in 2005. It was during this time that another high school was opened in the district.

Table 4

Ethnic Distribution at Borderlands High School

| Year | Total Population | Mexican-Descent | Western European-Descent | African American-Descent |
|------|------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1975 | 1,936 | 1,207 (62%) | 711 (36%) | 18 (.9%) |
| 2005 | 2,537 | 2,210 (87.1%) | 299 (11.8%) | 21 (.8%) |

Note. *El Arroyo*, 1975; TEA, AEIS 2005.

Figure 1. Ethnic Distribution Borderlands High School: 1975-2005

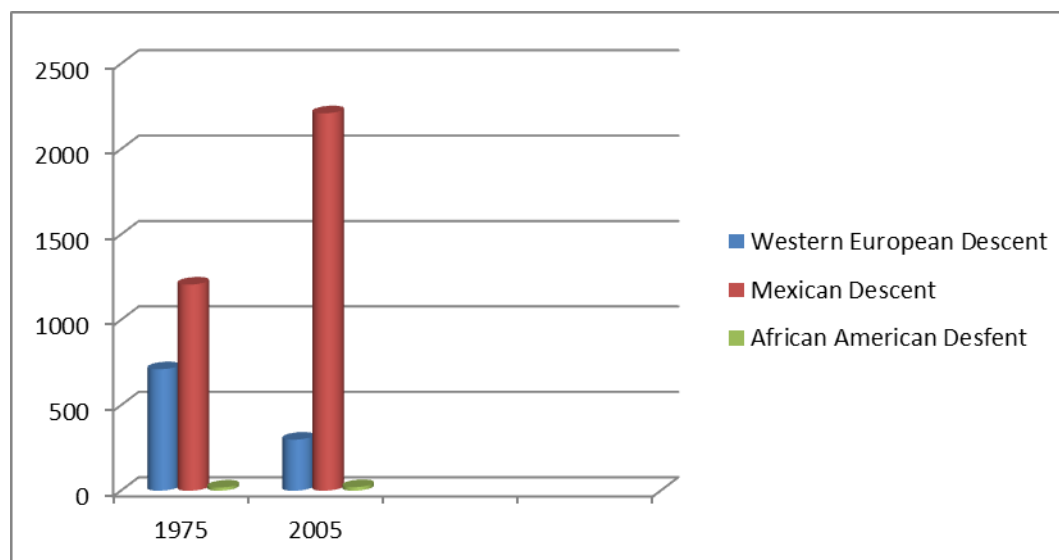


Table 5

Ethnic Distribution by Classification

| Class | 1975 | | 2005 | |
|----------------|-----------|------------------|------------|------------------|
| Classification | Mexican | Western European | Mexican | Western European |
| Freshmen | N/A | N/A | 746 (84%) | 135 (15%) |
| Sophomores | 419 (62%) | 253 (37%) | N/A | N/A |
| Juniors | 326 (57%) | 244 (43%) | 340 (81%) | 76 (19%) |
| Seniors | 322 (59%) | 221 (40%) | 399* (85%) | 69* (15%) |

Note. *El Arroyo*, 1973, 1974, 1975, 2002, 2004, 2005; *TEA, AEIS, 2005

Attrition and dropout data.

In an attempt to determine if there was an ethnically asymmetrical dropout or attrition rate, the ethnic distribution of each class was determined and compared. The dropout rate reported by TEA for the class of 2005 was calculated as a *longitudinal dropout rate* which was discussed previously. The longitudinal dropout rate for the graduating class of 2005 indicated that 6.2% of the Mexican-descent population dropped out as compared to 1.2% of the Western European-descent students.

There are no longitudinal dropout data for 1975, so an *attrition rate* was calculated. An attrition rate is calculated when it is impossible to collect all of the data over at least a four year period of time which is required to calculate a longitudinal dropout statistic. Simply stated, an attrition rate merely calculates how many students left the class over a given period of time. To calculate the attrition rate for this study, the researcher obtained the number of students who began the first year of high school with a given class, and then he subtracted the number of students who were present at the completion of their high school career. To achieve a percentage, the researcher divided the number of students who were not present by the number who began together (TEA, 2006).

The information in Table 5 was used to ascertain the attrition rate for the graduating classes of 1975 and 2005 respectively. Of the approximately 419 Mexican-descent students who were sophomores in 1972-73, 322 graduated. Ninety-seven (23%) did not graduate. Of the approximately 253 Western European-descent students who were sophomores in 1972-73, 221 graduated. Thirty-two (12.6%) did not graduate. The attrition rate for Mexican-descent students is nearly double the attrition rate of Western European-descent students.

Because of information to be discussed in subsequent sections, there are no data available for the freshman class of 1971-72, who were to become the senior class of 1975. However, there are demographic data available for the freshman class of 2001-02. Of the 746 Mexican-descent freshmen who began high school in 2001, 399 graduated. Three hundred forty-seven (46.5%) did not graduate. Of the 135 Western European-descent freshmen who began their high school careers in 2001, 69 graduated. Sixty-six

(48.8%) did not graduate. The attrition rates for the two groups are very nearly equal for the class of 2005. These statistics are remarkable on several levels and require further investigation.

Limitations of these statistics.

Of the six yearbooks studied (the 2004 yearbook was unavailable), only the yearbook of 2002 (freshman class) included the names of those whose pictures were not included. Having the names of the students who were absent on picture day enabled the researcher to more accurately calculate the demographics for that class. However, because the other yearbooks did not include this information, it was impossible to be sure of the accuracy of the data.

Another significant problem was that in the school years 1971-2, 1972-3, 1973-4, and 1974-5, Borderlands High School was a three grade campus: sophomore, junior, and senior. Attempts to locate records which would indicate the number of ninth graders in the year 1971 were extensive, but futile. It appears from researching other sets of demographic data related to the drop-out rates, e.g. 2001-2005, the greatest rate of attrition occurs between the freshman and sophomore years, but because of the antiquity of the data, the true rate of attrition for the class of 1975 could not be measured.

Conclusion to Research Site.

The purpose of this study is to understand the changing milieu of Mexican descent students in this specific place during the two specified times. To comprehend these milieux, it is necessary to understand the fundamental details related to this specific place and its origin. Although the purpose of this study is not to present a statistical analysis of the demographic nature of this situation, it is a valuable part of the context of

the situation in which education occurred in these two periods, and therefore must be understood

Data Gathering

The complexity of this milieu was detailed earlier, and it follows that the data to be gathered to understand these milieux will be equally complex. *Holism*, as it relates to *Gestalt* theory (Ash, 1998; Freeman, 2005) is understood to be relevant and applicable to this study. Ratner (2008) tells us that “[h]olism regards individuals or elements as reciprocally influencing each other... This dialectical relation of individuals/elements comprises a system, or a whole” (no page). Therefore to understand the persistent gap between the educational achievement of Mexican-descent children and Western European-descent children, it is necessary to understand every possible facet of the milieu which encapsulated them. Interviews with witnesses of the history, official documents from the school, unofficial histories such as yearbooks, documents pertaining to state and national policies as well as letters related to Borderlands compliance, or lack thereof, to those policies will be studied to gain an understanding of the whole of this environment which impacted the educational experience of the Mexican-descent students of each of the identified eras. The first of those to be discussed will be the testimonies of those who experienced this phenomenon first hand, former students of Borderlands High School.

Focus groups.

Preparatory to presenting the data extracted from the conversations generated by the focus groups, it is necessary to explicate the conditions and situations of those groups.

Information related to the participants, the settings, and the specific focus groups will be detailed here.

Participants selection.

As this is a study of the educational achievement gap for members of the Mexican-descent community, the researcher was concerned with talking with people of Mexican descent who had attended Borderlands High School in the years 1972-1975, and 2001-2005. Initially, the Alumni web site at Borderlands Independent School District's web site was consulted for the names of members of the two respective classes. Each person listed was sent an email which explained the nature of the research and invited the person to participate in a focus group discussion. When emailing did not produce results, the researcher began contacting acquaintances who were residents of the town.

Additionally, the researcher researched the year book for 1975 and searched the telephone book's white pages for each person listed in the year book. There were very few entries, and of those called, only five had working numbers. Most of the phones had recently been disconnected, and the researcher assumes that the recent disconnects are due in part to the fact that many people are replacing their "land-line" phones, which are listed in the phone book, with cell phones which are not. Because of the recent graduation of members of the class of 2005, the researcher did not search the phonebook. Instead, with the help of a member of the class, efforts were made to contact them through the social media. Monetary compensation and food were offered as incentives for people to attend (Krueger & Casey, 2009).

Three people from the class of 1975 and two people from the class of 2005 attended the first focus group meetings. Having exhausted the possible means of finding

respondents, the researcher understood the necessity of expanding the search. A new search for participants was initiated and included anyone who was on campus with those who graduated in 1975 and 2005. Enlarging the potential participant pool greatly expanded the list of possible participants. Two additional participants from 1975, and four from 2005 attended the second set of meetings.

When the list of participants was reviewed, it was noticed that all of them had been successful both in school, and afterwards. Because this research deals with the gap in educational success, it was important to hear the story of someone who had not been successful, someone who had fallen into the gap. Finding someone who had not been successful proved to be very difficult. The researcher asked many people from the community for referrals of anyone who would have graduated during the expanded period but did not. A local Catholic church was contacted and the church secretary and pastor were apprised of the situation and asked for referrals. None were gained. Eventually, a member of the community referred a person from the 1975 era who had dropped out in the tenth grade. An individual interview was held in an attempt to gain the perspective of one who was less than successful in high school.

As the data were analyzed, it became apparent that the participants from 1975 tacitly accepted the status quo of Western European hegemony, and did not question why they could not speak Spanish on campus, or why they were being channeled into vocational classes, while children of Western European descent were being prepared for college. Again, following the concept of theoretical sampling, the researcher sought out people from the generation prior to 1975 and arranged a focus group meeting with six participants who had attended schools in Borderlands in the 1960s.

It had been hoped that the participant selection process would result in the researcher being able to compose groups of former students with a variety high school experiences who would remember and discuss their experiences, thereby generating data which would add to the growing picture of what it was like to have been a student of Mexican descent in one of the two designated periods. Because of the very low level of response to the recruiting efforts, the researcher had to adjust to the situation and work with the few who attended. The use of theoretical sampling proved to be very productive and led to the production of rich, informative data.

Setting.

With the exception of the group of participants from the 1960s, the setting for the meetings was in a very well furnished and comfortable meeting room of a local motel. This site was chosen to give an official air to the proceedings in order to enhance the credibility of the project. Sandwiches and soft drinks were served. There were two digital recorders operating during the entire session. In attendance at all of these meetings were the researcher's *ahijada* (goddaughter) and her husband, who were both of Mexican descent, and lent a degree of ethnic credibility to the proceedings. Their functions were to serve refreshments, and monitor the recording devices.

Description of individual focus groups.

In this section, the individual groups will be described in preparation for a lengthy discussion on the information which was received, how it was manipulated, and what was revealed. If one defines a *focus group* strictly by numbers, it would be said that the data gathering procedure which involved participants was composed of two "mini-focus groups" (Krueger, 1988, p.28) of four to six participants, and four group interviews.

However, if one adheres to the understanding that the distinction between focus groups and group interviews is not so much the number of participants, but the presence of a conversation between the participants, it would be said that the researcher conducted five very small focus groups and one group interview. The distinction being that the two respondents in the first group from 2005 never quite generated a “stand alone” conversation, but relied on being prompted by questions.

Focus group 1975A.

The first group from 1975 met in late June, 2011 and was composed of three people from the 1975 era: a man and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Rodríguez, and another woman, Ms. Suárez. Mr. Rodríguez was the first generation of his family to have been born in the United States, and professed to have had a very successful career as the owner of an electronics business. His wife was also first-generation American and worked in a local supermarket. Ms. Suárez was first-generation American who had worked her way through high school as a migrant worker. Following high school graduation, she had worked full-time and gone to college at night for eight years before receiving her bachelor’s degree. She was employed as an administrator in a government agency. All of the participants were completely bilingual.

The researcher had read the letter from Health, Education, and Welfare (H.E.W.), 1972, which detailed instances of racial prejudice, discrimination, and unjust treatment of Mexican-descent students by the predominately Western European-descent administration. However, when the researcher tried to discuss these areas, the participants assured him that there were no problems while they were in school. Ms. Suárez apologetically related an incident of racial discrimination, but the others insisted that

there were no distinctions in the curriculum, inequities in the ratio of teachers, or mistreatment of Mexican-descent students.

Focus group 1975B.

The second group of participants from 1975, Ms. Domínguez and Ms. Sánchez, met in the same hotel in early August, 2011. Both ladies had experienced the world of migrant workers as children, both had worked days and gone to college in the evenings, and both had professional careers. Ms. Domínguez was approaching retirement from the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and Ms. Sánchez had recently retired after 30 years teaching elementary school. The 1975B session was very different from the earlier group from 1975. Although there were but two, it was truly a focus group in that the researcher simply stated a prompt, and their conversation developed organically and spontaneously. Both ladies were fully bilingual, although Ms. Domínguez declared that her Spanish was more like Tex-Mex and Ms. Sánchez was very proud of her “Mexican Spanish.”

Unlike the first group of participants, the 1975B group freely discussed being tracked towards vocational careers while the Western-European descent students were taking classes designed to prepare them for college. They talked of a racially unbalanced faculty and of being forced to speak English. It was an interesting comparison to the first focus group from 1975.

Focus group 1975C

The one single interview was held with Ms. Villa. The researcher had wanted to hear her story, because she did not initially finish high school. The meeting was to have been held in a restaurant, but it was too noisy for the recording devices, so it was

held in her car in the parking lot. She left high school early to marry her high school sweetheart and be away from her very traditionally strict parents. Twenty years later, she achieved her high school equivalence degree and finished college. Ms. Villa could understand Spanish, but was functionally monolingual.

Focus group 2005A

Two young ladies, Ms. Jiménez and Ms. Juárez, met with the researcher the same afternoon as the first group from 1975. The fathers of both of the ladies were first-generation Americans and both mothers were born in Mexico. Although Ms. Jiménez declared that Spanish had been her first language, she no longer spoke it. Ms. Juárez also stated that because her mother did not speak English when Ms. Juárez was born, she initially spoke Spanish, but like Ms. Jiménez, she now prefers to be considered monolingual English speaking. Both ladies were still in college.

Whether it was because this was the researcher's first focus group or because of the composition of the group could not be determined, but the 2005A group was more like a group interview than a focus group.

Focus group 2005B

This group of four met in early August, 2011. Of the five groups, the 2005B group was the most diverse. There were two women, Ms. Fuentes, and Ms. Cano, and two men, Mr. Orozco and Mr. Ramírez. Ms. Fuentes had finished college and was looking for a job as a high school teacher, and the other three were still in college studying a variety of subjects. Ms. Cano arrived late and had very little input into the conversation.

Mr. Orozco was born in Mexico, but came to Borderlands as a baby. Mr. Ramírez is recently arrived from Mexico, and he had just received his citizenship. Ms. Cano is first-generation American, and Ms. Fuentes' father, who recently retired from the U.S. Navy, is first-generation American who worked as a migrant worker as an adolescent. Ms. Fuentes' mother was born in Mexico. Although Ms. Fuentes attended school in the suburbs of Virginia until returning to the Valley as a high school freshman, she did not present an attitude of total assimilation. This group had a very productive conversation in which many different points of view were interwoven. Of the four participants, Ms. Fuentes was the only one who did not fluently speak Spanish.

Focus group 1965

The focus group with participants who had attended school in Borderlands in 1965 was held between the meetings of the two groups from 1975 and was necessitated by the lack of information received from the first group of participants from 1975. Researching the documents related to the seventies, the letters from The Department of Housing, Education, and Welfare (H.E.W.) of 1972 and 1974, and Civil Action 5281, the researcher had found reliable evidence of severe racial prejudice, discrimination and abuse in the Borderlands School District, yet the testimonies of the participants from 1975A contained little corroborating evidence. It was reasoned that hearing the story of a group from ten years earlier would reveal the situations and attitudes which served as the underpinning for the racial attitudes so engrained in the society that the participants in 1975 accepted them as being normal and simply the way the world was. Remembering the aspect of grounded theory which not only permitted, but required purposive research to fill gaps in the data, theoretical sampling, the researcher went in search of persons

from the 1960s to interview. He was fortunate to find a family of former migrant workers who were in elementary and secondary school in the 1960s. They agreed to meet with the researcher.

The group was comprised of three sisters, one brother, and two sister-in-laws of one family. The entire family had attended public schools in the Borderlands Independent School District. The family traveled and worked together as migrant workers during their entire public school experience. The meeting began quietly and politely, but soon became emotional and intense as each family member recounted the abuses they had suffered in a system which openly treated them with less respect than their Western European-descent counterparts. They spoke of an instance of a child being placed in a special education class only because she was a migrant Mexican-descent student; there were stories of children being physically punished for speaking Spanish on campus, and many other blatant examples of explicit and overt racial discrimination which will be detailed in subsequent sections.

One of these participants later received an equivalent high school degree, but none graduated from high school. However, all of their children finished college.

Conclusion.

The researcher was initially disappointed that the participant pool was limited and that the groups were so small, but with the one exception, the focus groups were largely independently sustained conversations generated by the participants in response to the prompts from the researcher which served only to establish the parameters for their discussion.

Documents.

In an attempt to find policy statements, and other materials which would explain the structure of the on-campus environment, the researcher began with reading the minutes of all of the Board of Education meetings, and when available, the attachments to those minutes. Additionally, the researcher found copies of the federal legal proceedings of the case which addressed school districts which were not in compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other official correspondences between Borderlands' Board of Education and state officials and federal officials.

Minutes from Borderlands Consolidated School District's Board meetings.

Permission was received from the Superintendent of Schools to speak with district personnel regarding locating and retrieving relevant documents. School board minutes from 1975 and 2005 were located, and copies were purchased for detailed study.

In the initial analysis of the records from 1975, it was noted that there were references to documents regarding the civil rights legislation of 1964, and Borderlands Consolidated Independent School District's initial failure to comply with those regulations in the early 1970s. Following the dictates of *theoretical sampling*, documents from the 1960s and early 1970s were obtained and analyzed as they were relevant to the policies regarding the students of Mexican descent. Among these were the Civil Rights Act (1964) – Public Law 88-352, Title 6; Civil Action No. 5281, United States V. State of Texas et al; and Borderlands Consolidated Independent School Board records from 1972, 1973, and 1974. Letters between BCISD and various state and federal agencies were contained in those records.

El Arroyo.

To gain an insight into the milieu of the school and the social life on campus, volumes of *El Arroyo*, the high school yearbook, from 1973, 74, 75 were located in the journalism classroom, and with the permission of the journalism teacher, were perused.

Not only were they important in learning how the Mexican-descent students fit into the social and extra-curricular fabric of the school, but because of the longitudinal lapse, these yearbooks were also the only way to obtain demographic data related to the ethnic makeup of the student body, faculty and administration for the class of 1975. To learn the percentages of the various ethnic groups, the researcher manually counted the students in each of the classes, and using knowledge of Spanish surnames, approximated the number of Mexican descent students in each of the classes, clubs, athletic teams, and musical organizations. The same method was used to determine the percentage of Mexican-descent faculty. Surely some Mexican-descent students had Western European-descent surnames, and some Western European-descent students had Spanish surnames, so the results were not exact. However, because no other records from those years have survived, it was the only method available, and did render valuable data.

To ascertain the ethnic makeup of the student body, faculty and administration for 2005, the computerized *2004-05 Academic Excellence Indicator System* (AEIS) records were downloaded from the Texas Education Agency's website. However, to gain an understanding of the composition of the clubs, athletic teams, and other extra-curricular organizations, the yearbooks from 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005 studied.

Other sources.

To learn of the early years of Borderlands and the surrounding county, the *Cameron County Historical Commission's* documents were studied. Finally, The United States Census Bureau records were also obtained to ascertain the populations of the time periods involved.

Data Analysis

In this section, the processes by which the data were analyzed will be discussed to reveal how the *Constant Comparative Method* was employed to form the theory which resulted from this study. The documents from the historical commission have received very little scrutiny. They simply provided a history from the politically and economically dominant point of view. The history of the region serves as a back-drop to and a precursor for the social ambiance and social structure which were to follow. However, the strands of information which contributed to understanding the milieu being studied were teased out of the tangle of interwoven information from various, diverse sources and were analyzed to varying degrees in divergent ways.

There are three essential sources of information: focus groups; federal, state, and local documents; and novel sources of information such as the yearbook, *El Arroyo*. Each source contained data in a unique format, and these different formats necessitated different approaches to understanding what the data were saying, and how the information was related to the emergent theory of this study.

The information from the focus groups, the testimonies of the participants in the milieu being studied were rich with data and steeped in innuendo. In several instances, the participants had not been aware of obvious attitudes, circumstances, or social

partitions until they were brought-up in the focus group discussions and the reality of the situations were seen from a distant perspective. Data embedded in subtle, spontaneous conversations requires the most thorough and dissective analysis. Each utterance, regardless of how apparently inane, was scrutinized through all phases of the coding process. The process will be described in detail in subsequent sections, but the overall data analysis plan provided for redundant analysis to bring the researcher's attention back to the statements in the testimonies repeatedly so as to provide a deeper insight into what was being said, and what it meant.

The documents, especially the minutes of the school board meetings, contained information from a wide range of areas, many of which were not related to the core question being addressed by this study. Therefore, the Minutes were "selectively code[d]" (Glaser, 1978, p.61) to isolate and focus on issues and entries germane to the fundamental issue, "*what was the educational milieu of Mexican descent students in these specified times.*" Items such as budget reports, construction proposals, construction progress reports, and other board issues were identified and set aside. When the extraneous areas were omitted, there was very little left which pertained to this study. That which was relevant to the educational milieu of the Mexican-descent students exclusively was placed in the same data pool, and received the same intense analysis as the other areas being coded.

The data from *El Arroyo* was numerical, and was used to compare the numbers of Mexican-descent persons in the administration, faculty, student body, vocational organizations, and academic organizations to the numbers of Western European-descent persons in those same bodies. Therefore, the data could be analyzed at face value; the

numbers were simply compared. What the comparisons indicated will be analyzed in subsequent sections.

Focus groups.

The previously described focus groups yielded hours of recorded conversations. To convert these conversations into meaningful units of analyzable and comparable documents, they first had to undergo a long, multi-phase process.

Transcribing.

Immediately following the focus group sessions, the tape recordings were transcribed by the researcher who listened to the tape recordings with headphones and recorded the information through a Microsoft word processing program. Initially, the researcher did all of the transcribing, but because of time constraints, a Spanish-speaking lady who was a member of the Mexican-descent community and a student at a nearby university was employed to perform this function. It was important that the transcriber be both bi-lingual and bi-cultural so she could understand the occasional localized idiom spoken in Spanish. The final transcripts were read and checked for accuracy by the researcher.

Coding and memoing.

In this section, the researcher will detail the arduous, exacting process of coding which extracted the theory of the study from the statements of the documents, and conversations of the focus groups.

Substantive codes

When the recordings of a focus group session had been transcribed, the researcher initiated a multi-step coding process. Glaser (1978) prescribes two distinct, but related

fields of coding: “substantive and theoretical” (p.55). Beginning with substantive codes, which are drawn from the experiential, observed, and factual information contained in the documents and focus groups, the researcher first identifies and names the units of the data in the process which is known as “open coding” (p.56). To produce a deeper understanding of each statement, the researcher divided the process into two phases which were named *open* and *process* coding. To facilitate coding, a chart, entitled simply *Coding*, with four columns was generated. The first column, *Statement*, contained the initial statement taken from the focus group transcript, or document, and the second column, *Open Code*, contained a paraphrased reflection of the statement. To intensify the understanding of the paraphrased statement, it was restated as a gerund to reveal what was occurring in the data (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser, 1978). The third column was entitled *process code*. Finally, there was a column for any memos which handling and analyzing the data might generate. The form was utilized for each focus group and document, and a portion of the second 1975 focus group is presented in Appendix A1.

When all of the transcripts and documents had passed through the open coding procedure, and substantive codes had been produced, the process began to conceptualize the empirical data and to generate theoretical codes. Reviewing all of the coded documents and comparing each coded item to all others, the researcher began to see similarities and patterns coalescing around common themes. Initially, there were 34 of these themes, which can be considered as *categories* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Many initial codes showed an affinity to more than one theme, and were accordingly placed in more than one category. The initial list of categories is presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Initial Coding Categories

| Number | Name | Description |
|-----------|--------------------------|--|
| One | Administrative | Statements related to the administering the focus group |
| Two | Dissertation | Statements related to the rational, nature, or purpose of the dissertation |
| Three | Students | Statements related to students in the discussions |
| Four | Community/Culture | Statements related to the Mexican-Descent Community, its attitudes and traditions |
| Five | Family | Statements related to the family, attitudes and influence |
| Six | Establishment | Statements related to the school as an institution |
| Seven | Schools | Statements related to the school as the location for instruction and education |
| Eight | Teachers | Statements related to teachers |
| Nine* | Mexican-Descent | Statements related to the attitudes and actions of persons of Mexican descent |
| Ten* | Western European-Descent | Statements related to attitudes and actions of persons of Western European Descent |
| Eleven | Temporal | Statements related to the specific attitudes or attributes of a particular time period |
| Twelve | Migrant | Statements related to migrant students |
| Thirteen | Language | Statements related to the use of or the restricted use of either English or Spanish |
| Fourteen | Dropout | Statements related to the specific act of dropping-out of school |
| Fifteen | Affective Elements | Statements related to the emotional aspects of school |
| Sixteen | Special Education | Statements related to placement in Special Education |
| Seventeen | Racial Discrimination** | Statements related to civil rights issues |
| Eighteen | Education | Statements related to education, its values, purposes, etc. |
| Nineteen | Financial Situations | Statements related to financial concerns |

| | | |
|--------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Twenty* | Location | Statements related to towns other than Borderlands |
| Twenty-one | Marital Issues | Statements related to Marrying |
| Twenty-two* | Delayed Graduation | Statements related to students who dropped out of school then returned |
| Twenty-three | Intra-Ethnic Racial Issues | Statements related to discriminatory statements between Mexican Nationals and Mexican Americans |
| Twenty-four | Early Educational Experiences | Statements related to experiences which occurred in grades K-6 |
| Twenty-five | Perseverance | Statements related to participants persevering through difficult times |
| Twenty-six | Tracking | Statements related to the practice of directing a student's course of study to either vocational or Academic |
| Twenty-seven | Self-Esteem | Statements related to a person's self-esteem |
| Twenty-eight | Motivation | Statements related to a participant's educational motivation |
| Twenty-nine | Biographical Data | Statements related to a person's biographical data |
| Thirty | Literacy | Statements to a person's ability, or love of reading |
| Thirty-one | Gender | Statements related to situations in which gender was a significant factor |
| Thirty-two | Higher Education | Statements related to a person pursuing higher education |
| Thirty-three | Posterity | Statements related to the children of the participants |
| Thirty-four | Campus Life | Statements related to the social life on BHS campus |

Note. *Data in these categories was later moved to other categories. **Upon consideration, this category was renamed *Colonialism* to reflect the theory which is demonstrated.

So they could be seen as a whole, the categorized substantive codes were extracted from the initial Coding Chart which had been produced for each focus group or document, and compiled in a second series of charts, *Compilations*, whose title included the category name and number. A separate chart was created for each of the initial

categories. These charts contain columns for the original statement, the focus group, or document from which it was extracted, and the process code which had been derived. This process allowed the researcher to read, and consider the category as a whole, and to begin to understand the nature of the category and what the compiled codes were saying.

A third set of tables, *Category Summaries*, were then created to focus the concepts and ideas which were emerging. The Category Summaries chart restated the process code as a more general and inclusive statement. To allow the researcher to see the temporal changes which were occurring, the statements were grouped by year. Samples of these charts can be seen in Appendix A5. In this format, the researcher could begin to decipher the theoretical implications which the groups of statements were making.

Theoretical codes.

As has been mentioned, Glaser (1967) stated that there are two general categories of codes, substantive and theoretical. It was this researcher's experience that the process does not so much consist of a polarized condition of *substantive* codes at one extreme and *theoretical* codes at the other, but it is more like a process which creates a continuum with *substantive* codes at one end of the spectrum and *theoretical* codes at the other. The previously described process explicates the transformation of empirical, factual data into theoretical, abstract concepts.

Following the dictates of the constant comparative method, everything was compared to everything. In doing so, the emerging theoretical codes were compared to the foundational theories which were discussed in Chapters One and Two. They were also compared to the issues discussed in the current literature related to the educational achievement gap involving students who are descendants of immigrants. The

comparisons began to generate connections which coalesced into shared themes. As these connections were recognized, the following preliminary theoretical codes were suggested:

Table 7

Preliminary Theoretical Codes

| Number | Name | Description |
|--------|----------------------------------|---|
| One | Assimilation Acculturation | Changes in behavior or attitude of members of the culture to more closely mimic the dominant culture |
| Two | Changes Over Time | Changes in institutions which can be attributed to the passing of time |
| Three | Cultural Ecology | Actions or behaviors which reflect the concepts posited by J. Ogbu related to voluntary and involuntary migrants |
| Four | Discrimination and Inequality | Actions and behaviors which exemplify an expression of superiority of one socio-political group over another |
| Five | Teachers | Actions or behaviors by teachers which are discriminatory in Nature |
| Six | Familism and Collectivism | Evidence that the needs and wants of individual family members are subjugated to the needs of the family |
| Seven | Habitus | Elements in a society reflective of codes, behaviors, and attitudes generated and maintained by a specific social niche |
| Eight | Social Reproduction | Evidence of attitudes passed down from one generation to the next. |
| Nine | Social Space | Evidence of cliquishness based on common interests |
| Ten | Dropping Out | Accounts of, reasons for dropping-out of school |
| Eleven | Residence – Immigration | Information related to the length of time a family has resided in the United States |
| Twelve | Migrants | Issues unique to those whose families were migrant workers while they were in school |

| | | |
|----------|---------------------|---|
| Thirteen | Educational Success | Evidence of success in the educational system |
| Fourteen | Mexicaness | Behaviors and attitudes reflective of the Mexican culture |

Having established an initial list of suggested theoretical codes, a series of procedures were initiated to refine the list. The first consideration was Glaser's (1978) discussion on theoretical coding and how they function to integrate the data as represented in the substantive codes. Remembering the integrative function of theoretical codes, the researcher re-examined the list of suggested theoretical codes while considering Glaser's list of "coding families" (pp.74-82). Glaser considered the fundamental group of coding families to be what he referred to as "The Six C's, Causes, Contexts, Contingencies, Consequences, Covariances and Conditions" (p.74), so these were of primary concern to the researcher. For example, when considering the substantive codes which dealt with the changes in the attitude of those of Mexican descent regarding education, the change could be seen as a *consequence* of years of social contact with persons of Western European descent, and therefore *Acculturation* was considered a valid code.

However, the suggested theoretical code *Dropping-out* appeared to be a consequence of other factors, and rather than being a theoretical code, it was possibly a sub-code to another theoretical family. The same was true of the suggested theoretical code *Teachers*. Looking beyond Glaser's families for a method of refining the list of theoretical codes, the researcher considered Spradley's (1979) *Domain Analysis* (p.107). A domain, as defined by Spradley, is a category composed of other categories. For the remainder of the document, the term *theoretical domain* will be used to indicate collections of categories which reflect an affinity to a single theoretical theme. The

concept of “semantic relationships” (p.107) applied to *Dropping-out* as a theoretical code had the following results:

Cause-effect *X* (substantial code) is the result of *Y* (suggested theoretical domain)

Quitting school (*X*) is the result of Discrimination and Inequality (*Y*)

The semantic relationship is supported by the data, and when seen in this relationship, it is apparent that *Dropping-out* can be included in the theoretical domain *Discrimination and inequality*, but is not suitable as an independent theoretical domain. The same applies to the suggested theoretical code *Teachers*.

In addition to realigning suggested theoretical domains, the constituent nature of each code was re-examined. When considered in relation to the underlying theoretical causes, the suggested theoretical domain of *Discrimination and Inequality* was seen to be exemplary of the attitudes connected with and fostered by *Colonialism*. Therefore, the title was changed. The refined list of theoretical domains is presented in Table 8.

Table 8

Theoretical Domains

| Domain | Explanation | Sub-Category |
|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Acculturation/ Assimilation | This involves the acceptance of the values, ideas, traditions, culture, etc. of one ethnic group by another. This usually involves the subjugated group's acceptance of the values of the oppressing group. | Educational capital |
| | | Family size |
| Changes Over Time | This domain involves changes in establishments, institutions, or society as a result of the passing of time, or the movement of ideas, principles or social values. | Establishment Social Values |
| Cultural Ecology/ Immigration | This domain reflects the concepts of J. Ogbu and involves the distinction between voluntary and Involuntary immigration. | Dropping out |

| | | |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| Colonialism | This domain includes the subjugation of one Culture by another, including discriminatory acts | Dropping out Discriminating Teachers Colonial Discourse |
| Familism and Collectivism | This domain involves actions of participants which reflect a strong allegiance to the family. It is marked by the sacrifice of the individual's wants and needs for the needs of the family. | Dropping out |
| Habitus | Attitudes, beliefs, values, etc. which identify a Particular group and are the result of that group's Extended historical experiences | Social Reproduction Educational Capital Literacy Self-Esteem |

Numerical data.

For those elements of the study which involved numerical data, it was not necessary to reduce and refine the information into understandable units: the numbers could simply be compared to other appropriate sets of numbers to yield information relevant to the study.

The demographic data from TEA for 2005 when compared to the demographic data gleaned from the 1975 yearbook revealed much about the changes in the ethnic ratios within the student body, faculty, and administration. The dropout rates from 2005 were taken from TEA's AEIS records, but data which enable the researcher to apply the attrition method of calculating the dropout rate for 1975 were extracted from the yearbooks. The data which indicated student participation in various types of organizations from both eras being studied were extracted from the yearbook, *El Arroyo*, disaggregated ethnically, and then compared to like data taken from the yearbooks of the

era to which it was being compared. These statistical data are presented in graphic representations in following sections.

In accordance with the procedures prescribed by grounded theory, the statistical data were compared to the results of the data analysis of the other sources of information, as well as to the memos which were the result of these processes.

Memoing.

When the data prompted questions instead of supplying answers, those questions were noted in the form of *memos*. At every point in the process where a thought was generated, a question suggested, or an idea was related to the emerging data, it was recorded as a memo. It is this process of memoing which connects the researcher to the research and leads to “abstraction and ideation” (Glaser, 1978, p. 83). The procedures related to coding and memoing were performed in accordance with the dictates of grounded theory, and the constant comparative method (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) which is the data analysis method of choice for this study.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the ways and means of obtaining, managing, and analyzing the data were discussed. In the following chapter, the results of the afore-mentioned processes will be discussed.

Chapter Four

Analysis of the Data

In the previous chapter, the design of the research as well as the rationale for the design were presented and explained. The chapter continued with a discussion of how the research design was implemented, and how data were extracted from the documents, the yearbooks, and the focus groups. The chapter ended with a list of the theoretical categories which the research had produced. Chapter Four will be a continuation of the process by presenting the data which were discovered and generated by the previously described processes. The two *Primary Theoretical Domains: Colonialism and Habitus*, which were the result of the constant comparative method will be presented and discussed as will the two *Forces* which are seen to be acting on the primary theoretical domains.

A final, comparison of the theoretical categories revealed common elements and themes at a deeper level, and resulted in fusing many of the categories to produce two essential, theoretical domains, and two areas which can be seen as dynamic forces acting on the two theoretical domains. The original theoretical categories which addressed *discrimination and inequality, teachers, tracking and institutional social reproduction* were merged to form the new theoretical domain of *Colonialism*. The original categories of *familism, social space, self-esteem, family social reproduction, cultural ecology, and migrant workers* were merged into the new theoretical domain of *Habitus*.

After several attempts to analyze and categorize the data at the theoretical level, it became apparent that the theoretical category of *Acculturation and Assimilation* was in fact a dynamic force which was acting on many of the elements of habitus throughout the

period of time covered by this study. Therefore, it has been reclassified not as a theoretical domain, but as a dynamic force. The area of *Changes-Over-Time* was seen to be an over-arching phenomenon which related predominantly to the domain of *Colonialism*, and after further consideration, it too has been classified as a force, not a domain.

Table 9

Primary Theoretical Domains and Forces

| Domain | Explanation | Sub-Category |
|-------------|---|---|
| Colonialism | This domain includes the subjugation of one culture by another, including discriminatory acts. | Dropping out Teachers Tracking Discrimination Institutional Reproduction |
| Habitus | Attitudes, beliefs, values, etc. which identify a particular group and are the result of that group's extended history. | Family Reproduction Educational Capital Literacy Self-Esteem Familism/ Collectivism Cultural Ecology Migrant Workers Language |

Forces Acting on the Theoretical Domains

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Changes Over Time | Societal changes which are related to the educational establishment and society as a whole. |
| Acculturation/ Assimilation | Changes at the personal and community level in response to the changing environment. |

Forces Acting on the Primary Theoretical Domains

Throughout this chapter, information will be grouped and entered by which chronological era is being represented in the data. It will be noticed that changes occur from 1965 to 1975 to 2005. These changes are the results of the forces of *acculturation/assimilation* and *changes-over-time* acting on the Primary Domains. To aid in the understanding of this process, these forces will be explained initially.

Acculturation/Assimilation.

As was explained earlier, both acculturation and assimilation involve adopting cultural artifacts of other cultures. The former is an additive process by which the society or an individual agent adopts traits from another, usually dominant, society as an act of enrichment, an act of adding to what exists. The latter is subtractive and is often indicative of cultural shame. A society or an individual agent attempts to strip away their indigenous cultural traits and replace them with those of the dominant society (Korzenny, 1999). To label a specific act as either acculturative or assimilative, one needs know the motivation for the adoption of the artifact. In the following section, various instances of cultural adoption will be discussed, but there will be no attempt on the part of the researcher to label these instances as either assimilation or acculturation.

Gloria Anzaldúa (1987), a native of the Rio Grande Valley, described the border in a dramatic and poetic way:

The U.S.-Mexican border *es una herida abierta* [an open wound] where the Third World grates against the first and bleeds. And before a scab forms it hemorrhages again, the lifeblood of two worlds merging to form a third country - a border culture.

Vila, (2000), while paying homage to Anzaldúa, disagreed with her analysis. The title of his book *Crossing Borders, Reinforcing Borders: Social Categories, Metaphors, and Narrative Identities on the U.S.-Mexico Frontier* is self-explanatory in this regard. There are those in the border culture who seek to cross borders, i.e. acculturate/assimilate; and there are those who defend borders, i.e. reject acculturation/assimilation. Accepting or rejecting assimilation/acculturation could be a study unto itself, but suffice it to say in concluding this section, that when considering the educational milieu of the students of Mexican descent for the years 1975 and 2005, acculturation/assimilation must be seen as a dynamic component of those environments.

Changes-over-time.

A thread running through all of the conversations was the idea that a valid comparison of the past and the present cannot be made because the world is a very different place in each of the time periods. When analyzing the data, the researcher identified a set of changes in the social and educational milieu which must be distinguished from *acculturation or assimilation*. As presented here, acculturation and assimilation dealt with modifying personal attitudes and beliefs in response to experiencing a different culture. The discussion of *changes over time* will be restricted to changes within the system, the establishment, which changed the world in which these lives were lived.

When the focus group of 1965 was discussing why they had been so focused on working, and not education, Jorge began the conversation by saying of his parents, “they would only think about tomorrow, they, they, uh,” and Silvia continued, “they needed to work” to which Jorge added, “in the fields and getting enough money to uh pay for uh..

because we didn't have welfare at that time." Over the 40 year span of this investigation, many safeguards have been put in place to protect people. These programs may have changed the way people respond to their reality.

In the focus group of 1975B, Yolanda was almost lamenting the fact that her family had had to work so hard to survive and because the food stamp program and other forms of social safe guards had been introduced, "they [those who come from Mexico to work] don't feel they have to work as hard to survive. They know that they're going to be fed somewhere." This researcher will not comment on the implications of that comment; the point is that there have been changes over time which may affect perceptions and actions.

This situation applies to English Language Learners (ELL) and Migrant programs as well. Yolanda reported that in the late sixties, her older sister had dropped out of school during the third grade because she could not speak English, yet there were no programs available to help her learn English. There are now federally mandated ELL programs to assist students who are unable to speak English, and to support the children as they learn English.

In the sixties, Jorge walked away from his middle school never to return because of the lack of equitable policies addressing make-up work for migrant students. He was charged with making up three months of school work and home work in less than two weeks, and there was neither a program to assist him, nor were there patience and understanding of his situation. There are now federally mandated programs which ensure that policies are in place to prevent such an unworkable situation from occurring and to deal with the affective side of the problem as well.

During those earlier periods, there appears to have been greater autonomy among the school districts. They established policies and practices to fit their needs and reflect their values. Today, Borderlands belongs to the Texas Association of School Boards (<http://www.tasb.org/>) which helps the local districts understand and conform to state and federal regulations designed to insure compliance with The Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other laws passed to insure equitable treatment of all students in public schools.

The purpose of the research was to understand the educational milieu of students of Mexican descent in 1975 and 2005 as it relates to the achievement gap between students of Mexican descent, and students of other ethnicities. Because our attitudes about society and governments' responsibility to insure equity have evolved over time, the social and educational milieus of the two time periods are different. Yet the achievement gap persists.

Primary Theoretical Domains

The results of the constant comparative method were that by comparing everything to everything, finally, two primary, foundational domains emerged: *Colonialism* and *Habitus*.

Colonialism.

Colonialism will first be discussed, and then it will be likened to discriminatory practices which were apparent in Borderland's policies,

Theoretical foundations, a review.

Saíd (1993) explains that colonialism is generally an extension of imperialism, and imperialism is the taking and controlling of an area by an entity whose metropolis is historically in another area. People of Western European descent first took control of the

area in which Borderlands is located with the Texas Revolution in 1836, and later consolidated their control of the land with the Mexican American War which ended in 1848. Following those two instances of forcefully taking political control of the land, colonies were established along the Rio Grande River, thereby establishing the second condition of colonialism.

However, neither imperialism nor colonialism is a simple act of taking and holding property; it involves establishing a social and ethnic hierarchy (Ashcroft et al., 2000; Bhabha, 1994; Pratt, 1992; Saíd, 1993). Saíd (1993) explains that the lexicons of the colonizers contain lists of deprecating terms used to describe and refer to the colonized. It is this aspect of colonialism which is evinced in the data from the 1960s and 1970s.

Acts which are generally identified as *discriminatory* demonstrate an assumption of superiority on the part of the perpetrator which leads to a disregard for subjugated persons (Castro-Salazar & Bagley, 2010). It is this lack of consideration for the needs of the children of Mexican descent which is revealed in the data and discussed in this section.

Racially segregating students

During the 1960s and 1970s, Borderlands CISD intentionally assigned students to schools and classes based on language, ethnic, and culture orientation. Segregating students by race and ethnicity was especially true in the elementary grades.

Documents.

Civil Action Number 5281, United States V. State of Texas Et Al. (1971) was a legal action enforcing the Civil Rights Act, 1964, Title IV. This document details the

grievances against those who were not in compliance with the Civil Rights legislation.

Section F of that document stated the following:

Defendants shall not permit, make arrangement for, acquiesce in or give support of any kind to the assignment of students to schools, individual classrooms or other school activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, except where required to comply with constitutional standards.

Borderlands CISD was included in this civil action.

More directly related to the civil rights abuses at Borderlands CISD, a letter from H.E.W which was addressed to the Superintendent of Schools, Borderlands Independent School District and dated December 19, 1972, declares that because they are unable to speak English, students from Mexico are being excluded from the full educational curriculum offered by the district.

Another letter from H.E.W. January, 1974 is a report on a review of the Comprehensive Educational Plan designed to ameliorate the conditions established by years of discriminatory practices. This document indicated that progress was being made in many areas, but that much was still to be done:

One area that remains a concern is the assignment of students to classes in elementary and secondary schools. We urge the district to continue its efforts to minimize any isolation of minority students resulting from implementation of the bilingual program at the elementary level. (H.E.W. January 11, 1974)

The coded version of this letter is presented in Appendix F, p. 218.

Focus groups, 1965.

According to the testimony of the focus group from 1965, children in the first grade were separated by ethnicity and English language ability. Children were assigned to either *First Upper* or *First Lower*. Jorge spoke at length of students of Mexican descent of the same age as all other first grade students frequently being placed in First Lower their first year, and then promoted to First Upper in their second year, thereby extending their years in public education from 12 to 13. This memory was so vivid that fifty years later, he still remembers the teacher's name.

Focus groups 1975.

The participants in the focus group of 1975B also remembered that there were no Western European children in their elementary school classes, but they did not remember their first grade class being divided. Interestingly, fifty years after the experience, Yolanda spoke angrily of her first grade teacher, "oh I hated Mrs. Smith. She would bang her ruler right on my desk because I couldn't read 'Tom, Dick and Jane'" and when she called the teacher's name, it was the same as the name of Jorge's first grade, lower teacher probably ten years earlier.

Prohibition against speaking Spanish

Students on Borderland's campuses were prohibited from speaking the language of their family if it wasn't English.

Documents.

The document from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (1972) frames the situation holistically by stating that the entire curriculum is fashioned for the Western European-descent student and considers the "Spanish speaking students as at

best remedial.” This marginalization of the language of Mexican-descent students is reified in the enacting and enforcing of a policy which “stated in effect, that only English could be spoken on the school campus” (H.E.W., 1972).

Focus groups 1965.

All of the participants from the focus group of 1965 attested to the fact that under no circumstances could they speak Spanish on campus. Adela recounted the story of two elementary school girls who had just arrived from Mexico. She stated that they were really trying to learn the language with no support in the form of classes, or tutors. Their teachers had told them that “every time they hear them speak Spanish, they were gonna get it, paddled... Any little word that they said in Spanish they would get paddled.”

Focus groups 1975.

Participants in both focus groups from the 1970s remembered being forced to speak English, and that in elementary school they could speak no Spanish on campus. However, the prohibition had been relaxed by the time they entered high school. They were still prohibited from speaking Spanish in the classroom, but could speak their heritage language socially on campus. That situation would have been in 1972, at the time the injunctions of H.E.W were being enacted.

Focus group 2005.

The participants from 2005 reported that while they were students at Borderlands High School, there was a very relaxed policy towards speaking Spanish. Teachers spoke English, but there were no prohibitions about students speaking Spanish.

Discrimination in hiring professional staff.

Another discriminatory policy acted as a two-edged sword. Hiring a disproportionately high number of teachers of Western European descent was discriminatory on its face toward the Mexican-descent teachers, and subjected the students to the possibility of having a teacher who either did not know about their culture, or who knew and did not care.

Documents.

The H.E.W. (1972) document stated that although Mexican-descent teachers and administrators had been being hired in recent years, the discriminatory hiring practices of the past had been so severe that “[t]he percentage of minority faculty members and administration is still disproportionately low.” Additionally, it was stated that a review of Borderland’s records had revealed a pattern of assigning the few Mexican-descent teachers to schools which were populated predominately with Mexican-descent children. Not only does this document strike down the district’s hiring policy, it goes even farther by stating that in the future the district will employ “an affirmative policy of recruiting and employing teachers who are bilingual and sensitive to these cultures.” Additionally, the district was to begin in-service training which would “assist teachers and administrators in redefining their role in a bilingual/bicultural district.”

El Arroyo data.

The only data which were available from the seventies was that which had been extracted from *El Arroyo*, the yearbook. This limits the data to the ethnic ratio of Western European-descent teachers to Mexican-descent teachers in the high school only. In 1975, there were 93 teachers with Western European-descent surnames, and 19 teachers with

Mexican-descent surnames. For those holding administrative and staff positions, 20 had Western European-descent surnames, while only three had Mexican-descent surnames. The data related to 2005 were obtained from the AEIS system for 2005. The demographic data related to the administrative staffs of 1975 and 2005 are presented in Table 10.

Table 10

Ethnic Distribution of Borderlands' Administration

| Organization | <u>1975</u> | | <u>2005</u> | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| | Western European-Descent | Mexican-Descent | Western European-Descent | Mexican-Descent |
| School Board | 6 | 2 | 5 | 2 |
| Superintendent's Staff | 5 | 0 | 3 | 4 |
| High School Administration | 4 | 3 | 3* | 4* |
| High School Faculty | 93 | 19 | 66* | 85* |

Note. *El Arroyo*, 1975, 2005; *TEA, AEIS, 2005

Focus group 1965.

When asked if their elementary school teachers were mostly of Mexican descent, Mary put it very succinctly, “NO, none of them were Mexican American. All of them were white.” After a rather lengthy discussion of the abuses of some of the Western European-descent teachers (which will be discussed later) the participants began remembering their secondary school teachers. Silvia stated, “when I came to seventh grade I had, for the first time I saw a Hispanic, a male teacher. I was like shocked ... I was like, I couldn’t believe I seen a Hispanic teacher. I couldn’t, Mr. Saldivar. I never forgot those Hispanic teachers ever.”

Focus groups 1975.

The focus groups from the seventies told a very similar story. Yolanda was remembering her elementary school teachers' names when she suddenly exclaimed, "Goodness, all my teachers were white (sic). There weren't any Hispanic teachers, none – so we were forced to speak English." The participants from an earlier focus group from the seventies contributed that in secondary school, the teachers were "fifty-fifty."

Focus groups 2005.

All of the participants from the class of 2005 agreed that there was an ethnically even distribution of teachers. It was also reported that students were not assigned to a particular teacher because of race. When asked if her teachers had ever shown a preference to students based on race, Ms. Juárez replied, "Most of them *were* Hispanic."

Individual incidents of discrimination by teachers.

Focus group 1965.

Borderlands CISD perpetrated institutionalized discrimination in their hiring practices of teachers. *Some* of those teachers practiced personal discrimination in their treatment of their students. Jorge recounted an incident from junior high (sic) in which he, a migrant worker, returned to school in early December. One of his teachers handed him a list of all the homework he had missed since the first of September and gave him a very short period of time to do this enormous amount of work. When Jorge asked for an extension on the stated time frame, the teacher was demanding and insensitive to the point that Jorge was motivated to say 50 years later, "they didn't respect you, because – teachers, don't respect you", i.e. students of Mexican descent. Jorge left school that day and never returned.

From the same focus group, Sarah was brought to tears by the memory of a specific elementary school teacher who ignored her the entire school year:

so it was kind of like very hard because we would try our best and it wasn't good enough or they would stay mainly with the child that had - let's say that was middle class or whatever ... because the reason you know they treated us like - 'ok, you learn that's fine. You don't learn I'm not going to help you.' But why couldn't you ... I have as much intelligence as that one... but I wasn't the one...

The pain inflicted on this child, this victim of discrimination by a teacher, was obvious nearly fifty years later.

Focus groups 1975.

The reports from the focus groups from the seventies weren't nearly so extreme. Of all the participants, only Yolanda reported really hating a teacher of Western European descent because of the mistreatment she received. She also reported that the next year it was better, and there were no such reports from her counterpart, Adela.

Focus groups 2005.

All but one of the participants from the class of 2005 agreed that they knew of no instance of overtly racial preference being demonstrated by a teacher. However, Antonio reported that there was a high school English teacher whom he felt had given preferential treatment to students of Western European descent. There was no disagreement in the group; however, there were no additional reports of explicit racism or mistreatment of students based on racial prejudice.

Tracking.

Tracking refers to the policy of determining a student's future by assigning a course of study. The district's policy was both discriminatory, and reflective of Bourdieu's (1998) concepts of reproduction. It was discriminatory because it assigned more Mexican- descent student to vocational courses than to academically oriented courses. Tracking was exemplary of social reproductive policies because the schools were attempting to reproduce their vision of society, i.e. Western European-descent children would go to college, while children of Mexican descent would go to work in vocational fields.

Bernstein (1996) gives another reason for tracking. Different kinds of knowledge are imbued with "unequal value, power and potential" (p.xxi). Therefore, students of Western European descent are tracked to the opportunity to gain knowledge with a high social, economic, political, etc. capital, whereas students of Mexican descent are tracked to knowing how to work.

Documents.

The first indication of tracking appears in the H.E.W. document of 1972, and tracking is seen as the consequence of the district's failure to address the second-language needs of the Mexican-descent population in the elementary grades. As a result of not having acquired sufficient English language skills, "students find themselves locked into low ability groups and tracks upon entry into junior high and high schools."

By 1974, it was seen as less coincidental. The letter states, "We also request that the district review its counseling procedures in the secondary schools to assure that

minority students are not disproportionately enrolled into non-college bound courses” (H.E.W. January 11, 1974). Table 11 presents the three courses of study available in 1974.

Table 11

Courses of Study, 1974

| Course of Study Plan | English | Math | Lab Science | Foreign Language |
|---|------------|------------|-------------|------------------|
| Recommended Courses for More Selective Colleges | 12 Credits | 12 Credits | 12 Credits | 6-12 Credits |
| Recommended Minimum Requirements for College | 12 Credits | 12 Credits | 6 Credits | 6 Credits |
| Minimum Graduation Requirements | 9 Credits | 6 Credits | 3 Credits | 0 Credits |

Note. BISD Board Minutes, 1974.

Focus groups 1975.

The two participants in the 1975B focus group came from farm laboring families, finished high school, and completed college. Interestingly, both followed a vocational course of study through high school, and took vocational jobs following graduation. Both persevered and finished college. When asked if they had been aware of a college preparatory course of study in high school, both Yolanda and Adela replied “no.” Then Adela said, “in high school I remember vocational, but I never knew any other types of courses to take, other than what we took,” to which Yolanda added, “there was nothing available, nothing for college.” Adela closed the conversation with simply, “not for us.” The researcher then asked if they felt that their high school experience had prepared them for college. Yolanda replied, “no,” and Adela added, “I wasn’t either.”

In the 1975A group, two of the three participants followed the vocational career they had started in high school. Mr. Rodríguez became an electrician and owned his own business, even though his parents had wanted him to go to college. Ms. Rodríguez began working in a grocery store in high school, and still works there. Ms. Suárez also followed a vocational course of study in high school, and worked as a secretary after graduation, but she took college courses at night for eight years until she received her bachelor's degree. When asked if teachers at Borderlands high school had encouraged her to pursue a college degree, she replied, "no, I don't think so because I mean it [college] was for the whites."

When questioned about their involvement in extracurricular activities, all of the participants from both of the 1970s groups answered that they had been in vocational clubs.

El Arroyo.

To ascertain the extent of the differentiation between academic interest and vocational interests, the researcher went to the clubs and organizations section of the yearbook, *El Arroyo*, and counted the names of the Western European surnamed students who were in each type of extracurricular activity, and then compared them to the number of Mexican-descent surnamed students in the same activities.

For the class of 1975, there were 381 students participating in vocational clubs and organizations. Of that number, 31%, 120 of the students were of Western European descent and 68.5%, 261 of the students were of Mexican descent.

On the other hand, there were 281 students enrolled in academic clubs and organizations. Of that number, 194, 69%, were students with Western European surnames, and 87, 31%, had Mexican-descent surnames.

For the class of 2005, there were a total 283 students participating in vocational clubs and organizations. Of the number, 21.5%, 61 students were of Western European descent, and 78.4%, 222 students were of Mexican descent.

On the other hand, there were 291 students participating in academic clubs and organizations. Of that number, 25.4%, 74 students were of Western European descent, and 74.5% were of Mexican descent.

Figure 2. Borderlands High School Clubs and Organizations: 1975

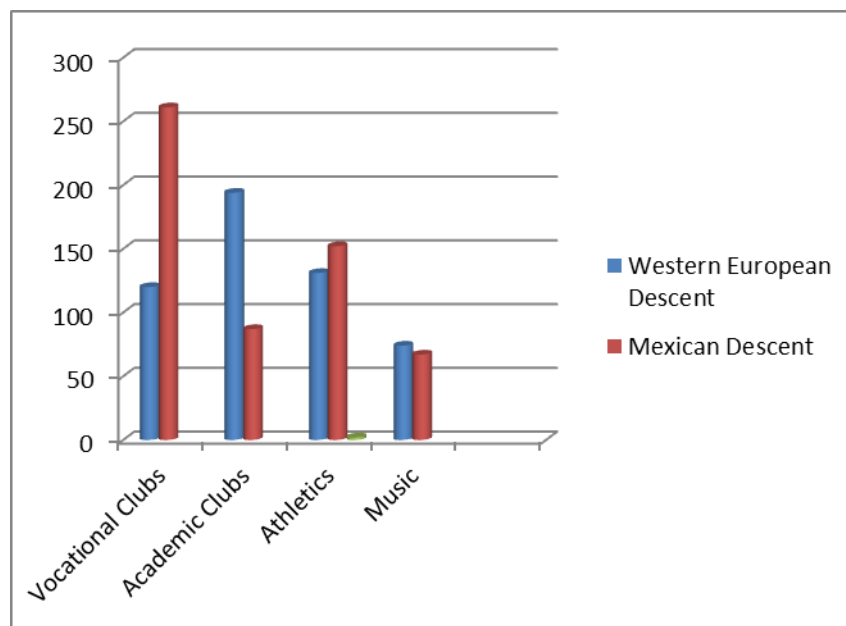


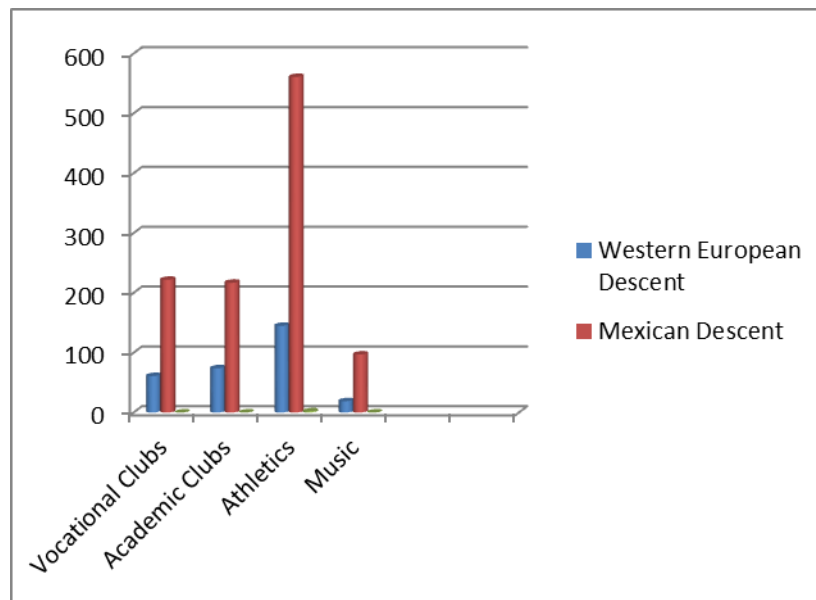
Table 12

Borderlands High School Clubs and Organizations, 1975 - 2005

| Activity | <u>1975</u> | | <u>2005</u> | |
|------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| | Western European-Descent | Mexican-Descent | Western European-Descent | Mexican-Descent |
| Vocational Clubs | 120 | 261 | 61 | 222 |
| Academic Clubs | 194 | 87 | 74 | 217 |
| Athletics | 131 | 152 | 145 | 561 |
| Music | 74 | 67 | 19 | 97 |

Note. *El Arroyo*, 1975, 2005

Figure 3. Borderlands High School Clubs and Organizations, 2005

***Special Education.***

The most egregious, flagrant, discriminatory policy revealed in this research showed a complete disregard for the humanity and self-esteem of the subjugated. In a great many instances, instead of providing classes to teach English to those who spoke only Spanish, the district simply declared them to be *special education* students and sequestered them away from the student body.

Documents.

The letter from H.E.W., 1972 referenced an earlier policy statement which prohibited placing “national origin-minority group students” in special education classes based on assessments designed to measure the ability to use the English language. Yet, when the records of Mexican descent students who had been classified as “mentally retarded” (sic) were reviewed, 81% of these students were found to be deficient only in their ability to use the English language.

To exacerbate this insensitive and discriminatory policy, a separate classification, “educable mentally retarded (EMR),” for special education students was used. This classification was in addition to the existing classification of “minimally brain injured,” (MBI). H.E.W.’s review of the records revealed that the students classified as EMR were “from 95%-100% Spanish surnamed, whereas the ... MBI class was 77% Anglo (sic). Those classified as MBI were included in regular classrooms for a portion of the day, but “EMR classes were self-contained for the entire day” (H.E.W.,1972).

Focus group 1965.

During the focus group with the participants from 1965, Mary began discussing why she had dropped out of school in the seventh grade: “the reason is they put me in Special Ed.” Her family of migrant workers had returned from the fields in the north in early December of her first year in junior high school, and Mary was concerned about the new system: seven classes, six class changes, and seven teachers. She related that instead of going to seven classes. “I was stuck in one room all day long.” It was not until the bus ride home that she learned she had been assigned to a special education class. When the other students learned who her assigned teacher was they jeered, “ahh you’re retarded

[laughter] ehhehhh te pusieron en Special Ed – n’ombre! (they put you in Special Ed – Wow!)” Mary continued, “I cussed at them, I cussed at them.” There were no assessments, no evaluations, no counseling sessions with the student or her parents; they just assigned her to Special Education. A week later, Mary wrote the teacher a note which said that she had to go home to “pick” onions. She signed her mother’s name, gave the note to the teacher, left school and never returned.

Focus groups 1975.

None of the participants from the seventies suffered such humiliation, but they were aware that students who had recently arrived from Mexico were often placed in special education classes. When discussing where the different groups of students congregated on campus, the researcher asked about those who had recently arrived from Mexico. Adela replied, “I didn’t know that there were any;” to which Yolanda responded, “there were, they were in Special Ed.”

Focus groups 2005.

When asked specifically about racial or ethnic segregation at Borderlands High School, all of the participants in both groups strongly stated that there were no separations based on race. Apparently, Borderlands CISD is now in compliance with federal regulations and all vestiges of institutional discrimination and racism have been removed.

Conclusion to Colonialism.

The colonialism initiated by Western Europeans moving into the Rio Grande Valley in the 1800s evinces the characteristics of the dominant society subjugating the dominated society and imposing its will politically and socially. Discriminatory practices distinguish

colonizer from colonized through not only an asymmetrical balance of power, but also an unbalanced recognition of the value of the person, and their culture. The unequal appreciation of persons from different ethnic groups was demonstrated through data retrieved from official governmental documents, local school district documents, the testimony of the participants in these situations, and the data gleaned from the school's pictorial record, *El Arroyo*.

The purpose of the research was to answer the question, "What was it like to have been a student of Mexican descent in Borderlands, Texas in both 1975 and 2005. The discussion above clarifies that the foundational generation of 1965 dealt with a far more conspicuously discriminatory system than did those in 1975. However, policies were in place during the 1970s which not only separated the students physically in the earlier grades, they showed a total disregard for the humanity of students of Mexican descent and attempted through tracking them to vocational careers to reproduce their unequal society for future generations.

Habitus.

As the analysis of the conversations of the focus groups yielded the data they contained, it became apparent that the theoretical concept of *habitus* is central to understanding what the data were revealing. Habitus, as you will recall, is the sum total of that which comprises the collective identity of the occupants of a particular social space. It defines members of a social space, in part by contrasting what they are not to what occupants of other social spaces are (Bourdieu, 1991. 1998).

The stated purpose of this research is to understand the educational milieu of students of Mexican descent. The above description of habitus presupposes that the

characteristics and dynamics of the habitus are inextricably intertwined with the milieu of a society: to investigate the milieu is to investigate the habitus.

The problem with which the researcher had to grapple, was that habitus is not a fixed phenomenon: it is the outer reflection of the inner workings of a society, a group of human beings, and while forces from within try to hold it static; it is dynamic; it is ever changing. The force which seeks permanence is social reproduction: parents pass on their values and their way of life to succeeding generations unconsciously in a manner very similar to the way in which social artifacts are passed from generation to generation in Vygotsky's (1978) concept of sociocultural development. At the same time, the dynamic forces of acculturation and assimilation are working to adjust the habitus to the environment in which it exists.

This research began as an investigation of a 30 year span of history, but was extended to a 40 year span to include starker examples of the oppression which underlies this situation. Any such longitudinal study will include changes in the habitus of the group being studied. As the habitus of these milieux are being presented, it will be noted that the situation changes from era to era. The dynamic forces previously mentioned are recognized in these differences between the focus groups. The areas of the habitus which surfaced during the study were *colonial discourse*, *language*, *educational capital* and *occupational choices*.

Colonial discourse.

In the *Theoretical Underpinnings* section, the researcher wrote of the works of Foucault and Gee, among others, and their ideas on Discourse with a capital "D." Ashcroft, et al. (2000) combine the concepts of *colonialism* and *discourse*, by positing

that the values and dispositions of colonialism become the defining parameters of the Discourse, the habitus, thereby creating a hybridized habitus reflecting what is being called *Colonial Discourse*. Reading and considering much of what was said in the focus groups, the researcher realized that participants in all of the focus groups were exhibiting the concept of hybridity to varying degrees. As was explained in Chapters One and Two, discourse as a social theory involves the structures, the boundaries, and the rules of a social space. The distinctions between discourse and habitus become blurred at times. The point that Ashcroft et al. make is that woven into the fabric of a society which reflects the remnants of colonialism are traces of the social milieu and the rules regarding how both the colonizer and the colonized will behave towards each other, and society as a whole. Bourdieu (1991) said that “*status*, like the habitus generated within it, are products of history” (p, 248). If the history of Borderlands, Texas includes elements associated with colonialism, it stands to reason that remnants of colonialism will remain.

Focus groups 1975.

The participants in both focus groups from the 1970s did not see any of the oppressive policies and practices which were outlined in the documents from H.E.W. until the issues were being discussed in the focus groups. The members of 1975A felt no sense of “otherness” as students of Mexican descent. They did not realize until asked which educational “Plan” they had each been assigned that all of them, and everyone of Mexican descent whom they knew had been assigned Plan I, the vocational plan. When asked if they were allowed to speak Spanish on campus, the tone of their voice, and their body language said, “of course not.” The devaluing and excluding of their heritage language was never questioned.

Focus group 1975B exhibited the same acceptance of the prohibition against speaking Spanish, but there was some anger at having been forced to speak English. In this group, the participants were discussing their elementary school teachers when in mid-sentence Yolanda, stopped and exclaimed, “My gosh, they were all white.” It simply had been accepted that few of Mexican descent were capable of being teachers. Until that conversation, it had also not occurred to either participant that although Western Europeans also lived in Borderlands, none were in their elementary school classes. Fifty years later, Adela attended her high school reunion, and later remarked that for the first time she noticed that all the people of Western European descent were socializing with other Western Europeans, and all the people of Mexican descent were socializing with other Mexicans. Colonial Discourse had hidden the ethnic divisiveness most of her life.

When asked if she had also failed to see the ethnic partition while in high school, Yolanda, who had just retired from public school teaching, replied,

I had a real low self-esteem and I know a lot of friends of mine that had very low-
 - At the time, well we had this way of thinking that Mexicans were lower class
 and the whites were up there. And we had to look up to them because they were
 white. No matter- - ”.

Responding to the researcher’s question as to where this attitude had come from she replied,

Well I suppose from my friends and my parents, because we always worked for
 the white people. The white people were the ones that had the farms and the jobs
 and I think we got it from our parents and our friends: ‘white people are up there.
 We always look up to them.

Blindly respecting those of Western European descent had become a part of their unwritten rules, the discourse.

Intra-Mexican-descent discrimination.

In the previously described instances of colonial discourse, it had served to camouflage the oppression from the colonizers. However, there is a more sinister side to colonial discourse. Many Mexican Americans, especially those who live near *la frontera* (the border) harbor xenophobic attitudes towards those who have recently arrived (San Miguel, Miller, Kwak, Lee-Gonyea & Gonyea, 2010). Ochoa (2000) posits that the main reason for the discord between Mexican Americans, and Mexican Nationals is that Mexican Nationals deride Mexican Americans for having lost their indigenous culture, and the ability to speak Mexican Spanish correctly. However, San Miguel et al. (2010) argue that when a once homogeneous cultural group is separated by a boundary for a long period of time, feelings of *otherness* develop in spite of the fact that they “share indistinguishable cultural mores and norms” (p.96).

Language preference.

In a previously mentioned conversation, Adela, who was born in the United States, was proud of her “Tex-Mex,” and Yolanda who was born in Mexico, cannot understand being proud of a language which she considers to be a hybrid and a compromised language. In the focus group 2005A, both young ladies are daughters of recently arrived Mexicans. Irma’s father was born here, but her mother was born in Mexico. When asked about her first language, Lily, whose mother was also born in Mexico, replied, “Mine *was* Spanish, and then I learned English – my mom taught me Spanish because she’s from uhmmm Mexico.” The embarrassment of her mother’s

heritage was communicated with a long uhmhhh. Irma does not speak Spanish, and although her parents do, she also expressed an unwillingness to embrace Spanish.

Social space.

In discussing social life on the Borderland campus, it was learned from all of the participants from 2005 that social cliques could be identified in several ways: how they dressed, how they conducted themselves, and where they “hung out” on campus. The members of Focus Group 2005B included two participants who could be described as “recently arrived.” When discussing the subject of *social space*, literally, there was no discomfort when they described where the students who had recently arrived from Mexico gathered.

However, when asked the same question, the two members of the Focus Group 2005A responded very differently. First Lily said, “I just think that they would, maybe the migrant [migrated from Mexico] - what I’m thinking maybe the soccer players they would kinda hang out and speak Spanish together and ahh.” After an embarrassed silence, Irma interjected, “and they were usually the ones that were taking the ESL classes.” Lily concluded, “Uh huh - they hung out more together because they were from umm (short pause) I mean they were more just like----” when she couldn’t say the word *Mexican*, the interviewer offered the phrase *recently arrived*, to which she assented.

These two young ladies, whose fathers were of Mexican descent, and whose mothers had recently arrived from Mexico, clearly considered people who had recently arrived from Mexico and still exhibited its culture and traditions as *the other*, the different, the one’s not like us.

Conclusion to Intra-Mexican-descent discrimination.

From the responses of the participants of the 1960s and 1970s, it could be said that hegemonic colonial discourse had permeated the social ambiance and obscured the oppression which structured much of their lives. For the group from 2005, it was more like the colonized had become the colonizers; the oppressed had become the oppressors.

It can also be said that a component of the social milieu as salient and pervasive as the manifestations of colonialism would eventually be woven into the structural fabric of a given habitus. In some instances, colonial discourse can be seen as existing in the hybridized cultural artifacts of the students of Borderlands High School.

Occupational choices.

Of all of the adaptations of the Mexican families to the way of life in America, the most foundational is the change in occupational choices. In the group from the 1960s, five of the six had experienced farm labor. By the 1970s, four of the six participants had experienced farm labor and the other two were children of field hands. There was one participant in the 2000s focus group whose father had participated in farm labor when he was young, but none of the participants had done farm labor themselves.

During the 1975 B focus group, the topic of farm labor came up, and both participants reported that they had been migrant workers, one to a greater extent than the other. Concluding the conversation about working in the fields, Adela said, “you know what’s sad because even here in the Valley now regular Hispanics will not work in the fields.” Yolanda concurred, “They won’t work.” It appears that *Hispanics*, Mexican Americans, now consider it demeaning to be a field hand.

It was difficult to witness the criticized become the critic, the oppressed become the oppressor, the colonized become the colonizer, but it was evidenced in the focus groups and can be explained through the concept of colonial discourse.

Educational capital.

As the value on farm labor was going down, coincidentally, evidence from the conversations indicated that educational capital was increasing in value. In the early discussion of the theoretical underpinnings of this study, educational capital was defined as simply the value placed on education, and the subsequent exchange rate educational capital would have in relation to social capital, economic capital, etc. Each of the focus groups discussed educational capital and how it affected their relation to education.

Focus group 1965.

The focus group from the 1960s presented evidence that public education, at any level, was not a strong component of the habitus of this one migrant family. When asked what his parents' attitude was towards education for the children, Jorge replied, "I don't think that they meant not to give us an education... at that point and time, it was not uh, the thing to do, not for them, it was not the thing to do." The first eight children of this family did not finish high school, but one of the younger daughters not only finished high school, but was offered a scholarship to attend a local college. Silvia recounted, sadly, that their mother would not allow the daughter to accept the scholarship. The family needed money, so she was to go to work. Of the six participants in the group from the 1960s, not one finished high school. Sarah reported that she reached the twelfth grade before she dropped out, which is indicative of the low value which was placed on completing high school

Focus groups 1975.

For half of the participants of the focus groups from the 1970s, the story was the same. Yolanda reported that initially, her parents had placed little value on education, but over time this attitude changed and both of the younger children in her family were allowed to finish high school. However, she stated: “My father didn’t want me to go to school [college].” He wanted her to pursue a vocational career, but she graduated from college in spite of her father’s feelings. At one point in the discussion, she became very embarrassed when she revealed that all of her older siblings had dropped out of public school.

The other half of the group from the 1970s was also from farming families, but these families strongly encouraged their children to finish high school and attend college. All of the participants from the 1970s finished high school, and of the six participants, only two did not finish college. One of those, Raul, reported that his father had urged him to attend the local college, but immediately after high school he was interested in electronics, and chose to enter that vocation. Raul also reported that none of the children in his father’s family finished high school.

Focus groups 2005.

All of the members of these two groups reported that their families had been insistent that they stay in school, and they had. There were reports of cousins who had not received the support from their families and had not finished school, but all of the siblings of all of the participants from the 2005 focus groups had either finished school, or were still in school. Of the six focus group participants who had been students at Borderlands High School in the 2000s, one had finished college, and the other five were

currently students at a local university. As was said earlier, none of the group from the 1960s finished high school, but all of their children did finish high school, and went on to earn a college degree. Educational capital has gained value in the Mexican-descent community which only one generation before had placed a much higher value on manual labor.

Literacy.

It seems natural that all cultures would place a high social capital on literacy, but in the nation of Mexico, they consider themselves as an aliterate society. (Jiménez, Smith, and Martínez-León, 2003). Moreno-Valle Suárez (2001), an education scholar in Mexico, stated, “[q]uiere decir que somos un pueblo que sabemos leer, pero que no lo hacemos.” (I want to say that we are a people who can read, but we do not) (p. 226).

Focus groups form 1960s and 1970s.

In each of the focus groups, questions were asked regarding literacy and love of reading. In the 1960s, all but Sarah stated simply that they read only efferently. In the 1970s, two of the participants, Christina and Araceli, enjoyed reading aesthetically, but for Raul, the pleasure in reading was learning something new. Therefore, his reading can be described as purely efferent.

Focus group 2005.

When asked about a “love of reading,” all of the respondents from the 2000s declared that they read a lot; most stated that they read to fulfill assignments in college. However, Janie related that she had had a difficult time learning to read while in elementary school in Virginia, but in secondary school in Borderlands, she had, for some reason, suddenly and unexplainably developed a greater sense of self-efficacy. With an

increased confidence in her ability to read and to learn, came a love of reading. In the same focus group, Antonio made a similar comment, “I started liking it [reading] little by little, but at first it took getting used to ‘cause I wasn’t used to reading at all.”

Spanish language usage.

Earlier, Spanish language was cited as an indication of the presence of colonial discourse and the rejection of Spanish was seen as an example of assimilation and the desire to remove associations with Mexico, and the Mexican culture. In this section, it will be addressed more as a part of the habitus which is undergoing changes.

There is an apparent correlation between the years in which the participant attended Borderlands High School, and their affinity towards, and ability to use, Spanish. Spanish was the first language of all of the participants from the focus group from the 1960s and 1970s. They did not begin to learn English until they began attending public school. Once in school, they learned English because as Yolanda said, “Mrs. Smith [her first grade teacher] made me with that yard stick... I remember that I was forced to speak English.”

The acculturation/assimilation of Spanish language usage was exemplified in a conversation between Yolanda and Adela during the focus group for 1970s B. Adela, whose father had been born in the United States, described her Spanish as being more like “Tex-Mex...we speak English and Spanish all in one sentence.” Mary, on the other hand, is from a more traditionally Mexican family and responded to the use of Tex-Mex by saying, “when we arrived [from Mexico] we had this Spanish de Mexico, and there were the Hispanic Americans here and they spoke a different Spanish, and so when we got together, we just developed a new – Tex-Mex they call it: which I cannot stand.” She

went on to explain that she still visits family in Mexico, and they deride her for being a bilingual teacher who cannot speak what they consider to be correct Spanish.

By the next generation, there was even more acculturation/assimilation of the language. Of the six participants from the 2000s, only two continued to speak Spanish, and they were the two who had been born in Mexico, and had lived there at least for a few years. Two of the remaining four were neutral on the subject of speaking Spanish; it just didn't matter to them if a person spoke it or not. The remaining two had developed an anti-Spanish attitude even though neither of their mothers could speak English fluently.

Familism.

In each of the three time periods represented, there were statements made evidencing the idea that to members of Mexican descent families, the needs of the family outweigh the needs of the individual. This concept is known as familism (Fuligni, Tseng & Lam, 1999; Romero, Robinson, Haydel, Mendoza, & Killen, 2004), and is a very powerful component of the habitus in the Mexican-descent community.

Focus group 1965.

Silvia told of her youngest sister who had finished high school and was offered a scholarship to go to college. Their mother insisted that she refuse the opportunity for personal advantage and go to work because the family needed the money. As Silvia said, "See, she needed to help the family, that's what they [the parents] told her, and that's what my sister did because we were raised to obey."

In the same group, Nancy spoke of her older siblings dropping out of school, going to work, and making it possible for the younger ones to finish high school. When

she finished speaking, both Silvia and Susana concurred saying that it had happened in their families.

Focus groups 1975.

Discussing family sacrifice, Yolanda, who had pursued a college degree in spite of her father's desire for her to pursue a vocational career after high school, became very emotional when she remembered that her brothers had quit school to help the family. "So my dad worked in the fields - even here we worked in the fields. So my dad couldn't support the family so he needed help you know as far as income he needed my brothers." Because of her brother's sacrifice, she was able to finish high school.

Focus groups 2005

Antonio told the same story that "kids drop out to provide for their families, their moms, their sisters." Later in the conversation, he added a new dimension to the idea of familism. When asked what he thought were other reasons for dropping out of school, he related that in his family, if a boy's girlfriend became pregnant, it was understood that family came first and the boy would go to work to support the family. He went on to say that there should be consideration financially for both the present and the future, "but a lot of families don't think that way, especially in the Hispanic culture. They would think that you have to drop everything and just dedicate yourself to that, and I've seen it a lot."

Social reproduction.

The concept of social reproduction as it relates to the habitus is simply the passing on of values and cultures from mothers and fathers to daughters and sons as a way of teaching the children how to *be* in the world (Bourdieu, 1998). It is also simply a child growing up in a certain set of circumstances, being comfortable with those circumstances

and continuing to relate to those circumstances as they enter adulthood (Willis, 1977).

Lily from the 2005A group spoke of her cousins who were, in her opinion, not doing well financially yet, when they considered education their thought was, “well if mom and dad, look how good mom and dad are doing and they didn’t go to school, you end up looking at your parents,” to which Irma replied, “And that’s been going on for years.” These thoughts on social reproduction as it relates to the achievement gap are neutral and the participants see it just as a matter of course. However, Arturo from the 2005B focus group saw it more negatively,

I think that it’s mostly cultural, like we ah like for example, we Mexicans like we see that most of us don’t graduate; that kinda messes us up even though we can do it. Like some people get discouraged because of the culture... .

In the same conversation, Ms. Fuentes agreed that “it goes back to the culture. If generations before didn’t pursue higher education, they’re not likely to push it on their children.”

From several different perspectives these participants expressed the idea that one generation’s attitudes toward education is passed on to the next. In this way, family social reproduction can be seen as a factor in maintaining the achievement gap.

Migrant workers.

Another aspect of the habitus of the Mexican-descent community in the Rio Grande Valley is the *migrant worker* life style. In this research, all but one of the participants from the 1960s were involved in migrant work, half of the participants from 1970s experienced life as a migrant worker, but none of the students from the 2000s were directly involved in leaving Borderlands to work with the crops in different parts of the

country. There are still students who are migrant workers who are attending Borderlands High School, but as the section regarding *acculturation/assimilation* indicated, residents of the Borderlands area are seeking different ways of making a living.

Migrant work is being considered as a topic which influences the educational gap experienced by Mexican-descent students not so much because of its direct impact on today's educational milieu, but because of its influence on the Mexican-descent students who are succeeding and achieving today. In the preceding paragraph, it was stated that only half of the participants in the focus groups from the 1970s were directly involved in the migratory workers' life style. However, all of the participants were children of migrant workers. The focus groups which represented the 2000s contained one person who was the daughter of migrant workers, but several were the grandchildren of those who endured this difficult life style. Whether being a migrant worker develops a sense of tenacity, or simply serves as an impetus to change life styles, there appears to be a positive effect of the migrant worker phenomenon on the educational achievement of students of Mexican descent.

Cultural ecology.

The concept of *cultural ecology* or *oppositional cultural explanation* as it is referred to in Chapter Two belongs in a discussion of the habitus of the Mexican-descent community of the Texas/Mexico border because of the number of residents who can trace their roots back to Mexico. All of the participants in these focus groups are either recently arrived, or are either a first- or second-generation resident of the United States. As has been described in Chapter Two, *cultural ecology* is the theory of John Ogbu, among others, which overly simply stated posits that there are two kind of immigrants: voluntary

and involuntary. The voluntary immigrants are here because they want to be and will endure initial sacrifices to become a part of the idealized dream which brought them here. According the cultural ecology theory as posited by Ogbu (1983, 1987, 1990, 1998) the involuntary migrants were initially conscripted, enslaved and subjugated. Elements of the cultural ecology theory were discussed, and could be seen by some of the participants in this research.

During the 2005B focus group, while Antonio was discussing educational achievement of students of Mexican descent at Borderlands, he mused, as if the thought had never occurred before:

I see it [lack of educational motivation] more on people who were raised here that have Hispanic backgrounds than from people who actually went to school in Mexico, grew up in Mexico. They had it bad over there, they came over here to better their lives so most of them will try to graduate high school, go to college.

Within the 2005A group, all the members had noticed aspects of the cultural ecology theory in their experience. One of the problems which troubled the researcher throughout the focus group process was the fact that statistically, twice as many students of Mexican descent were educationally unsuccessful as were students of Western European descent, yet all of the participants in these focus groups, or their children, were successful. None of the participants in the 1965 group were educationally successful, but all of their children graduated from college. A possible answer to this apparent contradiction could lie in *cultural ecology*. All of the participants are either first- or

second-generation residents of the United States, and all of their families came here voluntarily.

Conclusion to habitus.

In looking for causes related to the existence of the educational gap between students of Mexican descent and other ethnicities, it is apparent that components of the habitus have contributed to both the success and the failure of the children to complete school. In the 1965 group, the one family which participated had no parental support for education, and they all dropped out of school. Of all the participants in all of the other focus groups, only Yolanda's father discouraged her from finishing school. All of the other parents were supportive, and all of the other participants completed high school.

During the discussion of the elements involved in the primary theoretical domain of habitus, the force which was described as acting on the primary theoretical domain, acculturation/assimilation could be seen in the data. In each category within the domain of habitus, there was change.

Conclusion

Of all the data from diverse sources, the two theoretical categories most related to understanding the educational milieu of students of Mexican descent at Borderlands High School in the years 1975 and 2005, and how those milieux relate to their achievement gap, were *Colonialism*, and *Habitus*. Colonialism set the stage as an external, oppressive force to the Mexican-descent community, and habitus is the fabric of the community, and as such is both descriptive of the attributes of the community, and generative of attitudes and actions within the community.

Chapter Five

Concluding Remarks

The preceding chapter presented the process of distilling the data in search of the essence of the situation involving the educational achievement gap between students of Mexican descent, and those of Western European descent. The long and arduous process began with reading and analyzing hundreds of pages of transcripts of interviews, group interviews, and mini-focus groups which had occurred over a two month period, and had involved eighteen participants from three distinct time periods. Thousands of pages of documents from the Borderlands Independent School District's Board of Education meetings were sifted through to find those very few documents which related to this specific topic.

Finally, and probably most enjoyably, the researcher looked through six editions of *El Arroyo* in search of long since lost demographic data from the 1970s as well as the novel, unique data related to the extra-curricular activities of both the 1970s and the 2000s. As the researcher identified the Spanish surnames and counted the numbers of students of Mexican descent, he began to become familiar with the names and the faces. As he followed each class from year to year, he began to notice that many of the smiling, yearbook-posed faces which had been in the previous edition were missing. For each succeeding class, sophomore, junior, senior, the size of the pictures increased; the number of the pictures in the class decreased.

The analysis of the sources initially broke the data into thousands of units, codes, and through the process of constant comparison identified commonalities and strings of theory began to emerge. Finally, two primary theoretical domains were identified:

Colonialism, forces from outside the community, and Habitus, the internal, identifying characteristics of the community. Those two central themes of this research were explicated in the previous chapter.

In this concluding chapter, the changes to the fabric of the society, the adjustment of the habitus to the ever changing world will be briefly presented. Suggestions for future studies will be made, and then the researcher will review both the primary and secondary research questions in relation to the data gleaned from the sources investigated in this project. Finally, the researcher will suggest ways to bring that which was gleaned from the research into the classroom to benefit the children of Mexican descent.

Acculturation and Assimilation

The dynamic forces of acculturation and assimilation can be seen affecting every identified aspect of the habitus of the Mexican-descent community of Borderlands, Texas except immigration. For each succeeding generation, there was an increase in the value of education. Though none of the members of the group from 1965 finished high school, all of their children finished college. Of the remaining 12 participants, the rest finished high school, and all but two were either in college, or had finished college.

It can be said that there is an element of acculturation in the occupations chosen by the participants in these groups. All but five of the participants had either been migrant workers, or were the children of migrant workers. However, there were no second generation migrant workers in these groups. Each generation had found a way to enter other occupations.

In the area of language, each generation acculturated linguistically. The only probable case of assimilation was seen in the focus group of 2005 where two of the six participants had rejected their heritage language in favor of English.

The one area of the habitus which seems to be impervious to the forces of acculturation/assimilation is the area of familism. The participants from the sixties might argue about the degree of familism, but members of the group from 2005 were relating stories of sacrificing for the family just as those of 1965 had.

Limitations of This Study

The study involved a very small group of participants in a very specific location. To increase the understanding of this problem, the research needs to be expanded. The most critical manner in which the research needs to be expanded is to find a way to include those who are in the Mexican-descent community who are disfranchised. The researcher tried to find participants who had not had been educationally successful in the public school system, but was unable to. For the research to be meaningful, the voice of those who dropped out must be heard. The research presented here was a study of the achievement gap between students of Mexican descent and those of Western European descent, yet all of the participants had been successful. Ideas and theories can be generated from this study about what leads to success, but to fully understand the problem, those who were unsuccessful need be heard from.

Recapitulation of the Research Questions

In concluding, the researcher will look back at the research questions and attempt to answer them using the data extracted from the multiple sources of this study.

Procedure.

For each of the two *primary research questions*, the researcher will briefly summarize what has previously been presented in some detail. The structure of the answer will include responding to the five *secondary research questions*.

Primary Research Questions.

In 1975, what was the educational environment of Mexican-descent students in Border Lands High School, and how did it shape their view of education and literacy?
In 2005, what was the educational environment of Mexican-descent students in Border Lands High School, and how did it shape their view of education and literacy?

Secondary Research Questions.

1. What are the views of education and literacy held by the participants of each of the respective years?
2. What were the official school policies in each of the respective years which related to Mexican-descent students?
3. What was the nature of the school environment in each of the respective periods for members of the Mexican-descent community?
4. What were the attitudes of the Mexican-descent community regarding education in each of the respective years?
5. What have individual members of the Mexican-descent community in each of the respective years done with their education?

Question One, 1975.

The educational milieu of the class of 1975 was a world in a state of flux. Four out of the six participants from this group were perfectly content with their environment

and felt included in the mainstream of their world. One expressed awareness that favoritism was being shown to students of the Western European community, and one expressed having low self-esteem because of her belonging to what was perceived to be a lesser race. The reality of the society as seen from a distant perspective, years later was that this milieu was distinctly divided along racial lines.

The policies of the school supported and enforced that division. Only the language of the politically dominant group, English, was permitted on campus. Students who had problems conforming to the prohibition against speaking Spanish were labeled as *educable mentally retarded* (EMR) and sequestered in Special Education classes for the entire day. Few teachers of Mexican descent were hired, and those who were hired were frequently assigned to classes which were composed of only Mexican-descent students. To perpetuate this social structure, students of Mexican descent were *tracked* into vocational courses and given no college preparatory classes, while there were college preparatory classes available for those of Western European descent.

With one possible exception, the participants of the 1960s and 1970s were students of lower socioeconomic status, who had labored in fields and farms as adolescents. Some came from families which because of economic strife, placed a low value on education, but without exception, the participants in this process had very positive attitudes toward education, and expected that it would pay dividends to those who accrued it. All of the members of this group made good use of their education. Four finished college, one had a successful career as an electrician, and one had remained in the job she began in high school.

The educational environment was a reflection of the general ambiance of the society, and was very reflective of traditional Mexican values. One such value was familism. From each group there were stories of older siblings sacrificing their educational opportunities to help the family. Each of the participants was successful, and with one exception, each credited strong family support as being a major ingredient in their success.

It was stated that 1975 was a world in flux. The milieu of that era was markedly different from the one shown by the group from 1965. There were still problems, but forces were in play during 1975 which would eliminate many of those residual effects of colonialism and discrimination.

Question two, 2005.

Those forces which were undermining the racially discriminatory past of Borderlands had taken control by 2005, and all the official school policies reflected the letter and the spirit of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. There were no prohibitions against speaking Spanish on campus. Students were not being placed in special education classes because of their race and national origin, and the racial ratio for both teachers and administrators was fair and equitable. The only sign of discriminatory behavior was the manner in which some second generation members of the Mexican-descent community regarded more recently arrived students of Mexican descent.

The fairness and equal opportunity on campus was extended to the future for all students, as counselors and teachers encouraged all students to prepare for and pursue college degrees. All of the students who participated had taken advantage of their education and were either in college, or had finished college.

Whereas many of the participants from 1975 felt included in the school and society of Borderlands, genuine inclusion was much more nearly a reality in 2005. The one constant between the two milieux was the strength of the attachments to family. There were still reports of children sacrificing their immediate needs to contribute to the family, and each participant credited their success to family encouragement and support.

An Enigma

Yet, the problem remains. Chronicling the changes of this town, and this educational system from 1965 to 2005 revealed the tremendous improvements in education and the increased opportunity for all. Yet, the problem remains. As was stated on page five of this document, when compared to the Western European-descent students, six times as many students of Mexican descent dropped out of high school in the school year 2004/05.

Weissglass (2001) said it well, “this country has spent hundreds of millions (perhaps billions) of dollars in the last two decades on attempts to decrease the achievement gap without any major change on the national level” (no page available).

Recommendations for Future Research

The greatest disappointment for this researcher was that persons who had not been successful in the education system could not be found and included. Additional research must be done which focuses on finding such participants, and motivating them to participate. Only by hearing their stories of why they were unable to continue in school can we truly get a picture of why the achievement gap is so wide and so stubbornly persistent. This study and the approach used was a step in the right direction, but it should not be the last step in that direction.

The confusing aspect of this study is to see that so many improvements have been made, yet the achievement gap persists. Of the many aspects of habitus which were seen in this study, two are especially interesting to this investigator. The first involves migrant workers. The question is, “why are members of that sub-culture of the Mexican-descent community successful when the conditions under which they attend school are so difficult? Further research in this area could be very beneficial not only to the Mexican-descent community, but to education in general.

The second component of the habitus which this researcher would like to see studied further is the connection between familism and the educational trajectory of the student. This study showed that those who related strongly to their families were successful if the family had a high value on education, but those whose families did not value education, with one exception, were unsuccessful educationally.

Earlier in this report, a study from NCES (2003) was cited, and it was stated that the behavior of “Hispanic” kindergarteners is indicative of their not feeling connected to the educational activities in the school. It is this researcher’s opinion that this disconnectedness is possibly an indication that these children are experiencing a sense of *otherness*, and find it difficult to become excited about participating in a program to which they are not intrinsically connected.

The issue becomes one of intrinsic motivation, therefore a proposed direction for future study would be to research the possibility of addressing the situation through Ryan and Deci’s (2000) concept of the Self-Determination Theory (SDT). Over-simply stated, SDT posits that fulfilling three internal prerequisites, “competence, autonomy, and relatedness... enhance self-motivation and mental health.” (p.68). Competence refers to

self-efficacy, autonomy refers to the feeling of ownership of the processes which produce positive results, and relatedness refers to the strength of connections to others, *especially family* and community. In an earlier work, Deci, Eghrari, Patrick, and Leone (1994) had reported that an additional factor in deepening the sense of intrinsic motivation was support of the social context for doing the task involved. In other words, if the community and family are supportive of educational advancement, the student is more likely to be self-motivated to achieve educationally. Although not explicitly stated in this research, the discussion of this study supports that statement.

Practical Applications

A problem with the scope, depth, and persistence of the achievement gap involving students of Mexican descent requires an effort by the entire educational establishment. Scholars, superintendents, curriculum directors at all levels, teachers, and para-professions need to become involved in ways of removing the sense of otherness and creating a sense of belonging in the school.

The results of this study indicate the strength of familism in the Mexican-descent culture, and the power this phenomenon has in motivating children to be successful. By acknowledging the beneficial aspects of familism, and including considerations for connecting to familism, the entire community and the habitus which it represents, an atmosphere can be created in which the children will feel that it is their educational system and that it is important to participate and succeed in their educational system.

Ways and means.

Familism is an extension of the Mexican culture, so we must demonstrate to the children that we value their culture. For students of Mexican descent to be successful, English must be mastered, but encouraging the students to maintain their heritage language increases the development of English while supporting the student's self-image and self-esteem.

Making the Mexican culture a part of the curriculum and classroom culture will also be beneficial. Historically, Mexico has produced great artists such as Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and José Clemente Orozco. Displaying these powerful and often beautiful works in the classroom would give a very positive image to the Mexican culture.

Octavio Paz is but one Mexican poet whose works are available in both Spanish and English. Additionally there is a growing number of Mexican-descent writers who produce literature for children of all ages. Pat Mora, Gary Soto and Alma Flor Ada are but three well know authors of children's literature, and Sandra Cisneros and Rudolfo Anaya are known for their works for adolescent readers.

Strengthening the presence of Mexican-descent culture in the classroom is helpful, but to more directly enhance the effects of familism; involve the family. Earlier, Jun-Li Chen (2005) and Laroque et al. (2011) were cited in a discussion about barriers to family involvement in their children's education. There may be barriers to the parent's involvement in their child's education, but attempts need be made to overcome those barriers and connect with the family in a joint effort to benefit the children. These efforts must be at the district, school, and classroom level.

Beyond simply involving families in classroom activities, the community should be involved in the operation of the school and have a say in decisions regarding issues relevant to their children. Western European-descent families are meaningfully involved in the educational system by, among other things, being involved in the political process which selects the school board. Parents of Mexican descent need to become involved at the district and school level. Such political involvement would be easier in districts which are populated predominately by persons of Mexican descent. In districts in which they are a minority it will be more difficult, but there must be a way to create a situation in which students of Mexican descent have a sense of ownership and connection to the institution of public education.

Conclusion

In the school year 2009/10, more than seven times as many students of Mexican-descent dropped out of Borderlands High School as did students of Western European descent. This study has been an attempt to understand why the disparity in the dropout rate persists. The means of arriving at a point of understanding was by deconstructing the educational milieu of a community in a town near the Texas/Mexico border. The picture which was produced was an incredibly complex collage that presents more questions than answers. By all indications, the situation is getting better, yet the disparity in the dropout rate continues.

It is clear from the participants in this study that success is possible even in the most difficult of situations. It is also clear to this researcher that although this problem is a difficult and disturbing one, efforts must be made to continue to find a way to address

the educational gap between students of Mexican descent and students of other ethnicities.

REFERENCES

- Ainsworth-Darnell, J.W. & Downey, D.B. (1998). Assessing the oppositional culture explanation for racial/ethnic differences in school performance. *American Sociological Review*, 63, 536-553.
- Allatson, P. (2007). *Key terms in Laztino/a cultural and literary studies*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Anzaldúa, G. (1999). *Borderlands, La frontera: The new mestizo* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.
- Ash, M. (1998). *Gestalt psychology in German culture 1890-1967*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., & Tiffin, H. (1998). *Post-colonial studies: The key concepts*. New York: Routledge.
- Barbour, R. (2007). *Doing focus groups*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications
- Barth, F. (1969). Introduction. In F. Barth (Ed.). *Ethnic groups and boundaries: The social organization of culture difference*. (pp. 9-38). Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company.
- Bartlett, F. C. (1923). *Psychology and primitive culture*. Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press.
- Belsey, C. (2002). *Poststructuralism: A very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford Press.
- Benton, D.C. (2000). Grounded theory. In D. Cormack (Ed.), *The research process in nursing* (4th ed.) pp. 153 – 165. Malden, MD: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Berg, S.C. (2005). Limón's *La Malinche*: Negotiating the in-between. *Dance Research Journal*, 37, 75-93.

- Bernstein, B. (1996). *Pedagogy, symbolic control, and identity: Theory, research, critique*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Berry, J.W. (2010). Intercultural relations and acculturation in the pacific region. *Journal of Pacific Rim Psychology*, 4(2), 95-102.
- Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The location of culture*. New York: Routledge.
- Blumer, H. (1979). *An appraisal of Thomas and Znaniecki's the Polish peasant in Europe and America*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books.
- Boeije, H. (2002). A purposeful approach to the constant comparative method in the analysis of qualitative interviews. *Quality and Quantity*, 36, 391-402.
- Bonafil Batalla, G. (1996). *Mexico profundo: Reclaiming a civilization*. Austin, TX: The University of Texas Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1998). *Practical reason*. Stanford, CA: Stanford Press.
- Bourdieu, P. & Wacquant, L.J.D. (1992). *An invitation to reflexive sociology*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Breen, L.J. & Darlaston-Jones, D. (2010). Moving beyond the enduring dominance of positivism in psychological research: Implications for psychology in Australia. *Australian Psychologist*, 45, 67-76.
- Calderón-Tena, C. & Knight, G.P. (2011). The socialization of prosocial behavioral tendencies among Mexican American adolescents: The role of familism values. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 17, 98-106.
- Carr, E.H. (1963). *What is history?* New York: Knopf.

- Carranza, F.D., You, S., Chhuon, V., & Hudley, C. (2009). Mexican American adolescents' academic achievement and aspirations: The role of perceived parental educational involvement, acculturation and self-esteem. *Adolescence*, 44, 312-333.
- Castro-Salazar, R. & Bagley, D. (2010). 'Ni de aquí ni from there': Navigating between contexts: Counter-narratives of undocumented Mexican students in the United States. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 13, 23-40.
- Chang, J., & Le, T.N. (2010). Multiculturalism as a dimension of school climate: The impact on the academic achievement of Asian American and Hispanic youth. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 16, 485-492.
- Charmaz, K. (2001). Qualitative interviewing and grounded theory analysis. In J.F. Gubrium, & J.A. Holstien (Eds.). *Handbook of interview research: Context & method* (pp.675-694). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Charmaz, K. (2006). Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis. London: Sage Publications
- City of Harlingen Texas. (2006). *Charter of the city of Harlingen*. Retrieved from http://www.myharlingen.us/docs/1-CITY_CHARTER_06pdf.
- Comaroff, J.L. (1987). Totemism and ethnicity: Consciousness, practice and the signs of inequality. *Ethos*, 52, 301-323.
- Connelly, S. & Anderson, C. (2007). Studying water: Reflections on the problems and possibilities of interdisciplinary working. *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews*, 32, 213-220.

- Cooper, R. & Burrell, G. (1988), Modernism, postmodernism and organizational studies:
An introduction. *Organizational Studies*, 9, 91-112.
- Cummins, J. (1979). Linguistic interdependence and the educational development of
bilingual children. *Educational Research*, 49 (2), 222-251.
- Deci, E.L., Eghrari, H., Patrick, B.C. & Leone, D.R. (1994). Facilitating internalization:
The self-determination theory perspective. *Journal of Personality*, 62, 119-142.
- DeYoung, A.J. (1987). The status of American rural education research: An integrated
review and commentary. *Review of Educational Research*, 57, 123-148.
- Duffy, M. & Chenail, R.J. (2008). Values in qualitative and quantitative research.
Counseling and values, 53, 22-38.
- Dybicz, P. (2010). Confronting oppression not enhancing functioning: The role of social
workers within postmodern practice.
- El Arroyo. (1973). El Arroyo, Vol. 43. [High School Yearbook] Harlingen High School.
Archived at Harlingen High School, Journalism Classroom.
- El Arroyo. (1974). El Arroyo, Vol. 44. [High School Yearbook] Harlingen High School.
Archived at Harlingen High School, Journalism Classroom.
- El Arroyo. (1975). El Arroyo, Vol. 45. [High School Yearbook] Harlingen High School.
Archived at Harlingen High School, Journalism Classroom.
- El Arroyo. (2002). El Arroyo, Vol. 72. [High School Yearbook] Harlingen High School.
Archived at Harlingen High School, Journalism Classroom.
- El Arroyo. (2004). El Arroyo, Vol. 74. [High School Yearbook] Harlingen High School.
Archived at Harlingen High School, Journalism Classroom.

El Arroyo. (2005). El Arroyo, Vol. 75. [High School Yearbook] Harlingen High School.

Archived at Harlingen High School, Journalism Classroom.

Emberling, G. (1997) Ethnicity in complex societies: Archaeological perspectives.

Journal of archaeological research, 5, 295-342.

Ennis, S.R., Rios-Vargas, M., & Albert, N.G. (2011) The Hispanic Population:2010 census briefs. Retrieved from www.census.gov.

Esparza, P., Sánchez, B. (2008). The role of attitudinal familism in academic outcomes:

A study of urban Latino high school seniors. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*, 14, 193-200.

Flores, L.Y. , Ojeda, L., Yu-Ping H., Gee, D. & Lee, S. (2006), The relation of acculturation, problem-solving appraisal, and career decision-making self-efficacy to Mexican American high school students' educational goals. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 53, 260-266.

Foley, D. (2005). Elusive prey: John Ogbu and the search for a grand theory of academic disengagement. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 18, 643-657.

Foster, K.M. (2004). Coming to terms: A discussion of John Ogbu's cultural-ecological theory fo minority academic achievement. *Intercultural Education*, 15, 369-384.

Foucault, M. (1972). *The archaeology of knowledge*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Freeman, J. (2005). Towards a definition of holism. *British Journal of General Practice*, February, 2005.

Friedman, S.S. (2001). Definitional excursions: The meanings of modern/modernity/modernism. *Modernism/modernity*, 8, 493-513.

- Fuligni, A.J., Tseng, V., * Lam, M. (1999). Attitudes towards family obligations among American adolescents with Asian, Latin American, and European backgrounds. *Child Development*, 70, 1030-1044.
- Gándara, P. & Contreras, F. (2009). *The Latino education crisis: The consequences of failed social policies*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.
- Gándara, P., Rumberger, R., Maxwell-Jolly, J. & Callahan, R. (2003, October 7). English learners in California schools: Unequal resources, unequal outcomes. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 11(36), Retrieved 3-10-2012 from <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v11n36/>.
- Gee, J.P. (2005). *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Gibson, M.A., Bejínéz, L. F. (2002). Dropout prevention: How migrant education supports Mexican youth. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 1(3), 155-175.
- Gibson, M.A., Bejínéz, L.F., Hidalgo, N. & Rolón (2004). Belonging and school participation: Lessons from a migrant student club. In M.A. Gibson, P. Gándara & J.P. Peterson Koyama (Eds.). *School connections: U.S. Mexican youth, peers and school achievement*. (pp. 129-149). New York: Teacher's College Press.
- Glaser, B.G. (1965). The constant comparative method of qualitative analysis. *Social Problems*, 12, 436-445.
- Glaser, B.G. (1978). *Theoretical sensitivity: Advances in the methodology of grounded theory*. Mill Valley, CA: The Sociology Press.

- Glaser, B.G. (2004). Remodeling grounded theory. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 5, 3.4. Retrieved from <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/viewArticle/607/1315>
- Glaser, B.G., & Strauss, A.L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Piscataway, NJ: Aldine Transaction.
- Good, M.E., Masewicz, S., Vogel, L. (2010). Latino English language learners: Bridging achievement and cultural gaps between schools and families. *Journal of Latinos and Education*, 9, 321-329
- Gould, M. (1999). Race and theory: Culture, poverty, and adaptation to discrimination in Wilson and Ogbu. *Sociological Theory*, 17, 171-200.
- Guba, E.G., & Lincoln, Y.S. (1982). Epistemological and methodological bases of naturalistic inquiry. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 30, 233-252.
- Guyll, M., Madon, S., Prieto, L. & Scherr, K.C. (2010). The potential roles of self-fulfilling prophecies, stigma consciousness, and stereotype threat in linking Latino/a ethnicity and educational outcomes. *Journal of Social Issues*, 66 (1), 113-130.
- Guzman, B. (2001). The Hispanic population: Census 2000 brief. U.S. Census Bureau. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-3.pdf> Washington, DC.
- Henry, A. (2006). Historical studies: Groups/Institutions. In J.L.Green, G. Camilli, & P.B. Elmore. (Eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods in education research* (pp.333- 355). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

- Hess, R.S. (2000). Dropping out among Mexican American youth: Reviewing the literature through an ecological perspective. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 5, 267-289.
- Hirshman, S. (2001). The educational enrollment of immigrant youth: A test of the segmented-assimilation hypothesis. *Demography*, 38, 317-336.
- Hoefer, M., Rytina, N. & Campbell, C. (2006). Estimates of the unauthorized immigrant population residing in the United States: January 2006. Washington, DC: Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics.
- Horsey, D. (2012, April 24). Crossing the border – in reverse. *The Baltimore Sun*. Retrieved from www.articles.baltimoresun.com/2012-04-24/news/bs-ed-horsey-immigration-text
- Jimenez, R.T. (2000). Literacy and the identity development of Latina/o students. *American Educational Research Journal*, 37, 971 – 1000.
- Jimenez, R.T., Smith, P.H., & Martinez-Leon, N. (2003). Freedom and form: The language and literacy practices of two Mexican schools. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 38, 488 - 508.
- Johnson, B. & Christensen, L. (2008). Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Jun-Li Chen, J. (2005). Relation of academic support from parents, teachers, and peers in Hong Kong adolescents' academic achievement: The mediating role of academic engagement. *Genetic, Social, and General Psychology*, 131, 77-127.
- Kaestle, C.F. (1992). Standards of evidence in historical research: How do we know when we know? *History of Education Quarterly*, 32, 361-366.

- Kao, G. & Thompson, J.S. (2003). Racial and ethnic stratification in educational achievement and attainment. *Annual of Sociology*, 29, 417-442.
- Kipling, R. (1899). The white man's burden. *Trans-communicator*, 16, 213
- Kitcher, P. (1980). A priori knowledge. *The Philosophical Review*, 89, 3-23
- Kohler, A.D. & Lazarín, M. (2007). Hispanic education in the United States. *National Council of La Raza, Statistical Brief*, 8.
- Korzenny, F. (1999). Acculturation vs. Assimilation among US Hispanics: E-mail self-reports. Downloaded from www.criskin.com/assets/HispanicAcculturation/Assimilation.pdf. 3/17/2017.
- Krueger, R.A. (1988). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Krueger, R.A., & Casey, M. A. (2009). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Kyvig, D. E. & Marty, M.A. (2000). *Nearby history: Exploring the past around you*. (2nd ed.). New York: Altamira Press.
- Larocque, M., Kleiman, I. & Darling, S.M. (2011). Parental involvement: The missing link in school achievement. *Preventing School Failure*, 53, 115-122.
- Lee, J. (2002). Racial and ethnic achievement gap trends: reversing the progress toward equity? *Educational Researcher*, 31, 3-12.
- Lee, J. & Shute, V.J. (2010). Personal and social-contextual factors in K – 12 academic performance: An integrative perspective on student learning. *Educational Psychologist*, 43(5), 185-202.

- Lincoln, Y.S. & Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalist Inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Livingston, G. & Kahn, J.R. (2002). An American dream unfulfilled: The limited mobility of Mexican Americans. *Social Science Quarterly*, 83, 1003-1012.
- Lyotard, J.-F. (1979). *The postmodern condition: A report on Knowledge*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Maril, R.L. (1989). *Poorest of Americans: The Mexican-Americans of the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.
- Marshall, M.N. (1996). Sampling for qualitative research. *Family Practice*, 13, 522-525.
- Martínez, T.P., & Martínez, A.P. (2002). Texas tragedy: No Hispanic child left behind? *The Education Digest*, 68, 35-40.
- Matute-Bianche, M.E. (2008) Situational ethnicity and patterns of school performance among immigrant and nonimmigrant Mexican-descent students. In J.U. Ogbu (Ed.), *Minority status , oppositional culture, and schooling* (pp. 397-432). New York: Routledge.
- Maykut, P. & Morehouse, R. (1994). Beginning qualitative research: A Philosophic and practical guide. London: RouteledgeFalmer.
- Medina, C. & Luna, G. (2004). Learning at the margins. *Rural Special Education Quarterly*, 23, 10-16.
- Miles, M.B. & Huberman, A.M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Mills, S. (1997). *Discourse*, New York: Routledge.

- Mitchell, J. (2003). The quantitative imperative: Positivism, naïve realism and the place of qualitative methods in psychology. *Theory Psychology*, 13, 5-31.
- Moreno-Valle Suárez, L. (2001). Esbozo de la historia de la educacion en México. *Revista Panamericana de Pedagogía*, 2, 215-232.
- Muller-Merbach, H. (2007). Kant's two paths of knowledge creation: A priori vs. a posteriori. *Knowledge Management Research & Practice*, 5, 64-65.
- National Center for Educational Statistics. (2003) *Status and trends in the education of Hispanics*. (NCES 2003-008). Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2003/2003008.pdf>.
- O'Bryan, S.T., Braddock, J.H.II, Dawkins, M.P. (2008). An examination of the effects of school-based varsity sport participation and parental involvement on male academic behaviors. *Challenge: A journal of Research on African American Men*, 14, 1-27.
- Ochoa, G.L. (2000). Mexican Americans' attitude toward and interactions with Mexican immigrants: A qualitative analysis of conflict and cooperation. *Social Science Quarterly*, 81, 84-105
- O'Conner, C. (1997). Dispositions toward (collective) struggle and educational resilience in the inner city: A case analysis of six African American high school students. *American Educational Research Journal*, 34, 593-629
- Ogbu, J.U. (1983). Schooling the inner city. *Society*, 21, 75-79.
- Ogbu, J.U. (1987). Variability in minority school performance: A problem in search of an explanation. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 18, 312-334.

- Ogbu, J.U. (1990). Minority education in comparative perspective. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 59, 45-57.
- Ogbu, J.U. (1998). Voluntary and involuntary minorities: A cultural-ecological theory of school performance with some implications for education. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 29, 155-188.
- Ogbu, J.U. (1999). Beyond language: Ebonics, proper English, and identity in a Black-American speech community. *American Education Research Journal*, 36, 147-184.
- Ogbu, J.U. (2008). The history and status of a theoretical debate. In J.U. Ogbu (Ed.), *Minority status, oppositional culture, and schooling* (pp. 3-28). New York: Routledge.
- Ojeda, L., & Flores, L. Y. (2008). The influence of gender, generation level, parents' education level and perceived barriers on the educational aspirations of Mexican American high school students. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 57, 84-95
- Okihiro, G.Y. (1996). Oral history and the writing of ethnic history. In D.K. Dunaway & W.K. Baum (Eds.), *Oral history: An interdisciplinary anthology* (pp.199-214).
- Padilla, A.M., & González, R. (2001), Academic performance of immigrant and U.S. – born Mexican heritage students: Effects of schooling in Mexico and bilingual/English language instruction.
- Palacios, N. Guttmannova, K. & Chase-Lansdale, L. (2008). Early reading achievement of children in immigrant families: Is there an immigrant paradox? *Developmental psychology*, 44, 1381-1395.

- Pieterse, J. N. (2004). *Globalization and culture: Global mélange*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Ltd.
- Poon, J. P.H. (2003). Quantitative methods: Producing quantitative methods narratives. *Progress in Human Geography*, 27, 753-762.
- Porter, J.E. (1986). Intertextuality and the discourse community. *Rhetoric Review*, 5, 34-46.
- Portes, A., Fernández-Kelly & Haller, W. (2005). Segmented assimilation on the ground: The new second generation in early adulthood. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28, 1000-1040.
- Portes, A. & MacLeod, D. (1996). Educational progress of children of immigrants: The roles of class, ethnicity, and school context. *Sociology of Education*, 69, 255-274.
- Portes, A. & MacLeod, D. (1999). Educating the second generation: Determinants of academic achievement among children of immigrants in the United States. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 25, 373-396.
- Portes, A., & Rumbaut, R.G. (2005). Introduction: The second generation and the children of immigrants longitudinal study. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 28, 983-999.
- Pratt, M.L. (1992). *Imperial eyes: Traveling, writing, and transculturation*. London: Routledge.
- Raiskin, J. (1993). The art of history: An interview with Michelle Cliff. *Kenyon Review*, 15, 57-71.
- Ratner, C. (2008). Methodological individualism vs. holism. Retrieved from <http://www.sonic.net/~cr2/holism.htm>

- Ream, R. (2005). Toward understanding how social capital mediates the impact of mobility on Mexican American achievement. *Social Forces*, 84, 201-224.
- Reardon, S.F., Galindo, C. (2009). The Hispanic achievement gap in math and reading in the elementary grades. *American Educational Research Journal*, 46, 853-891.
- Rinderle, S. (2005). The Mexican diaspora: A critical examination of signifiers. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 29, 294-316.
- Romero, A.J., Robinson, T.N., Haydel, K.F., Mendoza, F. & Killen, J.D. (2004). *Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics*, 025, 34-40.
- Rozeff, N. (2009). Chronological History of Education in Harlingen, Cameron County Historical Commission. Retrieved from <http://cameroncountyhistoricalcommission.org/Harlingen%20History.htm#A%20Chronological%20History%20of%20Education>
- Rury, J.L. (2006). Historical research in education. In Green, J.I., Camilli, G., & Elmore, P.B. (Eds.), *Handbook of complementary methods in education research* (pp. 323-332). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Ryan, R.M. & Deci, E.L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well being. *American Psychologist*, 55, 68-78.
- Saíd, E.W. (1993). *Culture and imperialism*. New York: Vintage Books.
- San Miguel, C. Kwak, D., Lee-Gonyea, J. & Gonyea N.E. (2011). Xenophobia among Hispanic college students and implications for the criminal justice system. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 27, 95-109.

- Schmid, C.L. (2001). Educational achievement, language-minority students, and the new second generation. *Sociology of Education*, 74, 71-87.
- Schwandt, T.A. (2007). *The sage dictionary of qualitative inquiry* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications
- Smith, T.M. (1995). Findings from the condition of education 1995: The educational progress of Hispanic Students. *U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement: NCES 95-767: National Center for Education Statistics.*
- Smokowski, P.R., Bacallao, M. & Buchanan, R. L. (2009). Interpersonal mediators linking acculturation stressors to subsequent internalizing symptoms and self-esteem in Latino adolescents. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 37, 1024-1045.
- Spirkin, A. (1983). *Dialectical Materialism*. Moscow: Progress Publishers. Retrieved from: <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/spirkin/works/dialectical-materialism/index.html>.
- Spivey, N.N. (1997). *The constructivist metaphor*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Suárez-Orozco, C. et al. (2010). Academic trajectories of newcomer immigrant youth. *Developmental Psychology*, 46. 602-618.
- Texas Education Agency (2002) *Academic Excellence Indicator System 2001-02 campus performance*. Austin, TX: Author. Retrieved from www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/
- Texas Education Agency (2002). *Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools 1990-00*. Austin, TX: Author. Retrieved from http://www.tea.state.tx.us/acctres/dropcomp_index.html

Texas Education Agency (2003) *Academic Excellence Indicator System 2002-03 campus performance*. Austin, TX: Author. Retrieved from

www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/

Texas Education Agency (2004) *Academic Excellence Indicator System 2003-04 campus performance*. Austin, TX: Author. Retrieved from

www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/

Texas Education Agency (2004). *Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools 2000-01*. Austin, TX: Author. Retrieved from

http://www.tea.state.tx.us/acctres/dropcomp_index.html

Texas Education Agency (2005) *Academic Excellence Indicator System 2004-05 campus performance*. Austin, TX: Author. Retrieved from

www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/

Texas Education Agency (2005). *Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools 2003-04*. Austin, TX: Author. Retrieved from

http://www.tea.state.tx.us/acctres/dropcomp_index.html

Texas Education Agency (2006) *Academic Excellence Indicator System 2005-06 campus performance*. Austin, TX: Author. Retrieved from

www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/

Texas Education Agency (2006). *Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools 2004-05*. Austin, TX: Author. Retrieved from

http://www.tea.state.tx.us/acctres/dropcomp_index.htmlor.

Texas Education Agency (2007). *Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools 2005-06*. Austin, TX: Author. Retrieved from

http://www.tea.state.tx.us/acctres/dropcomp_index.html

Texas Education Agency (2008). *Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools 2006-07*. Austin, TX: Author. Retrieved from

http://www.tea.state.tx.us/acctres/dropcomp_index.html

Texas Education Agency (2009). *Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools 2007-08*. Austin, TX: Author. Retrieved from

http://www.tea.state.tx.us/acctres/dropcomp_index.html

Texas Education Agency (2009). *Secondary school completion and dropouts in Texas public schools 2009-10*. Austin, TX: Author. Retrieved from

http://www.tea.state.tx.us/acctres/dropcomp_index.html

Texas quick facts (2010). *U.S. Census Bureau*. Retrieved from

www.quickfacts.census.gov.

Thompson, J.B. (1991). Editor's introduction. In P. Bourdieu *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Trujillo, L.A. (1975). The masculine" Mexican folk dance. *Viltis: A Folklore Magazine*, 9-13.

U.S. Census Bureau (2000). Profile of general demographic characteristics: 2000

Geographic area: Harlingen City, Texas. Retrieved from

<http://censtats.census.gov/data/TX/1604832372> .

U.S. Census Bureau (2010) ACS demographic and housing estimates: 2005-2009,

Harlingen City, Texas. Retrieved from <http://census.gov/servlet/ADPTable> .

- Valencia, R.R. & Black, M.S. (2002). "Mexican Americans don't value education!" – On the basis of the myth, mythmaking, and debunking. *Journal of Latinos and Education, 1*, 81-103.
- Valenzuela, A. (2008). Ogbu's voluntary and involuntary minority hypothesis and the politics of caring. In J.U. Ogbu (Ed.), *Minority status, oppositional culture, and schooling* pp. 496-530. New York: Routledge.
- Valenzuela, A., & Dornbusch, S.M. (1994). Familism and social capital in the academic achievement of Mexican origin and Anglo adolescents. *Social Science Quarterly, 75*, 18-36.
- Vila, P. (2000). *Crossing borders, reinforcing borders: Social categories, metaphors, and narrative identities on the U.S.-Mexico frontier*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Vygotsky, L. (1978) *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Press.
- Weissglass, J. (2001). Racism and the achievement gap. *Education Week, 20*, 72-76.
- Werner, H. (2005). Peoplehoods of the past: Mennonites and the ethnic boundary. *Journal of Mennonite Studies, 23*, 23-35.
- Willis, P. (1977). *Learning to labor: How working class kids get working class jobs*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Yow, V.R. (2005). *Recording oral history: A guide for the humanities and social sciences* (2nd ed.). New York: AltaMira Press.

Appendix A

The documents in this appendix demonstrate the process of going from “raw” data to the final two *Theoretical Domains*. Because of the volume of this material, only a small sample is being presented. The researcher has attempted to follow a specific section of the data beginning with the focus group transcription and initial coding. It is to be remembered that these were working documents, and went through many changes.

1. Summative Coding, 1975
2. Initial Category List
 - a. produced as the process unfolded. It was used to later label the initial codes with Preliminary Category designation
3. Initial Categories
 - a. The Summative Coding chart was reviewed and notated using the category numbers designated on the Initial Category List
4. Category Compilations
 - a. All of the codes designated as a specific Category were compiled and compared
5. Category Summary
 - a. A chart was then produced for each category on with the codes assembled by type, e.g. F/G or Document
6. Theoretical Codes – Revised

A chart was produced for each of the initial Theoretical Codes. The researcher began comparing these categories to applicable themes from the literature to arrive at the final *Primary Theoretical Domains and Forces*.

Appendix A 1

1975 Substantive Coding

8/06/2011

Yolanda

Adela

F = Rossy

M = Jerry

| Statement | Initial Coding | Process Code | Memos |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>Yolanda: And uh well as far as HCISD</p> <p>umm I remember I started in the first grade I didn't speak a word of English.</p> <p>I remember Mrs. Smith – oh I hated Mrs. Yates. She would bang her ruler right on my desk because I couldn't read Tom Dick and Jane</p> | <p>Yolanda spoke no English in the first grade</p> <p>Mr. Smith forced Mary to Read in English</p> | <p>Returning to education</p> <p>Remembering the first grade</p> <p>Recalling the severity of the attitude of the teacher toward a student who could not understand the reading material</p> | <p>Mrs. Smith is mentioned by the group from 1965.</p> |
| I: chuckles) | | | |
| Yolanda: because I didn't speak | The treatment was also because she could not speak English | Recalling the severity of the teacher because she spoke no English | |
| Adela: my memory doesn't go that far back... I don't remember my you know first grade | Adela: doesn't remember the 1 st grade | Joining the conversation | |
| Yolanda you don't? well I remember that teacher | Mary remembers | Remembering that teacher | It is implied that the severity of the teacher caused Mary to remember her forty + |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| | | | years later |
| Adela:: probably because of the (banging) Mrs. Smith that's why you remember retained it | Adela: speculates that Mary remembers because it was so violent | Speculating that the memory was retained because of the extremely violent nature of the teacher | |
| W: but when you started the first grade did you start the first grade with anglo kids and went up with them? | Was the first grade class integrated or segregated | Probing the nature of the first grade class | This question comes from the information of the '65 group |
| Yolanda: yes.. They were all there... all of us were | The class was integrated | Indicating that a change had occurred | |
| I: I spoke with a group last week who were from the sixties. And if you... | Relating the rationale for the question | | |
| Yolanda: really... and they were segregated? | Guesses that they had been segregated | Anticipating the conclusion | |
| ndixYolanda: well let me think... well I know a lot of the kids slept on the floor because they had piojos, I slept on the table because I didn't have piojos (laughs) | Her memories of the first grade include nap time and lice, but not segregation | Probing her memory for indications of segregation, and finding only memories of nap time and lice. | |
| I: and piojos are lice? | | | |
| Yolanda: Yes lice, there were a lot of lice, if you didn't have piojos or lice you sleep on your desk in the first grade. | Children were segregated at nap time (floor or desk) based on existence of lice. | | |
| Adela:: like take a nap | Ascertaining that naps were taken | | |
| Yolanda: yea we would take a nap... And ah uh gosh I don't remember any | They took naps (astonished) She remembers no white kids in that | Continuing to remember, Mary now remembers that there were no White children in her 1 st grade class. | It is interesting that like Manuela previously, Mary |

| | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|--|--|
| white kids in the class. | class | | initially remembers things as they are today – integrated – but as she remembers , she becomes aware that segregation existed. |
|--------------------------|-------|--|--|

Appendix A 2

Initial Categories

1. Administrative – Statements related to the administering the focus group
2. Dissertation – Statements related to the rationale, nature, or purpose of the dissertation
3. Students – Statements related to students in the dissertation²
4. Community – Statements related to community, cultural attitudes and multi-cultural
5. Family – Statements related to family
6. Establishment – Statements related to the school district, board, and policies
7. Schools – Statements related to individual schools and curriculum
8. Teachers
9. MD
10. WED
11. Temporal – Statements related to the two basic time period being studied.
12. Migrant – Statements related to being a migrant worker, and a migrant student
13. Language – Statements related to the use of either English or Spanish as both relate to the same issue.
14. Drop out – Statements related to dropping out of school
15. Affective elements – Statements related to emotional aspects of school
16. Special Ed – Statements related to Special Education as it relates to MD students
17. Inequities – Racial distinctions
18. Civil Rights issues
19. Education – Statements related to education, its value and purpose, etc.
20. Financial considerations
21. Location – Towns other than Borderlands
22. Marital issues – Drop out related to getting married
23. Delayed graduation – Initial dropout – return to school
24. Inter-cultural racial issues – Situations where there is distinctions between *Pocho* and *Mojado*
25. Non-affective emotions
26. Early Education Experiences – Positive and negative – K-6
27. Perseverance
28. Tracking
29. Self esteem
30. Motivation
31. Biographical data
32. Literacy
33. Gender

Appendix A 3

Initial Category Designation

Numbers in Red indicate initial category designation

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Yolanda And uh well as far as HCISD</p> <p>13/umm I remember I started in the first grade I didn't speak a word of English.</p> <p>8/13. I remember Mrs. Smith – oh I hated Mrs. Smith. She would bang her ruler right on my desk because I couldn't read Tom Dick and Jane</p> | <p>Returning to education</p> <p>Yolanda spoke no English in the first grade</p> | <p>Returning to education</p> <p>Remembering the first grade</p> <p>Recalling the severity of the attitude of the teacher toward a student who could not understand the reading material</p> | <p>Mrs.Smith is mentioned by the group from 1965.</p> |
| | | | |
| I: chuckles) | | | |
| 13. Yolanda: because I didn't speak | The treatment was also because she could not speak English | Recalling the severity of the teacher because she spoke no English | |
| Adela: my memory doesn't go that far back... I don't remember my you know first grade | Adela doesn't remember the 1 st grade | Joining the conversation | |
| 8. Yolanda: you don't? well I remember that teacher | Yolanda remembers | Remembering that teacher | It is implied that the severity of the teacher caused Yolanda to remember her forty + years later |
| 8. Adela: | Adela speculates | Speculating that the | |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| probably because of the (banging) Mrs. Yates that's why you remember retained it | that Yolanda remembers because it was so violent | memory was retained because of the extremely violent nature of the teacher | |
| I: but when you started the first grade did you start the first grade with anglo kids and went up with them? | Was the first grade class integrated or segregated | Probing the nature of the first grade class | This question comes from the information of the '65 group |
| 25. Yolanda: yes.. They were all there... all of us were | The class was integrated | Indicating that a change had occurred | |
| I: I spoke with a group last week who were from the sixties. And if you... | Relating the rationale for the question | | |
| Yolanda: really... and they were segregated? | Guesses that they had been segregated | Anticipating the conclusion | |
| Yolanda: well let me think... well I know a lot of the kids slept on the floor because they had piojos, I slept on the table because I didn't have piojos(laugh) | Her memories of the first grade include nap time and lice, but not segregation | Probing her memory for indications of segregation, and finding only memories of nap time and lice. | |
| I: and piojos are lice? | | | |
| Yolanda: Yes lice, there were a lot of lice, if you didn't have piojos or lice you sleep on your desk in the first grade. | Children were segregated at nap time (floor or desk) based on existence of lice. | | |

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| Adela: like take a nap | Ascertaining that naps were taken | | |
| <p>17./25 Yolanda: yea we would take a nap...</p> <p>And ah uh gosh</p> <p>I don't remember any White kids in the class.</p> | <p>They took naps (astonished)</p> <p>She remembers no white kids in that class</p> | Continuing to remember, Yolanda now remembers that were no White children in her 1 st grade class. | <p>It is interesting that like Manuela previously, Yolanda initially remembers things as they are today – integrated – but as she remembers, she becomes aware that segregation existed.</p> |

Appendix A 4

Category Compilations

Category Thirteen

Language – Statements related to the use of either English or Spanish COMPILATION

| Statement | F/G | Focused Statement | Memo |
|---|-------|--|--|
| <p>(p.40)13. Yolanda: well um when I first entered school, I didn't speak a word of English.</p> <p>Not one word. I don't know if you experienced...you probably didn't because..</p> <p>13. Adela: we were all the same</p> | 1975B | Entering school, they spoke no English | Relate to '65 and dropouts |
| <p>(p.45) 25./13/umm I remember I started in the first grade I didn't speak a word of English.</p> <p>8/13. I remember Mrs. Smith – oh I hated Mrs. Smith. She would bang her ruler right on my desk because I couldn't read Tom Dick and Jane</p> <p>13. Yolanda: because I didn't speak</p> | | Being physically punished for speaking Spanish | Check H.E.W. for date of ESL. reference. |
| <p>(p.48)13/8 Yolanda: Mrs. Smith made me with that yard stick..</p> <p>It was a yard stick. I was forced.</p> <p>I remember that, I was forced to speak English.</p> <p>13W: and you were not allowed to speak Spanish...</p> <p>13 Yolanda in the classroom</p> | | Forced to speak English – physically | |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p>13 Yolanda I guess I spoke Spanish with my classmates...I mean they couldn't in the classroom</p> <p>5/13 Adela: a question I needed to ask...</p> <p>did your parents not know English as you were growing up and going to school.</p> <p>Did they learn English?</p> <p>5/13 Yolanda: very little.. no but they never made the effort. They never made the effort to speak English to learn English.</p> <p>5/13 Adela: because my parents can speak English. My mother more so than my dad, but my dad understands English.</p> | | <p>Speaking Spanish with her classmates on campus</p> <p>Parents spoke very little English</p> | |
| <p>(p.50)</p> <p>13 I: and they had nothing that would be equivalent of an ESL program?</p> <p>Yolanda: no no</p> <p>I: it was sink or swim?</p> <p>13/33 Yolanda everybody had the same book, we had no modifications, nothing, everybody had</p> | | <p>There were no programs that were the equivalent of ESL</p> <p>Basal Reading – no modifications</p> | |

Appendix A 5

Category Summaries

| <u>Category</u> | <u>Summary</u> | <u>Theoretical Code</u> | <u>Memos</u> |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|
| <u>Category Thirteen Language</u> | <p>I. 1965 – There was no tolerance of the use of Spanish on campus. Students were punished for speaking Spanish. There were no programs provided to teach English Explicitly, or support students while learning English.</p> <p>II. 1975 – The students could not speak Spanish in the classroom,</p> <p>but there was more tolerance with Spanish being spoken social on campus.</p> <p>Still, students were “forced” (Mary) to speak English. Report of a family member who was unable to adjust to English only instruction, and dropped out in the first grade. There were no ESL classes for those whose L1 was Spanish.</p> <p>III. 2005 – Language was no longer an issue. Both bilingual and ESL instruction are provided to support the students as they learn English. (See memos related to devaluing Spanish by members of 2005)</p> <p>IV. Document Letters from the Office of Civil Rights supports the above statements of the 60s and 70s.</p> | <p><u>Colonialism</u></p> <p><u>Colonialism</u></p> <p><u>Changes over time</u></p> <p><u>Colonialism</u></p> <p><u>Changes over time</u></p> <p><u>Colonialism</u></p> <p><u>Language</u></p> | <p><u>Cross reference and integrate F/G with documents.</u></p> |

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| | <p>A. Acknowledges HCISD's orientation toward monolingual English-speaking students</p> <p>B. Characterizes Spanish-speaking students as "at best remedial."</p> <p>C. Identifies national origin (Mexico) and poor English skills as justification for exclusion of MD students</p> <p>D. Directs district to initiate ESL program</p> <p>E. States that policy existed which prohibited speaking Spanish on campus</p> <p>F. This was declared discriminatory</p> <p>G. This letter orders the district to instigate policies which will insure that all children, regardless of racial, ethnic or language differences will have equal educational opportunity.</p> <p>H. Struck letter 1972 substantiates the above</p> <p>V. 1974 - Specific policies are implemented to initiate ELL programs in an attempt to be in compliance with Title <u>VI</u>.</p> | | |
|--|---|--|--|

Appendix A 6

Theoretical Codes - Revised

Habitus

| Theoretical Foundation | Initial Category | Summary |
|---|-------------------|--|
| <p>Bourdieu “the space of social positions is retranslated into a space of position-takings through the mediation of the space of dispositions (habitus) ...To each class of positions there corresponds a class of habitus (or tastes) produced by the social conditioning associated with the corresponding condition and, through the mediation of the habitus and its generative capability, a systematic set of goods and properties, which are united by an affinity of style. (Bourdieu, 1998, pp. 7-8)</p> <p>Habitus here will refer to any aspect of society which is an Identification Badge – an outward sign of the <i>social space</i> inhabited by MD students.</p> | | <p>Terminology: Explicating this category will be accomplished more efficiently when the appropriate, theory related terminology is used. Therefore, it is necessary to clarify the concept of Capital, and its divisions, social and cultural capital. Capital is that which has hierarchical value in a specified domain, and can be exchanged for capital from other domains, i.e. cultural capital (that which has value in the domain of arts and music) can be exchanged for social capital, i.e. that which contributes to one's position in a social milieu.</p> |
| <p>(Bourdieu, 1991, p.44) Saussure – “ It is not space which defines language, but language which defines space” John B. Thompson – Editor's Introduction Habitus – a set of <i>dispositions</i> which incline agents to act and react in certain ways.” (p.12) These dispositions are gained through Vygotskian socialization – inculcated Internalized discourse – “The habitus also provides individuals with a sense of how to act and respond in the course of their daily lives.” (p.13)</p> | Thirteen Language | <p>1965 – There was no tolerance of the use of Spanish on campus. Students were punished for speaking Spanish. There were no programs provided to teach English Explicitly, or support students while learning English.</p> <p>1975 – The students could not speak Spanish in the classroom, but there was more tolerance with Spanish being spoken social on campus. Still, students were “forced” (Mary) to speak English. Report of a family member who was unable to adjust to English only</p> |

| | | |
|--|---------------------------|--|
| <p>Provides a person with a “state of being.” p.51 <i>Habitus are the products of history p.248</i></p> | | <p>instruction, and dropped out in the first grade. There were no ESL classes for those whose L1 was Spanish.</p> <p>Discussion of the differentiation of Mexican Spanish and Tex-Mex – very opinionated and indicative of the nature of language in Habitus.</p> <p>2005 – Language was no longer an issue. Both bilingual and ESL instruction are provided to support the students as they learn English. (See memos related to devaluing Spanish by members of 2005)</p> <p>Document Letters from the Office of Civil Rights supports the above statements of the 60s and 70s.</p> <p>'75 Discussion of the differentiation of Mexican Spanish and Tex-Mex – very opinionated and indicative of the habitus of language in social spaces.</p> |
| <p>Education Capital –</p> | <p>Eighteen Education</p> | <p>I. 65</p> <p>a. Cultural Reproduction</p> <p>i. Families come from lower SES Mexican tradition where there is less educational capital.</p> <p>ii. The parents did not have a high level of</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | <p>education al capital. Working and providing for the physical needs of the family were prioritized over education</p> <p>iii. Education was not an integral part of their habitus.</p> <p>iv. There is a connectio n with financial realities because as the family became more financially secure through years of working as a family labor unit, there was more considerat ion for education. The younger children were allowed to stay in school and finish high school.</p> <p>II. '75</p> <p>a. For the families</p> |
|--|--|--|

| | | |
|---|------|---|
| | | <p>of half of the participants of '75, education was of no value. The emphasis was on work. However, like the participants of '65, with time, and financial security, the children were allowed to stay in school and finish high school.</p> <p>b. For half of the participants of '75 there was an emphasis of education.</p> <p>III. 2005</p> <p>a. All of the participants of 2005 were encouraged to finish high school and attend college.</p> |
| <p>“Collectivistic orientation emphasizes the goals and interests of the group over those of individual members. (Fuligni, Tseng, & Lam, 1999)</p> <p>“Familism is a construct that reflects the collectivistic nature of Latino culture, in other words, the orientation toward the welfare of the group (Romero 2004, p. 34)</p> <p>Freeburg, 1996 Fuligini, 1999 Romero, 2004 Vasquez Garcia et al. (2000)</p> | Five | <p>'65 and '75 large families 10+ Family unity and loyalty</p> <p>Families worked together as a labor unit</p> <p>Children left school to help support the family Younger siblings were allowed to stay in school</p> <p>Children refused scholarship to college to work and support the family</p> <p>Girls in '75 left school to be with boyfriend and begin their families rather than finish high school.</p> <p>2005 Boys encouraged to leave school to defer to their</p> |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| | | obligations to marry and support their pregnant girlfriend |
| | <p>Twenty-three Intra-racial divisions</p> <p>Moved to Social Space in Revised</p> | <p>I. '65</p> <p>a. None discussed</p> <p>II. '75</p> <p>a. One participant made several comments which made a clear distinction between Mexican-American, and Mexicans.</p> <p>b. Another participant made comments that newly arrived workers had too many advantages, and didn't have to work as hard.</p> <p>III. 2005</p> <p>a. Identifying the parties involved in racial conflicts: MD + 1 generation. v. MD recently arrived</p> <p>b. Distinguishing between recently arrived MD students, and 1 + generations MD students.</p> <p>c. Recently arrived MD will attempt to use education to better their lives.</p> |
| | <p>Twenty-nine Self-esteem</p> | <p>I. '75</p> <p>a. Participant stated explicitly that she and friends had low self-esteem</p> <p>i. Considered Mexicans</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | | <p>as a lower class</p> <p>ii. Accepted superiority of whites</p> <p>iii. These ideas were passed down from the parents.</p> <p>iv. Whites owned the farms on which they labored.</p> <p>b. Some students had no pride in their work</p> <p>c. Other participants from '75 exhibited a high self-esteem</p> <p>II. 2005</p> <p>a. Lack of academic success attributed to the fact that Mexican students feel that because they are Mexican, they are not expected to graduate.</p> <p>b. Expressing a reverse efficacy – a reverse to Self Determination “I am Mexican – Mexicans don't finish high school and go to college, therefore, I have no urgent motivation to finish high school and go to college.</p> |
|--|--|---|

Appendix B

Letter from Department of Health, Education and Welfare (H.E.W.), 1972

[This document was word processed to make it more legible]

Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Regional Office
Dallas, Texas

Office of Regional Director

December 19, 1972

Superintendent
Borderlands Consolidated Independent School District
Borderlands, Texas 78550

Dear Superintendent:

Thank you for the many courtesies extended to our staff during its visits to Borderlands November 30 – December 1 and December 13 – 17, 1971 for the purpose of reviewing the Borderlands Independent School District's compliance status with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This letter sets forth a summary of the conclusions made by this office based on our reviews of the district.

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

a. Unequal Access to the Curriculum.

To clarify Title VI responsibilities of school districts with respect to national origin minority group children the Department issued the National Origin Memorandum of May 25, 1970, a copy of which is enclosed. Point one of the Memorandum states:

“Where inability to speak and understand the English language excludes national origin-minority group children from effective participation in the educational program offered by a school district, the district must take affirmative steps to rectify the language deficiency in order to open its instructional program to these students.”

Traditionally, the total school program in the Borderlands ISD has been oriented toward monolingual English-speaking students, and has characterized the Spanish-speaking students as at best remedial. Although some initial steps have been taken to correct this situation, it is still prevalent throughout the system.

Based on our review of the district and subsequent analysis of data collected during the review, we have concluded that a substantial number of Mexican-American students have been excluded from effective participation in the educational program offered by the school district because of their national origin and their resulting inability to speak and understand the English language.

This conclusion is based upon data that includes: documentation of the English language skills of students in the district, reports from consultants, administrators, principals, teachers and members of the community concerning past and present efforts to provide adequate educational opportunity for non-English speaking students, and information relating to the overall achievement of Mexican-American students, such as scores on standardized achievement tests.

The analysis of this data reveals that a substantial number of Mexican-American students enter first grade classes in the district with serious deficiencies in English language skills, and that the district has not taken effective steps to offer a majority of these children equal access to and effective participation in the educational program offered by the district. This is confirmed by the consistently low representation of Mexican-American students in educational activities related to success in school and in performance of Mexican-American students on tests utilized by the school district in subjects which require facility in English.

As a result of the failure of the school system to provide an adequate curriculum for Spanish speaking students in the lower elementary grades, these students find themselves locked into low ability groups and tracks upon entry into junior high and high schools. For example, at Gay Junior High the 1971-2 Mexican American 8th grade students comprised 85% of level III (Remedial) language arts classes, but only 18% of Level I (Enriched) classes. A primary factor in assignment to classes at the junior high and secondary level was performance on standardized tests.

One other aspect affecting the total educational environment for Spanish speaking students in Borderlands was the policy at the high school which stated in effect, that only English should be spoken on the school campus. This policy and practice is discriminatory against Mexican-American students in the district whose home language is Spanish. It would also be discriminatory against any other national origin or racial group in the district whose home language was other than English.

In order to correct the deficiencies which exist, it will be necessary for the district to develop and implement a plan which will deliver curricula and all other educational services so as to insure that all children, regardless of racial or ethnic characteristics or language differences, have the same opportunity to learn and perform, academically and otherwise, and have equal access to all school services and functions. Such a plan will include among other things an affirmative policy of recruiting and employing teachers who are bilingual and sensitive to these

cultural differences; and a staff development program designed to assist teachers and administrators in redefining their role in a bilingual/bicultural district and in the development of a curriculum that does not penalize students who come to school with primary language skills in Spanish.

b. Special Education

As stated in Point two of the national Origin Memorandum: "School districts must not assign national origin-minority group students to classes for the mentally retarded on the basis of criteria which essentially measure or evaluate English language skills."

A review of 58 cumulative folders of Spanish surnamed students indicated that they were assigned primarily on the basis of English language skills, even though a substantial number (81%) of these students had very limited knowledge of the English language. Notations in the folders of many Spanish surnamed students clearly indicated that their assignment to classes for the mentally retarded was for the purpose of dealing with their inability to speak or understand the English language.

As a result of these inadequate tests and assignment procedures, there was a significantly higher percentage of Spanish surnamed students in classes for the mentally retarded than the percentage of such students in the district as a whole. In connection with this, self-contained educable mentally retarded (EMR) classes were from 95% -100% Spanish surnamed, whereas the minimally brain injured (MBI) class was 77% Anglo. EMR classes were self contained for the entire school day and students there received substantially less evaluation than those in MBI classes. Students in the MBI classes were assigned to regular classrooms for a portion of the school day.

Faculty

On January 14, 1971, the Office for Civil Rights issued a memorandum explaining Title VI requirements in Elementary and Secondary School Staffing Practices (copy enclosed). In pertinent part, the memorandum states:

"School districts that have in the past had a dual school system are required by current law to assign staff so that each school is substantially the same as the ratio throughout the district. This is the so-called Singleton (sic) rule, enunciated by the Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit in January 1970. The same rule applies to nonteaching staff who work with children."

"Even though a school district has not in the past operated an official dual system of schools, its statistical reports may nonetheless indicate a pattern of assigning staff of a particular race or ethnic group to particular schools. Where this appears to be true, the Office for Civil rights will seek more

detailed information regarding assignment policies and practices. If it is determined that assignments have been discriminatory, the school district will be requested to assign teachers so as to correct the discriminatory pattern.”

A review of data relating to the assignment of professional staff revealed that minority teachers are assigned to predominantly minority schools in significantly greater numbers than they are assigned to other schools in the district. Consequently, the district must reassign staff by the commencement of the fall semester, 1973-74 school year in order to achieve compliance with current Title VI requirements.

Our review indicated that the district has employed minority faculty members and administrators in the past few years. However, this effort has not yet overcome the effect of the district's apparent failure to hire such minority personnel in prior years. The percentage of minority faculty members and administrators is still disproportionately low considering their availability, and the fact that minority students account for approximately 70% of your student enrollment. In view of this, the district should maintain a special effort in this area, and should submit to this office details on your recruitment policy, including methods and places of recruitment, goals, and timetables.

Assignment of Students to Schools

Information gathered by the Office for Civil Rights during its review indicated that, historically, Mexican-American students, as well as Black students, were assigned to schools in a discriminatory manner. It also raised the possibility that School Board Policies governing the current assignment of students to schools violate Title VI of the Civil rights Act of 1964. Our analysis of this information is not complete. If our completed analysis reveals a violation in this area, we will notify the district and call upon it to formulate a plan of corrections.

In its May 25, 1970 memorandum, the Office for Civil Rights requested that school districts “examine current practices which exist in their districts in order to assess compliance with the matters set forth in this memorandum.” If such compliance problems were found to exist, school districts were requested to communicate immediately in writing with the Office for Civil rights. To date, the Office for Civil Rights has not received any communication from your district addressing itself to this matter. Consequently, and in light of the matters set forth above, we must request that you inform us within 45 days of those steps that will be taken by the district to implement a plan by the beginning of the 1973-74 school year addressed to those matters of noncompliance.

We will be happy to make available to the district, upon request, an education compliance team to work with you in detailing the evidence and basis for the conclusions set forth in this letter, and in developing a plan designed to correct any deficiencies which exist.

We look forward to hearing from you and working with you.

Sincerely yours,

Education Branch, Region IV
Office for Civil Rights
Enclosures
Cc: Chief State School Officer.

Appendix C

Civil Action 5281

Program Monitoring and Interventions > Complaints and Equal Educational Opportunity
Management > Civil Action 5281 > Text of Civil Action 5281

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS

TYLER DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

V.

CIVIL ACTION NO. 5281

STATE OF TEXAS, ET AL.

This Court's Order of April 20, 1971, in the above-entitled and number civil action is hereby modified to comply and conform with the directions of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit in its Opinion of July 9, 1971, in Cause No. 71-1061, entitled United States of America, Plaintiff- Appellee, versus State of Texas, Et Al., and Dr. J. W. Edgar, Commissioner of Education, Et Al., Defendants-Appellants, ____ F.2d ____ (5 Cir. 1971), and, as so modified, such Order is re-issued, as follows:

On November 24, 1970, this Court entered an order in this case then styled United States of America v. State of Texas, et al., Civil Action No. 1424, Marshall Division, requiring inter alia that the Texas Education Agency, the State Commissioner of Education and their officers, agents, employees, successors re-evaluate all of their activities and practices relating to the desegregation of public elementary and secondary education within the State of Texas; upon completion of this re-evaluation the defendants were required to file a plan stating specific actions which they would take pursuant to their affirmative obligations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. On January 15, 1971, the defendants filed their plan. Plaintiffs filed a response to this plan on February 1, 1971, incorporating both objections to defendants' plan and recommendations for what the defendants were legally required to accomplish by this plan. An evidentiary hearing was held on February 1 and 2, 1971. A further hearing was held in Tyler on April 12, 1971, the case then, and hereafter, being styled Civil Action No. 5281, Tyler Division.

The Court has carefully considered the submissions of the respective parties and the evidence presented at the hearings, in light of the defendants' affirmative duty to take "whatever steps might be necessary to ...[eliminate] racial discrimination root and branch." Green v. New Kent County, 391 U.S. 430, 437-38 (1968), Swann v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education, Nos. 281 and 349, ____ U.S. ____, (April 20, 1971). In this regard the duty of the state appears to be two-fold: First, to act at once to eliminate by positive means all vertiges of the dual school structure throughout the state; and second, to compensate for the abiding scars of past discrimination.

Accordingly, it is hereby ORDERED that the State of Texas, Dr. J. W. Edgar, Commissioner of Education of the State of Texas, the Texas Education Agency, their officers, agents, employees, successors and all other persons in active concert or participation with them (hereinafter referred

to as defendants) shall fulfill those duties

A. Student Transfers

(The Modified Order of July 13, 1971, has been amended by the Court by Order dated August 9, 1973, and Section A now has the following language:)

(1) Defendants shall not permit, make arrangement for or give support of any kind to student transfers, between school districts, when the cumulative effect, in either the sending or receiving school or school district, will be to reduce or impede desegregation, or to reinforce, renew, or encourage the continuation of acts and practices resulting in discriminatory treatment of students on the ground of race, color, or national origin.

(2) In applying the above section to student transfers between school districts, the defendants may grant the following classes of exceptions regardless of the race, color, or national origin of students.

(a) Class One: All transfers of students to county or multi-county day schools for the deaf.

(b) Class Two: Special education students from districts where the special education class for which the students are qualified is unavailable and such class is available in the receiving district, provided such students have been properly screened according to Texas Education Agency guidelines by the receiving districts.

(c) Class Three: The Commissioner of Education may grant additional transfers in hardship situations. Before such transfers are granted by the Commissioner, the parties will be notified at least 30 days in advance of the intent to grant such transfers and the reasons therefor. The parties may object to such transfers to the court, and the court may approve or disapprove such transfers with or without a hearing.

(3) In addition to the above exceptions, defendants shall use the following guidelines to determine the cumulative effect of student transfers in the various school districts of Texas.

(a) Where student transfers between school districts involve ethnic consideration concerning race, color or national origin of students, only hardship situations shall be considered, and such transfers shall be governed by the procedure in Paragraph A(a)(c), above.

(b) In such situations, the defendants shall not approve transfers where the effect of such transfers will change the majority or minority percentage of the school population, based on average daily attendance in such districts by more than one percent (1%), in either the home or the receiving district or the home or the receiving school.

(4) Defendants may use the following additional guidelines in approving or disapproving student transfers between the various school districts in Texas:

(a) The Agency will review and apply this Section to all in-grade transfers between school districts in Texas.

(b) The Agency will investigate all complaints of violations of its decisions made pursuant to Section A of the Court Order.

(c) The Agency will from time to time solicit the assistance of other agencies, both State and Federal, in arriving at a decision under Section A of this Court Order, but the Agency shall not be bound by such recommendations.

(d) The Agency will consider as factors relevant to its decision in approving or disapproving student

transfers under this Section: (1) whether the receiving district or the home district is composed solely of students of one race or ethnic origin, (2) whether all the students seeking transfers are of one race or ethnic origin, and (3) whether the sending or receiving school district is operating under the provisions of an order issued by another District Judge requiring said school district to eliminate segregation on the ground of race, color, or national origin.

(e) The Agency will use such additional guidelines as may be ordered by the court. The Agency may also use such guidelines as adopted by the Agency and submitted to the court order and to all other parties, in writing, provided no objection is filed by the parties to said agency-adopted guidelines within twenty-one (21) days of the filing of said guidelines with the court or their receipt by certified mail, return receipt requested, by the parties. In the event of objection by the parties or the court within such period, the Agency may request a hearing for approval of said guidelines by the court.

(5) The Texas Education Agency shall review all student transfers and shall notify the sending and receiving districts promptly of all transfers which do not appear to comply with the terms of this order.

(6) If, after receiving notice of the Texas Education Agency's refusal to approve transfer, the receiving district shall continue to accept the transfer of students, or if the sending district shall refuse to provide suitable educational opportunities for these students, defendants, after 15 days notice to the President of the Board of Trustees and the Superintendent (if the district has such an official), shall refuse to transfer the funds, based on the average daily attendance of the transfer students involved to the account of the receiving district, and shall, thereby, terminate and refuse to grant or continue paying to the offending district a percentage of state funds equivalent to the district's entitlement based on the average daily attendance of the students transferring in violation of this order.

(7) Defendants shall also refuse to distribute to the offending district any transportation funds which might accrue on account of transfer students accepted in violation of this order. If the offending district continues to refuse to deny transfers which adversely affect desegregation, the Texas Education Agency shall warn the district that its accreditation status is in danger. This warning shall remain in effect for ten days, at which time, if the offending district has failed to correct its violations, the Texas Education Agency shall suspend the district's TEA accreditation.

(8) The State Board of Education shall entertain no appeal from any decision of the Agency which applies sanctions against a school district in compliance with this or any preceding order of this court. However, any school district aggrieved by the proposed reduction or the reduction of funds, or the proposed suspension or the suspension of accreditation, shall have the right to petition the United States Court for the Eastern District of Texas, in which this suit is pending, for such relief as said court may deem proper.

B. Changes in School District Boundaries

(1) Defendants shall not permit, make arrangements for, approve, acquiesce in, or give support of any kind to changes in school district boundary lines - whether by detachment, annexation, or consolidation of districts in whole or in part - which are designed to, or do in fact, create, maintain, reinforce, renew, or encourage a dual school system based on race, color, or national origin.

(2) Defendants shall require the board of trustees of any school district desiring to annex or consolidate with a nearby district. If whole or in part, or desiring to change its boundaries in any other manner such as is described, for example, in Part II-A(2) of the Court's Order of November 24, 1970, to report said intention to the Commissioner of Education for the State of Texas at least 15 days prior to the effective date of such action, and shall take appropriate measures to insure compliance with this requirement.

(3) Whenever the Commissioner shall receive notice that a district or portion of a district is to be detached from, annexed to, or consolidated with another district, he shall institute an immediate

investigation as to the effects of such projected change of boundaries on the desegregation status of all of the school districts concerned. He shall promptly notify the appropriate county and local officials of his findings, and indicate whether or not the transfer of territory is in violation of the law.

(4) If county and local officials proceed to consummate the transfer of territory after being notified that they are in violation of the law, defendants, after 15 days notice to the President of the Board of Trustees and the Superintendent of the district (if the district has such an official), shall refuse to transfer funds, based on the average daily attendance of the students in the territory detached, annexed or consolidated, to the account of the new district, and shall, thereby, terminate and refuse to grant or continue paying to the offending district a percentage of state funds equivalent to the district's entitlement based on the average daily attendance of the students detached, annexed or consolidated in violation of this Order. These funds shall be distributed to the remainder of the original district, in cases of illegal detachments, but shall not be used by that district to support the education of children living in the detached area. In cases involving the consolidation of school districts, the Texas Education Agency shall hold the funds derived from the average daily attendance of the students illegally annexed to or consolidated with the new district in escrow pending dissolution of the illegal transfer of territory and the return of students to their original districts.

(5) Defendants are enjoined from granting incentive aid payments pursuant to Texas law (Art. 2815-4, Vernon's Texas Revised Civil Statutes as amended), to districts which are enlarged by annexations or consolidation actions in violation of this Order.

(6) Should a county board of education or a school district, having received notice from the Commissioner that a territorial alteration has been disapproved, fail to disavow the action and to declare its effects null and void, the Texas Education Agency shall notify the district that its accreditation status is in danger. This notice shall remain in effect for 10 days, at the end of which time, if the offending district has failed to correct its violations, the Agency shall suspend the district's TEA accreditation.

(7) In all cases involving annexation or consolidation of school districts, the Texas Education Agency shall apply the portions of the Order of the Court in this case dated April 19, 1971, concerning the annexation of nine all-black school districts to nearby bi-racial districts, and specifically, the portions of that Order relating to faculty and staff and to bi-racial committees, to the newly enlarged districts and shall require the said district to submit to the Texas Education Agency such reports as may be necessary to enable that Agency to determine whether the newly enlarged district is operating and will continue to operate in compliance with Title VI and the Fourteenth Amendment.

C. School Transportation

(1) Defendants shall not permit, make arrangements for, acquiesce in, or give support of any kind to bus routes or runs which are designed to, or do in fact, create, maintain, reinforce, renew, or encourage a dual school system based on race, color, or national origin.

(2) The transportation system in those county units and school districts having transportation systems shall be completely re-examined each year by the Texas Education Agency. Bus routes and runs as well as the assignment of students to buses will be designed to insure the transportation of all eligible pupils on a non-segregated and otherwise non-discriminatory basis. Bus routes and runs shall be constituted to provide that each bus operated by a district picks up every pupil along the route or run who is assigned to the school or schools and grade levels served by that bus. Where two or more equally efficient and economical routes or runs are available in a given area of the school district, the route or run which promote or facilitate desegregation of buses shall be adopted by the district and approved by the Texas Education Agency rather than a route or run which, whether by intent, inaction, or inadvertence, would maintain or encourage segregation.

(3) Accordingly, if upon examination of transportation systems, the Texas Education Agency shall find that a district is operating one or more bus routes or runs which serve 66% or more students of a minority group, which are duplicated by one or more routes or runs serving more than 66% students of another race or ethnic background, the Texas Education Agency shall immediately investigate and determine whether the heavily minority routes or runs may be re-routed, terminated or combined with routes or runs which serve non-minority students so as to desegregate these routes or runs. In no event shall this paragraph be construed as requiring any fixed percentage of students of a minority group of a particular route or run.

(4) If the Texas Education Agency finds that a county or local district is operating its transportation system in violation of this Order, it shall notify the appropriate officials of the local district. If the offending district refuses to alter its bus routes or runs so as to avoid segregation in instances where the Texas Education Agency has determined that such alterations are necessary, or if such a district persists in operating bus routes or runs which adversely affect the desegregation of its schools, classes, or extra-curricular activities, the Texas Education Agency shall refuse to approve the entire route structure of the district and shall, thereby, terminate and refuse to grant or continue paying state transportation funds to the offending district until it shall have altered all routes or runs operated in violation of this Order, so as to eliminate all vestiges of discrimination based on race, color, or national origin. In addition, the Texas Education Agency shall notify the district that its accreditation status is in danger. This notice shall remain in effect for 10 days, at which time, if the offending district has failed to correct its violations, the Agency shall suspend the district's TEA accreditation.

D. Extra-Curricular Activities

(1) Defendants shall not permit, make arrangement for, acquiesce in or give support of any kind to activities run in connection with the elementary and secondary educational program operated by the state or any of its county and local educational agencies which, whether by intent, inaction, or inadvertence, results in segregation or other discrimination against students on the ground of race, color, or national origin. These extra-curricular activities include, but are not limited to, student government organizations, athletic teams for interscholastic competition, clubs, hobby groups, student newspaper stuffs, annual staffs, band, band majorettes and cheerleaders.

(2) The Texas Education Agency shall instruct the members of its accreditation review teams in conjunction with its Title IV staff, to examine the extra-curricular activities of each district which they review. All violations of this Order which are discovered by such investigations shall be reported to the Commissioner of Education. If the Texas Education Agency receives complaints from any source that a school district is operating and supporting extra-curricular activities in violation of this Order, immediate investigation shall be made of such complaint.

(3) If the Commissioner finds that a district is operating and supporting extra-curricular activities in violation of this Order, he shall notify the county or local school district through the President of its Board of Trustees and through the Superintendent (if the district has such an official), that the district is operating in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Fourteenth Amendment. At the same time, he shall warn the district that its accreditation is in danger. This warning shall remain in effect for 10 days, at which time, if the district has failed to correct the violations, the Texas Education Agency shall suspend the district's TEA accreditation.

(4) In addition to the suspension of the accreditation of districts operating discriminatory extra-curricular activities, the State of Texas and the Texas Education Agency shall reduce the percentage of state funds granted to the district under the Minimum Foundation Program for salaries and operating expenses by ten percent. Should the district persist in operating its extra-curricular activities in a manner which results in segregation or discriminatory treatment of students on account of race, color, or national origin, the State of Texas and the Texas Education Agency shall reduce the percentage of state funds as described above by an additional ten percent for each semester or term that the violations continue.

(5) Defendants are required to consider that a suspension or reduction of programs and activities to avoid operating them on a desegregated basis continues a violation of Title VI and the

Fourteenth Amendment.

(5) Defendants are required to consider that a suspension or reduction of programs and activities to avoid operating them on a desegregated basis continues a violation of Title VI and the Fourteenth Amendment.

E. Faculty and Staff

(1) Defendants shall not permit, make arrangement for, acquiesce in or give support of any kind to the hiring, assigning, promoting, paying, demoting, reassigning or dismissing, or treatment of faculty and staff members who work directly with children in a discriminatory manner on account of race, color or national origin. Defendants shall be responsible for the application and enforcement throughout the State of the provisions of the Order of the Court in this case dated April 19, 1971, referred to in Section B(7) herein, and specifically, the portions of that Order relating to the treatment of faculty and staff.

(2) In carrying out its affirmative duties under Title VI and the Fourteenth Amendment in this area, the Texas Education Agency shall require each county or local educational agency desiring to receive state funds under Minimum Foundation Program to include with its preliminary application for such funds a list of objective, non-racial and non-ethnic criteria by which the county or local district will measure its faculty and staff for assignment, promotion, demotion, reassignment or dismissal and by which it will judge prospective employees for faculty and staff positions.

(3) The Texas Education Agency shall require the members of its accreditation review teams, in conjunction with the members of its staff designated to work in collaboration with the United States Office of Education to provide technical assistance to desegregating school districts pursuant to Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (hereinafter referred to as "Title IV staff" or "Title IV personnel"), to examine the faculty and staff hiring and assigning practices of the districts which they visit for accreditation purposes, and to examine the records relating to hiring, assigning, promoting, paying, demoting, reassigning or dismissing of faculty and staff who work directly with children for a period including the three years prior to the complete elimination of the district's dual school structure. The review teams and state Title IV personnel shall also examine faculty assignments within each school district under review to determine whether the percentage of minority teachers in each school is substantially the same as the percentage of minority teachers in the school district as a whole, as required under Part II, Section A of the Order of this Court dated April 19, 1971, and referred to in Sections B(7) and E(1) herein. Any evidence of discriminatory practices concerning faculty and staff shall be reported to the Commissioner of Education.

(4) After such further investigation as deemed necessary by the Commissioner, he shall notify the district through the President of its Board of Trustees and its Superintendent of the district has such an official, of any acts and practices with regard to faculty and staff which violate the areas described in Part II, Section A, of the Order of this Court, dated April 19, 1971, referred to in Section B(7), E(1) and E(3) herein. At the same time, he shall warn the district that its accreditation is in danger. This warning shall remain in effect for 15 days, at which time if the offending district fails to correct its violations with regard to faculty and staff who work directly with children, the Texas Education Agency shall suspend the district's TEA accreditation.

(5) In addition to the suspension of accreditation, the State of Texas and the Texas Education Agency shall refuse to approve the district's application for state funds under the Minimum Foundation Program for salaries, and shall, thereby, terminate and refuse to grant or continue paying such funds to the district.

(6) Any school district aggrieved by the proposed termination or the termination of Minimum Foundation Funds or the proposed suspension or the suspension of accreditation shall have the right to petition the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas, in which this suit is pending, for such relief as said Court may deem proper.

(7) This Order shall not be construed to have any effect upon the state or federal remedies

available to any individual members of Faculty or Staff for discriminatory action by a school district in assignment, demotion, dismissal, reassignment, payment or other employment conditions.

F. Student Assignment

(The Modified Order of July 13, 1971, has been amended by the Court by Order dated August 9, 1973, and Section F now has the following language:)

(1) Defendants are required to consider forthwith the application of the procedures and provisions of this order to any school district reviewed pursuant to Section F of this court's Modified Order of July 13, 1971, where (a) such review has been conducted at any time prior to the entry of this order, (b) such district was found to be in violation of federal constitutional standards, and (c) specific recommendations designed to eliminate such violations were provided to the district by the defendants but have not been implemented.

(2) Defendants shall not permit, make arrangement for, acquiesce in or give support of any kind to the assignment of students to schools, individual classrooms or other school activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, except where required to comply with constitutional standards.

(2) Defendants shall not permit, make arrangement for, acquiesce in or give support of any kind to the assignment of students to schools, individual classrooms or other school activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, except where required to comply with constitutional standards.

(4) If, by the end of the first week of the semester or term following receipt of the notice and plan provided for in paragraph F(3), a district has failed to implement such plan, or, has failed to adopt and implement an equally effective alternate plan to eliminate all racially or ethnically identifiable schools found to be in violation of constitutional standards as provided by paragraph F(3), the defendants shall warn the district through the President of its Board of Trustees and through its Superintendent (if the district has such an official) that its accreditation is in danger. This warning shall remain in effect for ten days after which time, if the district has still failed to achieve compliance, the Texas Education Agency shall suspend the district's TEA accreditation.

(5) In addition to suspension of accreditation and simultaneously therewith defendants shall suspend payment of all state funds granted to the district under the Minimum Foundation Program for salaries, operating expenses, transportation and all other purposes.

(6) Defendants shall suspend immediately without further notice the accreditation and the payment of all Minimum Foundation Program funds of any district which changes or otherwise modifies a plan adopted and implemented pursuant to paragraphs F(3) and F(4) herein when such changes or modifications are designed to, or do in fact, recreate, renew, reimplement or result in violation of federal constitutional standards.

(7) On or before June 1 of each school year until further orders of this court, defendants shall file a report with the court indicating (a) the school districts reviewed and the particular findings concerning the assignment and transfer of students within each such district, (b) all recommendations made and actions taken by the defendants and each such district to eliminate racially or ethnically identifiable schools, (c) what special cultural and educational activities these districts have instituted to compensate for the inherently unequal educational opportunities provided to students in these racially or ethnically identifiable schools. Copies of this report shall be served upon the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare and all parties to this action. A copy of this report shall also be retained in the offices of the Texas Education Agency in such a manner that it will be readily and conveniently available for public inspection during normal business hours.

(8) Any school district aggrieved by the proposed reduction or the reduction of Minimum Foundation Program funds or the proposed suspension of accreditation shall have the right to petition the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas, in which this suit is

pending, for such relief as said court may deem proper.

(9) If a school district which is reviewed pursuant to paragraph F(3) is the subject of a school desegregation suit or a court-approved plan of desegregation, a copy of the report required by paragraph F(3) shall be submitted to the District Court having jurisdiction of such suit or plan.

G. Curriculum and Compensatory Education

(1) Defendants shall insure that school districts are providing equal education opportunities in all schools. The Texas Education Agency, through its consulting facilities and personnel, shall assist school districts in achieving a comprehensive balance curriculum on all school campuses, and, where necessary, in providing for students to transfer to different schools in the district on a part-time basis to avail themselves of subjects not offered in their assigned school. Full time transfers may be allowed only where they do not adversely affect desegregation as further described in Section A herein.

(2) The Texas Education Agency shall institute a study of the educational needs of minority children in order to insure equal educational opportunities of all students. The Texas Education Agency shall request the assistance of the United States Office of Education and any other educational experts whom they choose to consult in making this study. By not later than August 15, 1971, a report on this study shall be filed by the Texas Education Agency with the Court including:

(a) Recommendations of specific curricular offerings and programs which will insure equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of race, color or national origin. These curricular offerings and programs shall include specific educational programs designed to compensate minority group children for unequal educational opportunities resulting from past or present racial and ethnic isolation, as well as programs and curriculum designed to meet the special educational needs of students whose primary language is other than English;

(b) Explanation of presently existing programs funded by the State of Texas or by the Federal Government which are available to local districts to meet these special educational needs and how such programs might be applied to these educational needs;

(c) Explanation of specific standards by which the defendants will determine when a local district, which has racially or ethnically isolated schools or which has students whose primary language is other than English, shall be required by the defendants to participate in the special compensatory educational programs available; and

(d) Explanation of procedures for applying these standards to local districts including appropriate sanctions to be employed by the defendants should a district refuse to participate in special compensatory educational programs where it has been instructed to do so pursuant to application of the standards developed under subsection (c) above.

(e) Copies of this report shall be served as described in Section F above, and a copy shall also be retained in the Offices of the Texas Education Agency as described therein.

H. Complaints and Grievances

The defendants shall send to all county and local educational agencies an information bulletin designed to notify faculty, staff and patrons of local school districts of the availability of complaint and grievance procedures and to inform them of how to utilize these procedures. Defendants shall further require that every county and local educational agency shall place this bulletin on public display in such a way as to assure its availability at all times during school hours. A copy of this bulletin shall be filed with the Court on or before August 15, 1971, with a copy to the plaintiff.

I. Notification

The defendants, in all cases where notification is given to a school district of imminent loss of accreditation or state funds because of its failure to meet the requirements of Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Fourteenth Amendment, shall, at the same time, notify the plaintiff. In the event that it becomes necessary to suspend the district's accreditation or to reduce or remove state funds the defendants shall also notify the plaintiff.

J. Conveyances of Real Property by a School District

(The Court, by orders dated August 9, 1973, and August 15, 1973, has ordered the following to be added to the Modified Order of July 13, 1971:)

(1) Defendants shall not permit, make arrangement for, approve, acquiesce in or give support of any kind to sales, leases or other conveyances of real property by a school district where such conveyances are designed to or do, in fact, create, maintain, reinforce, or encourage a dual school system based on race, color or national origin.

(2) Defendants shall require the board of trustees of any school district desiring to sell, lease or otherwise convey any interest in real property or buildings to report said intention to the Commissioner of Education for the State of Texas at least 15 days prior to the effective date of such conveyance and shall take all appropriate measures to insure compliance with this requirement.

(3) Whenever the Commissioner shall receive notice that a district intends to sell, lease or otherwise convey an interest in real property, he shall promptly notify the appropriate local school officials that the following language shall be incorporated into the instrument of conveyance, sale or lease, and further, that failure of the district to comply with this requirement will result in the imposition of sanctions as set out in paragraph J(4):

"The further covenant, consideration and condition is that the following restrictions shall in all things be observed, followed and complied with:

"(a) The above-described realty, or any part thereof, shall not be used in the operation of, or in conjunction with, any school or other institution of learning, study or instruction which discriminates against any person because of his race, color or national origin, regardless of whether such discrimination be effected by design or otherwise.

(b) The above described realty, or any part thereof, shall not be used in the operation of, or in conjunction with, any school or other institution of learning, study or instruction which creates, maintains, reinforces, renews, or encourages, or which tends to create, maintain, reinforce, renew or encourage, a dual school system.

"These restrictions and conditions shall be binding upon grantees, lessee, etc., name of grantee, lessee, etc., his heirs, personal representatives and assigns or its successors and assigns, as the case may be, for a period of fifty (50) years from the date hereof; and in case of a violation of either or both of the above restrictions, the estate herein granted shall, without entry or suit, immediately revert to and vest in the grantor herein and its successors, this instrument shall be null and void, and grantor and its successors shall be entitled to immediate possession of such premises and the improvements thereon; and no act or omission upon the part of grantor herein and its successors shall be a waiver of the operation or enforcement of such condition.

"The restriction set out in (a) above shall be construed to be for the benefit of any person prejudiced by its violation. The restriction specified in (b) above shall be construed to be for the benefit of any public school district or any person prejudiced by its violation."(4) If a school district, after notice from the Commissioner, proceeds to sell, lease or otherwise convey any interest in real property but fails to comply with the requirements set forth in paragraph J(3) herein, the

defendants shall proceed to impose sanctions in accordance with the following:

(a) The Commissioner shall notify the proper official or officials of the school district that the district is not in compliance and that, unless the district is not in compliance and that, unless the district initiates legal proceedings in a court of competent jurisdiction, within thirty days from date of the notice, to reacquire possession of the property, the payment of all state funds to said district under the Minimum Foundation Program for salaries, operating expenses, transportation and all other purposes shall be suspended. If the district initiates legal proceedings as required but, in the judgment of the Commissioner, the district fails to prosecute said proceedings expeditiously and in good faith, the Commissioner at any time thereafter may suspend the payment of all state funds to the district. Any party to this action who has reason to believe or to question that the Commissioner is not proceeding as required herein may, upon proper motion, apply to this Court for whatever relief is indicated, at law or at equity.

(b) In the event that a school or other facility used in conjunction with any institution of learning which would constitute a breach of the condition set forth in paragraph J(3) is operated on the real property conveyed by the district, the defendants shall suspend the payment of state funds under the Minimum Foundation Program for salaries, transportation and all other purposes, operating expenses, and, simultaneously therewith, defendants shall suspend the district's TEA accreditation. The suspension of funds and of accreditation as provided in this subparagraph shall continue until such times as the school or other institution of learning which was the basis for these sanctions has ceased operation or until such times as the district in question has taken steps to exercise its rights of reversion and has required the property in question.

(5) Defendants are enjoined from granting TEA accreditation to any school or other facility used in conjunction with any institution of learning, study or instruction, the operation of which would constitute a breach of the condition set forth in paragraph J(3).

(6) Any school district aggrieved by the proposed suspension or the suspension of Minimum Foundation Funds, or the suspension of accreditation shall have the right to petition the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas in which this suit is pending, for such relief as said court may deem proper. K. Jurisdiction

(The Modified Order of July 13, 1971, was changed by amendment by the Court by Order dated August 1973, and Section J of such Modified Order now appears as Section K.)

(1) This Court retains jurisdiction of this matter for all purposes, and especially for the purpose of entering any and all further orders which may become necessary to enforce or modify this decree.

(2) Nothing herein shall be deemed to affect the jurisdiction of any other district court with respect to any presently pending or future school desegregation suit.



Appendix D

Letter H.E.W, 1974

| Sentence | Function/Title | Paraphrase | Memo |
|---|---|--|------|
| | <i>February 13, 1974</i> | | |
| Department of Health, Education and Welfare Regional Office Dallas, Texas | Letter head | | |
| January 11, 1974 | Date | | |
| Superintendent Borderlands Consolidated Independent School District Borderlands, Texas | Internal address | | |
| Dear Superintendent | greeting | | |
| <p>We have carefully reviewed the Comprehensive Educational Plan [CEP] submitted by the district on December 20, 1973.</p> <p>It appears that the Plan substantially meets the Title VI compliance issues set forth in previous letters from our Office of December 19, 1972, and September 11, 1973.</p> | <p>Metadiscourse</p> <p>Expository Discourse</p> | <p>Stating that CEP has been reviewed</p> <p>Proclaiming that CEP substantially complies with Title VI</p> | |
| <p>One area that remains a concern is the assignment of students to classes in elementary and secondary schools.</p> <p>We urge the district to continue its efforts to minimize any isolation of minority students resulting from implementation of the bilingual program at the elementary level.</p> <p>We also request that the district review its counseling procedures in the secondary schools to assure that</p> | <p>Expository Discourse</p> <p>Imperative Discourse</p> | <p>Identifying discrepancy: Assigning students to classes based on race/ethnicity</p> | |

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p>minority students are not disproportionately enrolled into non-college bound courses.</p> <p>Staff from our office will visit the district periodically to review implementation of the Plan and to assist the district with any problem areas.</p> | <p>Imperative Discourse</p> <p>Expository Discourse</p> | <p>Ordering minimizing isolation of minority students in bilingual classes in elementary school.</p> <p>Requesting review of counseling procedures: Tracking minority students into non-college bound programs</p> <p>Informing that additional visits will be made to monitor compliance progress</p> | |
| <p>It has been a pleasure to work with you, your staff, and your school board in this matter of mutual concern.</p> | <p>Polite discourse</p> <p>Capatio</p> | | |

| | | | |
|---|----------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <p>We congratulate the district on the substantial accomplishment represented by the Comprehensive Educational Plan and</p> <p>look forward to working together in the future as it is implemented.</p> | benevolentia | Congratulating district on progress | |
| | Capatio benevolentia | | |
| | Conclusion | | |
| Sincerely yours, | | | |
| | | | |
| Education Branch, Region VI | | | |
| Office for Civil Rights | | | |
| Cc: Chief State School Officer | | | |
| | | | |