

Testimonio y Teoría: Creating Bridges with Bilingual Communities in DeKalb County

A. Jyoti Kaneria

Georgia State University, jkaneria1@gsu.edu

Christian Valdez

Garden Hills Elementary School (DeKalb County, GA), cvaldez221@gmail.com

DeKalb County has transformed significantly over the past eighty years. There have been flows of immigrants and transnationals into the area since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, making present day DeKalb a very diverse community. The children of transnationals in the U.S. find themselves at once students and teachers of their cultures and languages. Whether we speak our family's languages or not, many of us born to parents from another country desire a connection to our linguistic heritage so that we can journey towards comfort and a sense of belonging. Drawing from the revolutionary Latin American literary genre, *Testimonios* (Saavedra, 2011), we share our stories with the hopes of planting a seed for new directions. From a decolonizing, postcolonial framework, we suggest ways to support bilingual and transnational students and groups by connecting to their cultural and linguistic assets through Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) and Funds of Knowledge (Ladson Billings, 2009; González et al., 2005). The article begins with our theoretical framework, followed by an overview of DeKalb County's history and demographics. We continue with our *testimonios* and conclude with suggestions for connecting with bilingual students and communities.

Keywords: culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP), Funds of Knowledge, decolonizing, postcolonial, wholeness, *testimonio*, bilingual students, English language learners, Mexican heritage, South Asian Indian heritage, DeKalb County

Introducción

Our language is something that we cannot touch, but something that, in addition to thinking, hearing and speaking, we can feel. The children of transnationals in the U.S., many of whom are also transnationals, find themselves at once students and teachers of their cultures and languages. Transnational is a

term that has been suggested as a replacement for immigrant based on the notion that the traditional understanding of an immigrant and their immigration has been considered a one-way process towards assimilation (Kasun, 2013). Using transnational encompasses a broader idea for individuals who leave their countries of origin and their non-U.S. and U.S. born children; recognizing that transnationals shift back and forth across literal and figurative borders, maintain varying levels of connection to their heritage languages and cultural practices, and negotiate their identities and their positions within global politics and economies (Kasun, 2015). Transnationals can include bicultural, bi/multilingual people/students, simultaneous and emerging bilingual people/students and those considered English Language Learners (Kasun & Saavedra, 2014; Sánchez, 2007). Throughout this paper, we will primarily use the term transnational however, in discussing the demographics of DeKalb County, we do use the term immigrant because, during the twentieth century, that was, and still is, the term most widely used when discussing the journey of transnationals. Further, as we consider transnational youth and their experiences in schools, we occasionally specify a smaller subgroup, such as those mentioned above, specifically because these terms are likely the ones used to describe the students with whom ESOL teachers within the TESOL field work. We understand that the aforementioned terms and transnational are not equivalent in meaning but recognize that there is often substantial interconnection and overlap among those that fall within each label. Our overall purpose in this paper is to consider the history and experiences of transnationals in DeKalb County and their experiences and their children's experiences in schools.

As children of transnationals, particularly those of us raised in the U.S., we are, on the one hand, expected to be the experts of our languages and cultures

when interacting with people outside of our communities, and on the other hand, we are seen by some members of our own communities as not being or knowing enough in terms of our language and culture. Whether we speak our family's languages or not, many of us born to parents from another country have a deep desire to connect to our linguistic heritage so that we can journey towards comfort and a sense of belonging—identity work that shifts and transforms over time. The following quotes by Chicana feminist scholar, Gloria Anzaldúa, (2012) and multilingual education scholar, Esther de Jong, (2011) encapsulate the processual nature of identity and its interconnectedness with language and culture: Anzaldúa explained that “identity, as consciously and unconsciously created, is always in process - self interacting with different communities and worlds” (p. 69). She also declared boldly, “Ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity—I am my language” (p. 81). Esther de Jong (2011) stated that “the link between language and identity can exist regardless of the level of proficiency in the language. Limited proficiency in the home or heritage language does not necessarily diminish its importance for young children's identification with their culture” (p. 32). The visible representations of our cultures are merely the surface of what makes us who we are. We carry with us the languages, cultures and stories of our ancestors as precious remembrances of our families' heritages while we also yearn for opportunities to explore the many layers of our own identities and unique experiences.

We suggest that school and community leaders can support transnational people and students by connecting to their cultural and linguistic assets (Ladson Billings, 2009; González et al., 2005). Two U.S. born children of transnational parents from a *rancho* in Mexico and a farming village in India share their *testimonios* (Saavedra, 2011) of growing up in DeKalb County, painting a picture

not only of what life in multilingual families is like but also of the importance of connecting authentically with our transnational communities. Cinthya Saavedra (2011) explains that “[t]estimonio is a revolutionary Latin American literary genre that has been used by individuals to tell a collective story and history of oppression through the narrative of one individual” (p. 262). *Testimonios* are used in this article to share our personal stories with the hopes of inspiring our community and school leaders to work and live with members of transnational communities in new and empowering ways. We also use *testimonio* to speak in solidarity with other children of transnationals. *Testimonios* are not only important for sharing stories, but also for nourishing solidarity and understanding (Saavedra, 2011). We begin this article with a description of the *teoría* [theory] that frames our work, followed by an overview of DeKalb County’s history and demographics. Next, we share our *testimonios*. We conclude with suggestions for how school leaders and teachers can create bridges with the transnational students in their classrooms.

Teoría

Nuestro teoría, our theory, draws on subaltern (Saavedra, 2011; Spivak, 1994) perspectives. Subaltern perspectives are the perspectives of the colonized who historically have not had access to political, cultural or social power and whose voices have historically been marginalized (Saavedra, 2011; Spivak, 1994). Specifically, we frame this personal reflection on the transnational residents in DeKalb County through a decolonizing, postcolonial (Anzaldúa, 2012; Gandhi, 1998; Mohanty, 2003; Perez, 1999; Smith, 2012) and critical sociocultural lens (Lewis & Moje, 2003). Postcolonial theory recognizes the effects that hundreds of years of colonization had on colonized people and acknowledges that those effects are pervasive in the present (Anzaldúa, 2012;

Gandhi, 1998; Mohanty, 2003; Perez, 1999; Smith, 2012). The consequences of colonization not only impacted the physical body and spaces of colonized people but also caused cultural and psychological trauma which continues to be felt today by the descendants of colonized people. A decolonizing and postcolonial framework maintains that effects of colonization continue in our present in the forms of racism, neo-liberal economics, anti-immigrant rhetoric and policies, monolingualism, subtractive bilingualism and other inequities we see in our school systems (Anzaldúa, 2012; Kasun et al., in press; Flores, 2016; Mohanty, 2003; Valenzuela, 2010). By framing our reflection through a postcolonial lens, we focus our attention on seeing the wholeness of transnational people in DeKalb County, understanding that the colonial history of our nation, state, and county has consequences for their experiences in this geographical space. The decolonizing postcolonial framework seeks to center the wholeness of colonized people in a way that foregrounds their cultures, languages, identities and psychological wellbeing. With the understanding that the legacies of colonization continue today, we utilize this decolonizing postcolonial framework to foreground this wholeness of and for the members of transnational communities living in DeKalb County.

We also frame our reflection within a critical sociocultural lens. Noncritical sociocultural frameworks focus on individual cultural and linguistic identities within specific learning contexts and communities whereas a critical sociocultural lens considers tensions, conflicts, history and the influence of the macro on the micro (Lewis & Moje, 2003). Lewis and Moje (2003) posit that a critical sociocultural lens weaves together culture, identity, language, race, and ethnicity with larger discourses, historical and institutional contexts, and power relations particularly when considering meaning making and learning. From this

perspective, we frame our reflection not only on the linguistic and cultural assets of the communities we come from and live in community with, but we also attend to the macro-level contexts thus utilizing a critical lens to consider how we can connect across cultural divides and with our students in the classroom. In Table 1, we highlight some of the key concepts discussed in this paper with brief explanations.

Table 1
Key Concepts and Explanations

Concept	Explanation
<i>Testimonio</i>	A Latin American genre used to tell stories and histories of marginalization (Saavedra, 2011)
Teoría	The Spanish word for theory
Nepantla	The space that lies in the interstices in between our different worlds, a space where our contradicting identities dwell (Anzaldúa, 2015)
Subaltern	Colonized people who historically have not had access to political, cultural or social power and whose voices have historically been marginalized (Saavedra, 2011; Spivak, 1994)
Transnational	A term suggested as a replacement for immigrant; encompasses the notion that people who move to a new country do not necessarily stop connecting with their country of origin, continue cultural practices from their country of origin and negotiate their complex identities (Kasun, 2015; Kasun & Saavedra, 2014; Sánchez, 2007)
Decolonizing	A process of undoing the physical, emotional, psychological, economical, land-title related impacts of colonization that remain embedded in our current culture and systems (Anzaldúa, 2012; Gandhi, 1998; Mohanty, 2003; Perez, 1999; Smith, 2012)

Postcolonial	The state of those who lived and existed during pre-independence eras, independence eras as well into present day. This state of being reflects the psychological, emotional, cultural and linguistic violence and trauma experienced by the colonized and the legacy of it that remains in the present. It is also the term used as the temporal indication of the time after countries gained their independence (Anzaldúa, 2012; Gandhi, 1998; Mohanty, 2003; Perez, 1999; Smith, 2012)
Critical Sociocultural Lens	A theoretical framework that considers not only the cultural and linguistic identities of learners within specific contexts but also weaves in a critical perspective that includes the larger discourses, historical and institutional contexts and power relations as they relate to culture, identity, language, race and ethnicity (Lewis & Moje, 2003)
Fragmentation	A term used to describe the result of separating colonized individuals from their culture and language (Anzaldúa, 2012; Gandhi, 1998; Mohanty, 2003; Perez, 1999; Smith, 2012)
Culturally Relevant Pedagogy	Relational pedagogy, lessons and activities that connect to students' languages, cultures and identities, draw on students' cultural knowledge and promote building community (Ladson-Billings, 2009)
Funds of Knowledge	Teacher education, curriculum development and a process of engaging with students that taps into their cultural community knowledge through ethnography of their communities and homes and through interviews (González et al., 2005)

Un Rinconcito Llamado DeKalb

During the 1980s and 1990s, DeKalb County was a mix of commercial, industrial and residential suburbs, much as it is today. However, the county transformed significantly beginning in the 1950s and continuing into the 1960s and 1970s from what it was pre-WWII. In this section we will trace a brief history of DeKalb County in terms of demographics, economy and infrastructure giving an understanding of who lives in the county and what life was and is like living there.

La Demografía en DeKalb

As part of our decolonizing, postcolonial frame, we first would like to acknowledge the Native peoples who lived on the land that makes up today's DeKalb County. The Apalachee, Cherokee, Hitchici, Oconee, Miccosukee, Muskogee Creek, Timucua, Yamasee, Guale, Shawnee and Yuchi people populated Georgia, some of whom, mostly the Creek, lived in the area that ultimately became DeKalb County (Access Genealogy, 2012; Native Languages of the Americas, 2015). Figure 1 below shows the native tribes of Georgia and their approximate locations.

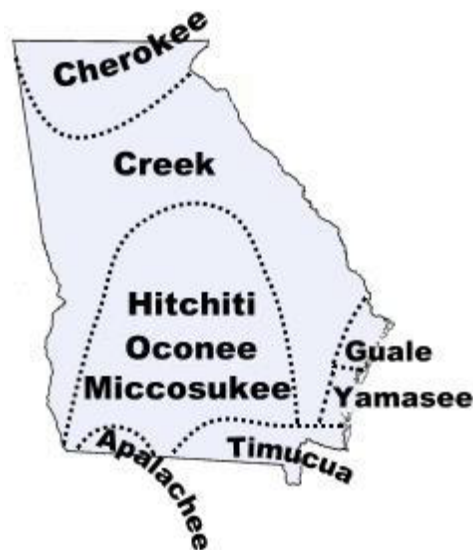


Figure 1. Map Showing Major Native Tribes in Georgia (Native Languages of the Americas, 2015)

In 1830, the Indian Removal Act was signed and called for the removal of Native Americans from their land. In 1838, federal soldiers and local volunteers forced the majority of Georgia's native peoples, through the use of violence and coercion, to leave their land and travel west by foot across the country on what is

now known as the Trail of Tears (History.com, 2020). By this acknowledgment, we honor these peoples and the land in Georgia that was once their land and that is part of their tradition and heritage.



Figure 2. Downtown Atlanta 1860s (Anderson, 2015)

Rebecca Dameron and Arthur Murphy (1997) discuss the flows of immigrants into Atlanta since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however they note that most of the immigrants of that early era were Greek, German Jewish, Scotch-Irish, Russian, Polish and other immigrant groups that mostly assimilated into the white culture of the white/black dichotomy in Atlanta. Figure 2 shows downtown Atlanta during the 1860s, illustrating the city as it was just before this first wave of mostly European immigrants. Figure 3 is Atlanta during this first wave of immigrants. Dameron and Murphy explain that many immigrants of European descent melted into “white” culture. They suggest that this melting into the white culture by European immigrants occurred for two

primary reasons, one being the prevalence of racial prejudice coupled with legal discrimination and the other being because racial and ethnic categories were limited to White, Black and Other, with *other* serving as the generic term for anyone who could not or was not allowed to fit into the white or black category. According to Dameron and Murphy, most European immigrants were able to choose the white category which was not accessible to the more recent non-European immigrants.



Figure 3. Five Points, Downtown Atlanta 1890s (Anderson, 2015)

Furthermore, because of the structure of the city, immigrants in Atlanta, at that time, did not settle into their own cultural enclaves as was the trend in other large cities such as New York, Chicago and Philadelphia and integrated themselves mostly into historically white neighborhoods (Dameron & Murphy, 1997).

Following the 1965 Immigration Act which ceased the discriminatory “national origin quotas” that were official policy practices of immigration at the

time, larger numbers of immigrants from the Global South (Delgado-Wise, 2014) came to the U.S., many of whom moved to Atlanta (Baldillo, 2013; Dameron & Murphy, 1997, p. 49). Furthermore, David Baldillo (2013) explains that the signing of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act provided a pathway to legal residency for undocumented immigrants already living in the U.S. and tightened security along the U.S.-Mexico border. He illustrates that the areas of the country that had larger immigrant populations, like California, became “saturated with newly legalized immigrants” which led to immigrant communities seeking other areas of the country to find work (p. 120). Baldillo notes that Atlanta, with its booming economy in the late 1980s and early 1990s, was a prime choice for many of these immigrants. While the 1965 and 1986 immigration reforms allowed for increased flows of legal immigration and documentation for immigrants from the Global South, Dameron and Murphy (1997) discuss the continued flows of undocumented immigration due to push factors within countries of origin. They explain that these push factors include, but are not limited to, the economic collapse in Mexico, war and unstable conditions in central America (which were often the result of U.S. intervention), and wars in Southeast Asia and varying African nations. People felt pushed to leave their homes in search of a better life, ultimately finding Atlanta to call home (Dameron & Murphy, 1997).

During the 1980s, when Jyoti was growing up, the Latinx and Asian communities were beginning to grow in Chamblee and Doraville—just up the road from her own neighborhood. Christian grew up in Doraville as part of the Latinx community in the 1990s. Dameron and Murphy (1997) suggest that these two cities, Chamblee and Doraville, were prime spots for new immigrants because of their proximity to one of two rapid transit lines in the metro-Atlanta

area, because of access to bus lines on Buford Highway, and because of affordable apartments and homes. Chamblee and Doraville were the heart of where the Buford Highway corridor or “La Buford” began its development into one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse communities in the county and where Plaza Fiesta and the Latin American Association call home. Figure 4 and 5 show the Buford Highway corridor and Plaza Fiesta in the 90s and early 2000s respectively.



Figure 4. Buford Highway Corridor, 1991 (Atlanta Journal Constitution, 2019)



Figure 5. Plaza Fiesta on Buford Highway, 2001 (Atlanta Journal Constitution, 2019)

At the same time, further southeast, in Clarkston, refugees from Vietnam were entering what would become the refugee resettlement area of the metro-Atlanta area. Clarkston has supported the resettlement of forty thousand refugees over the past twenty-five years, who recently, but not exclusively, have come from Syria, The Democratic Republic of Congo and in the past from Bhutan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, the Sudan, Liberia and Vietnam (Long, 2017). Nearly thirty-two percent of the 13,000 residents in Clarkston were born outside the U.S. (Stump, 2018). Just a few miles further to the south of Clarkston, in Decatur, is a large South Asian neighborhood with cultural restaurants, grocery stores and businesses that have been serving the community since the 1980s and 1990s.

DeKalb County's current demographics, based on the 2018 census estimates, show that there is a Latinx community of at least 65,063 people, or 8.6% of the total population, the Asian community, which includes Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese, has a population of 49,932 or 6.6 % of the total population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012; U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). Census information seems unable to track peoples from the middle-east

and Africa due to the census use of racial classifications versus national or cultural classifications. Nevertheless, we can get an approximation of this from the linguistic data included in the census. This data indicates that, “African Languages” come in second with nearly 2.5% of the population of the county speaking an African language (Data USA, n.d.). DeKalb has great linguistic diversity with over thirty-eight different language communities reported in 2010 (Data USA, n.d.). Figure 6 illustrates a timeline starting with the arrival of enslaved Africans, the removal of Native Americans, and leading into important events that supported the arrival of non-European transnationals relocating to Georgia.

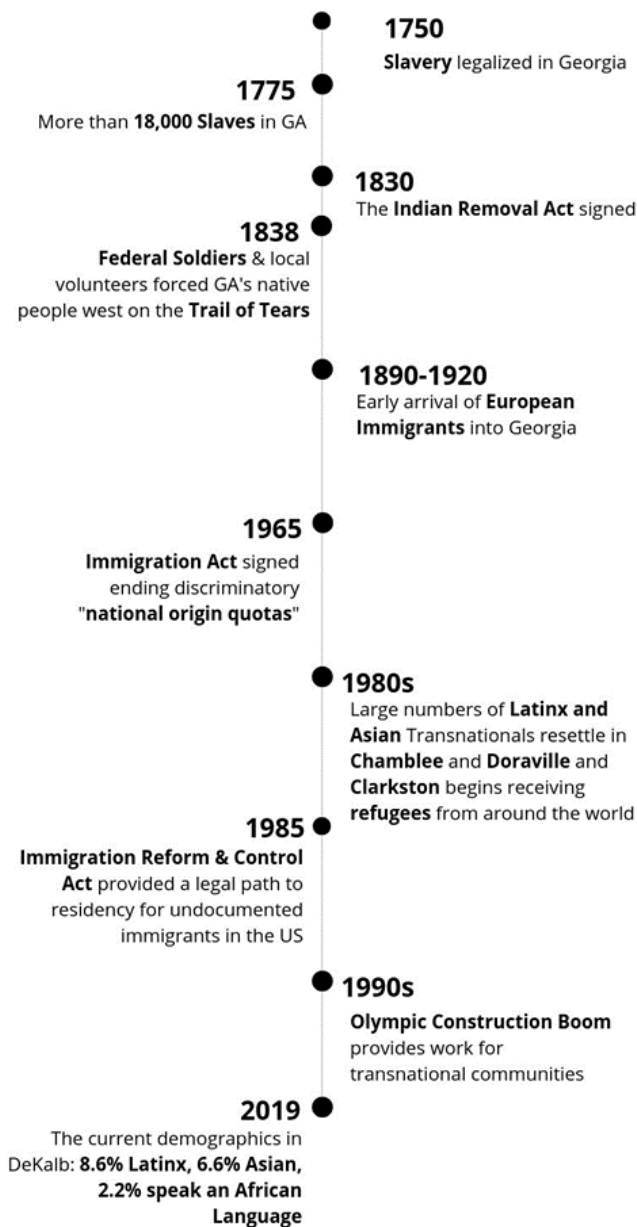


Figure 6. Timeline created by the authors highlighting the arrival of enslaved Africans, the removal of Native Americans, and important events supporting the arrival of non-European transnationals relocating to Georgia (Dameron & Murphy, 1997; Wood, 2002).

La Economía e Infraestructura de DeKalb

In the early twentieth century, according to Burton et al. (2010), DeKalb County's economy was mostly agricultural, predominantly based on dairy farms, and it was not until post World War II when DeKalb County began to develop into the county it is today. After WWII, Burton et al. note there was a national trend to develop affordable homes, thus facilitating the reunification of families that had been split during the war. In many areas around the country during this time, the suburbs were "bedroom communities" where people returned to sleep after working in the city during the day (Burton et al., 2010, p. 18). However, Burton et al.'s report indicates that DeKalb developed in a way that integrated commercial, industrial and residential areas so that people could live, work and shop in the same area. In fact, there are twelve small cities throughout DeKalb County and a wide range of international restaurants and commercial districts, some of the most notable being Your DeKalb Farmers Market, the Buford Highway Farmers Market, and Plaza Fiesta (Discover DeKalb, 2019). Figure 7 shows a map of DeKalb County with six of its 12 cities.



Figure 7. DeKalb County (2019)

As members of transnational communities settled permanently in DeKalb County, they began opening small businesses in these commercial districts to serve and represent their communities. Other major industries and employment opportunities in the county are manufacturing, hospitality, retail and education; in fact, there are nine colleges and universities in DeKalb County, including Emory and Oglethorpe University as well as three of Georgia State University's Perimeter College campuses (Data USA, n.d.; DeKalb Chamber, 2019). In addition to the formal business sectors, the 1990s construction boom during the pre-Olympic era, as well as the general economic boom of the 1980s and 1990s allowed for an explosion in the informal day labor economy which most often was filled with people from the Latinx community who left their home countries in search of work and a better life (Dameron & Murphy, 1997; Portes, 2015).

The transnational communities in DeKalb County have grown and their members have planted roots. Children in transnational communities go to public schools which are not well equipped to support their transnational identity, and may even insist that these students leave their language and culture at the schoolhouse door, thus promoting fragmentation of their identities. As part of colonization, colonizers forbade the cultural and linguistic practices of the colonized, forcing assimilation into the culture of the colonizer which resulted in the fragmentation of colonized identities (Anzaldúa, 2012; Gandhi, 1998; Mohanty, 2003; Perez, 1999; Smith, 2012). According to Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) “[f]ragmentation is not a phenomenon of postmodernism as many might claim. For indigenous peoples fragmentation has been the consequence of imperialism and colonization” (p. 29). We suggest that the colonial consequence of fragmentation is also true for transnationals and their children living in the U.S. The 1980s & 1990s were a time when society expected transnationals to

assimilate to the dominant culture, especially in the schools where such assimilation was equated to success. Below are two *testimonios* from Christian & Jyoti which provide a window into the fragmentation experiences of two children who grew up in multilingual communities in DeKalb County.

Testimonios: Voces Transnacionales de DeKalb

Jyoti and Christian grew up in DeKalb during two different decades, in two very different communities just three miles away from each other. Both of them grew up with two or more languages in their homes, however Jyoti did not grow up bilingual whereas Christian did. These two natives of DeKalb County tell their *testimonios* of language, culture and life as the children of transnational parents. We share these *testimonios* to give a small glimpse into the lives of our transnational, bilingual and bicultural families and communities with the hopes that our stories can facilitate deeper understanding and encourage connections among teachers and their transnational students, community leaders and their transnational community members, across cultures and languages.

Christian

My family's cultural heritage stems from an agricultural *rancho* by the name of *La Calzada de la Merced (La Calzada)*; geographically speaking it is near the *pueblo* of *Manuel Doblado* in the state of *Guanajuato, México*. Both of my parents are from *La Calzada*, a small tight knit *rancho* where everyone knows everyone, from the cradle to the grave. Figure 8 is a picture of me at *La Calzada* with my family.



Figure 8. *Primos at La Calzada*, 1997. Pictured (from left to right) are Christian Valdez, Gustavo Rodríguez, Daniel Valdez, and Brian Valdez. All permissions granted.

My father was able to finish high school and was enrolling into a college nearby when he decided to make the journey to *el Norte*, to the North. My mother on the other hand only finished her schooling up until 6th grade, when she had to withdraw from school in order to help out harvesting crops in the fields, managing livestock and caring for her younger siblings. These were the norms according to my parents; men would go to school as long as they could, while women were pulled out of school to manage the household. Ever since my parents were children, they heard stories about coming up North, especially my father, who heard these stories from his *bracero* father, my grandfather. *Braceros*, one that works with their *brazos* [arms], filled the job openings in the U.S. that were left by men who were drafted into World War II. A *bracero* is today's equivalent of a migrant farmworker. My grandfather had traveled to the Midwest and West coast of the United States of America seeking work in the fields, a skill he had from his life *en La Calzada*.

My grandfather's stories about *el Norte* inspired my father to seek a better life than what *La Calzada* could offer. My father took the initiative to make the journey up North, but before doing so he married my mother. They were 21 and 18 years of age respectively when they married. It was the mid-1980s when my father set out on his journey to *el Norte* with the hopes of supporting my mother financially, who was pregnant at the time. While my father spent a few years in the States, my mother was raising my oldest sister in Mexico with the help of her family and community members, because it does take a village to raise a child. As 1989 began, my father went back to Mexico to help my mother and oldest sister make the journey to *el Norte*. By the time they made the journey, my mother was 8 months pregnant with my second oldest sister. My parents did not want to waste any time to make the journey because they knew that being born in the States would give their children the right to a better life, the right to liberty, and the right to pursue happiness. It took my father, mother, and sister three weeks to make it from *La Calzada* to Atlanta where my second oldest sister was born, making her the first in my father's and mother's family to be born in a different country. Not long afterwards, in the fall of 1990, my twin brother and I were born in Atlanta as well. As the years went by, my father was able to convince more relatives to make the journey to *el Norte*, knowing that the journey was dangerous but worth it.

Before buying a house, our family lived with other relatives or friends from Mexico in one or two apartments. Figure 9 is a photograph taken outside of the apartments where we all lived together.



Figure 9. Parktowne North Apartments, 1992. Located on Buford Highway and Cliff Valley Way. Christian's older sister with her cousins outside the apartments where they lived with his extended family before his parents bought their home. Pictured (from left to right) are Diana Valdez, Dulce Rodríguez, Josue Rodríguez, Adriana Valdez, and Victor Rodríguez. All permissions granted.

This extended family dynamic was very similar to what my parents had in *La Calzada*, but as each individual family began growing in size, patience dwindled, particularly the patience that is needed to make a home in a new country. By 1992, my parents were able to find a house to buy, due in part to my father's job as a concrete mason. Soon after acquiring this job, my father began to recruit family members to work with him. As my father paved the way, at times literally paving the way, he and my mother were able to call Doraville, GA home, where they still reside today. Figure 10 is a picture that captures my father and his family together during a day of paving in Georgia.



Figure 10. Hermanos Valdez, Christian's father, grandfather, and five uncles on a paving job site. Pictured (from left to right) are Leopoldo Valdez, Jesús Valdez (grandfather, yellow hardhat), Jesús Valdez, Jr. (next to grandfather on the right), Martín Valdez (gray hardhat), Ernesto Valdez (father, brown hardhat), Orasmo Valdez, and Felix Valdez (white hardhats). All permissions granted.

Our relatives soon followed suit and were also able to buy houses in or near Doraville. Having the family close to each other was as crucial as breathing. Not only was having family close by important, but of equal importance was keeping our mother tongue of Spanish alive, our heritage language which gave us connection and comfort. By the spring of 1999, we had grown from a family of three to a family of seven when my younger sister was born.

For as long as I can remember, my parents always spoke Spanish to us and so it was my first language. My parents could not teach us English, so they constantly reinforced the importance of school and education in this country. Not only that, but once we had a television and cable, my parents would let us watch cartoons in English so that we were at least exposed to the English language. It was not until my parents registered my twin brother and I for Pre-K where we were truly exposed and immersed in the English language, and even began to

communicate with my siblings in our second language. English soon suffocated our first language. Not only did the English language consume our home language, it also consumed our daily life; to the point where our brains were rewired to think in English, and not in our mother language of Spanish, which did set my siblings and I for success in public school. The primary Spanish exposure we had was at home, where we would watch *novelas* on the television or during our weekly attendance in church. Going to church helped my mother the most. She was able to connect with other mothers that were in the same boat as her, at times befriending the mothers that lived nearby. I never realized until today, how much support these mothers gave one another at the start of their new life in a new country. While at church, we were taught to sing in Spanish, pray in Spanish, and even read the Bible in Spanish. Little did I know, that these moments of Spanish would foster my relationship with my parents and become the foundation of my biliteracy. Figure 11 shows how happy my mom was at church and Figure 12 documents my brother and I being at church as well.



Figure 11. Christian's mother at the local church they attended while he was growing up. All permissions granted.



Figure 12. Christian's mother at the local church they attended while he was growing up. All permissions granted.

The schools that my siblings and I attended were very diverse, from elementary to high school. Figure 13 shows my brother and sister and I outside of our elementary school. By the end of 5th grade, I realized that the demographics of my school were changing. I saw more students that looked like me, while students that were Caucasian were moving away. Being Latino became the norm in my schools. I hardly remember any teachers that looked like me or even spoke my home language, so hearing Spanish in school became like finding a needle in a haystack. When I did hear Spanish from an adult in school, my heart would feel a safe haven, a haven of comfort, because at times, I yearned to hear Spanish in my schools. I did not receive my first formal instruction in Spanish until I was in 10th grade. I was shocked that the teacher instructed us to only speak Spanish, not English. Being in a Spanish only space truly felt like a sanctuary. By practicing and reinforcing my Spanish, I was able to pass the Advanced Placement Spanish course for native Spanish speakers before I graduated high school. My academic Spanish achievements gave me the reassurance that I needed and confirmed that I had not lost a part of myself.



Figure 13. Christian, his brother and second oldest sister outside their elementary school in DeKalb, 1997. All permissions granted.

As a first-generation college student, I felt uncertain. Not being able to ask my parents for assistance in applying to college or filling out a FASFA form, contributed to this uncertainty. But mostly the uncertainty that I experienced stemmed from fear of being labeled as different. My fear of being seen as different became a reality in the first semester of my freshman year. I recall a time when a professor asked the class a question. Remembering the importance of education that my parents had instilled in me ever since I could speak, I raised my hand to answer, answering correctly without a problem. But after class, a classmate of mine told me that I had an accent when I spoke English. This was the first time where I was made aware of my accent. After that encounter, I was mortified to answer questions in class. I did not resume the habit of answering questions again until I got into my major courses, half way through my sophomore year. I made a conscious decision to start participating more actively in my classes in part to show my classmates that I did belong there, no matter my accent. Attending the university was the first place in which I was repeatedly reminded that I was different. I used my being different to motivate me

throughout college, and in the spring of 2013, I became the first in my family to graduate from college, graduating with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice.

It did not dawn on me until I decided to pursue my master's degree that I felt like the public education system had failed me. In the spring of 2017, I completed my master's degree in early childhood education. Only during my master's program did I realize that the schools that I went to had a simplistic view or attempt to incorporate diversity into the curriculum. Holding an international day event or putting up flags around the school, which are often the only attempts to embrace diversity in schools, does not mean that the schools are celebrating diversity, in fact they are mere superficial celebrations. On the contrary, these kinds of shallow nods to other cultures feed a pseudo truth to the students involved. To be diverse and celebrate diversity means that teachers need to include culturally relevant lessons for their students. Teachers using culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) incorporate the cultures that are present in their classroom into the curriculum, into the learning engagements (Ladson Billings, 2009). In doing so, the teacher creates a safe learning environment for student achievement and students are more able to reach and surpass expectations.

Today, I am a dual language immersion (DLI) Spanish teacher in Atlanta. In my classroom I not only teach a love for a language, but a love for culture, for people who may or may not look like me. On top of teaching language and culture, I teach mathematics, science, and social studies in Spanish. Becoming and being a DLI Spanish teacher has given me the courage that I sought as a child, the comfort of speaking and learning in my mother tongue. I can now give this comfort to my students. Further, I am keeping families together by teaching the mother language and not propagating the erosion of the home language—*subtractive bilingualism* (Lambert, 1975, 1977, 1981). Subtractive bilingualism

is the phenomenon in which children and adults alike lose their home language in the “process of becoming linguistically assimilated into the English-speaking world of the school and society (Fillmore, 1991). In the long run, not reinforcing the home language in public school is detrimental to the success of language-minority students; not teaching the mother language ultimately frays the relationships that parents have fostered with their children. Fillmore is convinced that “there is a connection between native language loss and the educational difficulties experienced by many language-minority-background students” (p. 344). I have seen cases where children and teenagers are not able to speak to their parents because of the language barrier(s) that were created by the public school system. These language barriers, among other reasons, create an unnecessary stress on family members communicating with one another that could lead to irreversible effects. Fillmore (1991) explains how the push for assimilation contributes to the stress of dissolving familial communication. She says, “What is at stake in becoming assimilated into the society is not only their educational development but their psychological and emotional well-being as individuals as well” (p. 207). My parents’ journey from *La Calzada* to *el Norte* has made me appreciative of who I am today, a grateful son and now a passionate educator. I am someone who can communicate with his own family and with other families in my community. In doing so, I can support families that are now going through what my family and I went through in the 1990s: paving comfort in a different country.

Jyoti

Seven tall pine trees outline the unkempt front yard of an eccentric 1965 A-frame ranch house in a suburb in northeast Atlanta. Nearly three-quarters of *the way* to the top of the tree closest to the house, sits a scruffy, sap-covered, dirt-

under-her-fingernails eight-year-old girl. Her brown skin and nearly black hair blend into the brown bark of the tree. She sits mindfully, feeling the wind in her hair.



Figure 14. Jyoti posing in a tree where she often felt the most at home, circa 1984. All permissions granted.

The year is 1984, and she and her sisters are the only brown-skinned bicultural children on the street and one of four families in the neighborhood with one or more parents from another country. On the other side of the neighborhood is James (a pseudonym for his “English” name) Lee whose parents emigrated from Korea, the Shankaras from the Middle East live further down that same street and the Chari boys and their mom who came from India live in the apartments around the corner. This tree-dweller, Jyoti, is a half Asian Indian, half white, bicultural women who grew up in DeKalb County in the northeast corner of Atlanta, Georgia. She can be seen exactly where she always felt most content in Figure 14.

My father immigrated to the U.S. from India in 1958 in pursuit of his Ph.D. His father and grandfather, my *tata* [grandfather] and *muttata* [great-grandfather], were farmers in a small village in the state of Karnataka in South India. Figure 15 is of my father shortly before or after he came to the United States. After my great-grandfather died, my grandfather, still a young boy, was sent to live with a wealthy ayurvedic [Indian traditional medicine] doctor who paid for my grandfather's schooling in return for the work my grandfather did in the doctor's home. My *tata* ultimately became a physics professor at a university in Bangalore where he raised my father and my father's six siblings.



Figure 15. Jyoti's father in his mid-twenties around the time he came to the U.S., circa 1958. All permissions granted.



Figure 16. Jyoti's mother in her early teens shortly after settling in Montana, circa 1955. All permissions granted.

My mother, a white woman, was born in Arizona. Her family moved twenty-one times during her first ten years of life, living in various U.S. states and in mining camps in several South American countries, in particular in Brazil, where she became fluent in Portuguese. Her family finally landed in a small mining town in Montana where my mother graduated from high school before heading to northern California for college. Figure 16 is of my mother around the time they settled in Montana. Figure 17 and 18 are pictures of me and my maternal grandparents.



Figure 17. Jyoti with her maternal grandmother, circa 1997. All permissions granted.



Figure 18. Jyoti with her maternal grandfather, circa 1986. All permissions granted.

My parents met at Stanford University in the mid-1960s, married in 1968 and moved to Atlanta, GA in 1970, three years after their interracial marriage was deemed legal in the state. Figure 19 is of my parents in their first home in Atlanta. My parents, a rare-for-the-time, mixed couple, settled in DeKalb County and raised me and my two sisters in a mostly English monolingual home. My father speaks at a minimum his mother tongue, Kannada, as well as Hindi, Tamil, some French and some Spanish. My mother lost her Portuguese but learned some Spanish and became nearly fluent in French.



Figure 19. Jyoti's parents shortly after moving to Atlanta, circa 1974. All permissions granted.

Despite their multilingual abilities, my parents' dominant mutual language was English which was the primary language in our home. Once, they brought in a Kannada language teacher into the house to teach the south Indian language of my father's family, however, the classes were not for me and my sisters but for my mother and other interested members of the community. I longed to learn the language. Mesmerized by hearing Kannada, I would hide on the stairs to listen to the class.

In my early childhood, we celebrated a few of the major Hindu holidays with our small Indian community group, the Kannada Koota. On these occasions I was able to put on my Indian culture like the blue silk *chaniya choli* dress I wore and try it on for size.



Figure 20. Jyoti dressed in a blue, silk *chaniya choli* dress, circa 1986. All permissions granted.

We blessed ourselves with *koomkooma*, the red paste that we delicately place in the middle of our forehead representing the third, spiritual eye. We also

recited singsong prayers to deities I knew little about in the Sanskrit language, a language that even the Indians present didn't speak because it is considered a "dead" language and is relegated to Hindu religious scriptures and practices. "Kultuko" (sit) the aunties would tell me and Manish, one of my first Indian friends, gesturing for us to sit on the floor and eat our dinner and sweets on silver thali plates. *Kultuko*. Sit. One of only a few words in Kannada I knew growing up. I can be seen on one of these occasions in Figure 20.

Despite not knowing my father's language and not having a large Indian community nearby, my Indian heritage marked me. I was marked, not only on the outside, through my traditional Indian name or through my distinct brown skin and black hair *against* the backdrop of the mostly white neighborhood *where* we lived and the mostly white and black demographics of the city. My Indian heritage also marked me on the inside in terms of grappling with my cultural identity. I remember very distinctly, when taking a standardized test when I was eight years old, having to select a box, an identity box. My choices were black, white or other. I raised my hand and asked my teacher which box I should pick. She paused, long enough for me to realize that she too did not know which label I should select. She knew my mother was white, but white didn't work for me. She knew my father was from India, but there was no label for that. She looked at me, seeing that I clearly did not match the physical categorization to select white or black. Somewhat flustered, she told me to pick "other." It was in that moment that I became aware of my "other-ness." Until then, I just knew I loved playing outside, being with my friends, and simply being a child. This experience of becoming an "other" at school profoundly impacted how I engaged at school and how I interacted with others outside of school. I developed the skill of a chameleon, blending in and adapting to those around me which meant that I was

almost always leaving some part of me behind. Anzaldúa (2015) calls this act of being a chameleon being a *nahual*, the indigenous word for a shape shifter. Many times people of color, including children of transnationals, find that they shift between the layers of their identity as they move between the different worlds within which they exist. In many ways, this is what I did. Yet this shifting back and forth, while allowing us to seemingly move fluidly between worlds, can also have a fragmenting effect. Anzaldúa explains that as we shift into our different shapes in between our worlds, we can benefit from learning to dwell in *la nepantla*, that space that lies in the interstices in between our different worlds, a space where our contradicting identities dwell, and in dwelling in *la nepantla* we are able to embrace our wholeness.

When I reflect on my childhood, I recall experiences that parallel Anzaldúa's description of dwelling *la nepantla*. For example, in many Indian families, there are strict gender roles, strict when compared to more American gender roles. Growing up, while these strict gender roles were not enforced in my home, I was very aware of them. I found when I was with my few Indian family members, I felt tension between wanting to be seen as "Indian enough" but also not feeling genuine when I tried to fulfill what I thought was the gender role that was expected of me. I also struggled with not wanting to perform the more traditional Indian gender roles that from an American point of view seemed to have a degree of gender oppression. Over time, I have come to embrace the contradictions that exist among the typical gender roles in Indian and American cultures, a process that has at times felt uncomfortable or disingenuous, but embracing these contradictions and others has been one of the truest forms of embracing my wholeness. Though it is an iterative process, I have worked towards embracing my wholeness as authentically as I can while shifting between

the different cultures in my life. As I remember my childhood and youth, particularly my time in school, I believe the adults and teachers could have done more to draw upon my shape-shifting abilities. In doing so, they would have also validated my wholeness and encouraged me to bring my entire self into the spaces within which I existed.

I spent much of my childhood inventing my own language and studying different English accents which in retrospect, I now see was my way of trying to connect to my lost heritage language. It was as if my brain, my heart and my soul needed to connect to a language other than English. My make-believe play almost always had a character who spoke another language or was from a far-off land.



Figure 21. Jyoti's paternal grandparents in Bangalore, Karnataka, India, circa 1978.

I was keenly aware that I had family living in India on the other side of the world. I have vivid memories of my own trip there to meet my family when I was eight. Figure 21 is one of my favorite photos of my paternal grandparents. I remember when I was there, one time my *ajji* (grandmother) snuck me coffee in her backyard patio. One time, I wanted a special rice pudding that is typical of South India. I asked my father how to ask for it and he instructed me to say, "*Payasam, beku*" (I want Payasam). However, when my American tongue tried

to parse out those words, I clearly did not say it quite right because in response to what I said, *Ajji* reached on top of her refrigerator and brought me a metal can full of coins. I felt a rush of shame and embarrassment that I could not speak the language, and disappointment that the tin did not have the rich, creamy rice pudding I was craving. Upset, I ran my father and quickly the mystery was solved. I had said, “*Paisa, beku*” (I want coins). In that moment, I was keenly aware of the fact that while I felt a deep connection to India, and its culture and people, I would always be disconnected from it in some way because I did not know the language. Although the colors, smells and sounds of India were deeply imprinted in my consciousness, the void of not knowing my family’s language was profound, leaving a hole in my heart. I wish that I had had the opportunity to learn more about my heritage culture and language. What a gift it would have been if I could have connected to my culture and language, to my whole self, through school. I wish there had been an active engagement with my cultural knowledge and space for me to learn more deeply about where my father’s family came from. Instead, I mostly felt disconnected from the learning that occurred at school, often riddled with anxiety about performing well enough to please my teachers and my meet father’s high academic expectations. It wasn’t until much later and through Spanish language courses and studying abroad that I began to connect more deeply with my Indian heritage.

In high school, we had to choose a language to study and I do not remember why I chose Spanish but doing so was a decision that would change my life. I studied Spanish in high school and in college. One of my college professors led a trip for students to Guadalajara, Jalisco in west central Mexico. Part of the program involved learning about the fraught relations between the U.S. and Mexico and understanding the push and pull factors of immigration. I decided to

apply to go on this trip during my junior year in college. The moment I stepped off the plane in Guadalajara, I felt as if I was home. There was a connection between Mexico and India that I would not realize I was feeling until three years later when I returned to India for the first time after more than a decade. There was something deeply profound for me to be surrounded by people in Mexico who looked as if they could be in my family, to hear sounds and smell fragrances that paralleled those in Bangalore. I do not wish to essentialize either of these countries or cultures or over generalize their similarities, but there were personal connections in my experience that ignited a cultural and linguistic healing I could have never predicted. The overarching realization I had was that language, culture and identity matter and that we should allow students in schools the space to explore their cultural and linguistic heritages as well as support their cultural and linguistic maintenance.

Puentes: Uniendo Vidas y Uniendo Comunidades

With the understanding that larger discourses on native speaker-ism (de Jong, 2011, García et al., 2012; Portes & Salas, 2015) and discourses on English as the official language lead to the fragmentation of transnational and multilingual communities and students, we must seek to change these dominant narratives. There are many linguistically and culturally diverse people in DeKalb County and they are deeply rooted. When considering our schools and education system, engaging in Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) and drawing on students' funds of knowledge are but two significant ways in which school leaders and teachers can disrupt the fragmentation of students and cease perpetuating negative discourses (González et al., 2005; Ladson Billings, 2009).

Ladson-Billings (2009) states that as part of CRP, teachers can help “students make connections between their community, national, and global

identities” (p. 52). In doing so, teachers are taking a critical sociocultural approach to teaching and learning and making connections to larger discourses while foregrounding the identities of their students. Furthermore, Ladson-Billings promotes relational teaching where relationships and building collaborative communities of learners are prominent in the classroom. As part of developing CRP in the classroom, teachers can draw on students’ funds of knowledge.

González et al. (2005) explain that the ideas within the funds of knowledge project highlight the knowledge that students already have from the cultural ways of knowing in their homes and that teachers can draw upon these funds of knowledge to connect the students’ home and culture to school curriculum. Part of the funds of knowledge project includes teachers conducting home visits to learn directly from the families about their specific cultural practices. Cathy Amanti (2005) explains “[a]ll cultures are heterogeneous, and practices within a group will vary according to such factors as gender, religion, class and geographic location. This has major implications for the way educators should think about multicultural education” (p. 131). In this way, it is important that we do not essentialize the cultures and experiences of bilingual students but that we take the time to learn more about their specific lived experiences and tailor our lessons to them and their funds of knowledge (Tinker Sachs et al., 2008).

Un Curriculum para Nosotros

Jyoti, who did not grow up immersed in Indian cultural practices had a deep longing to connect to that side of her biculturalism. A CRP approach for a student similar to Jyoti could have provided her the opportunity to explore different Indian cultural practices or research the history of Indian immigration in the U.S. On the other hand, Christian grew up more deeply immersed in his

Mexican culture. In this case, a teacher could have used a funds of knowledge approach to discover his family history coming from a Mexican *rancho*, his father's profession as a concrete mason or his Spanish/English bilingual abilities. In response, a teacher could have pulled from any of these funds of knowledge to enhance his learning and ensure he felt represented and embraced in his school. In Table 2 we offer curriculum ideas that could be used to support students like Jyoti and Christian. The table is organized by content areas. We suggest that teachers start out as the students in their exploration of and preparation for the activities. When doing the activities in their classroom, teachers should allow students to be the experts when there is enough rapport and safe space created. Each class can open with a "check-in" where teachers allow time and safe space for students to share how they are doing. We also recommend teachers incorporate a multimodal and multiliteracy approach when doing these lessons, which could include skits, poetry, movement, visual art projects, etc. These types of multiliteracy, multimodal approaches have been suggested explicitly in some of the listed activities but could be used throughout all of the activities.

Table 2
A Curriculum for Us: Culturally Relevant and Funds of Knowledge Based Activities

Content Area	Theme/ Lesson	Possible Activities
Social Studies	History & Identity	As part of a US History course/lesson, explore the pre-colonial and post-independence history, with a focus on the experiences of the various waves of immigration, viewed through a critical lens. Activities might include students researching their own family's arrival to the US, researching the Native tribes that once lived on the land we currently live on. For Latinx students, research and lessons on Chicano studies and for Asian students, Asian American studies, can help students situate their histories and identities. Please bear in mind, some students' families' stories of arrival may have been traumatic, so it is important to do your own research as well.
Social Studies	History & Social Justice	Research different social justice movements within the Asian and Latinx communities nationally and locally. Guest speakers could be invited virtually or in person. These activities give students the opportunities to understand the interconnected layers of systemic racism, discrimination, marginalization. Community work or service could be integrated so students could learn to see how the community is organizing to create positive change. The community work could be part of community service hours/project
Social Studies	Health & Spirituality	Students explore the traditional spiritual, medicinal and other traditional practices that are part of their heritage. For example, Día de Los Muertos, Ayurvedic Medicine, traditional textile making, etc. For Social studies, this could explore the ways these practices bring the community together.
Social Studies	Personal Reflection on their Lived Experiences	Have students keep a private journal that only the teacher reads and that they can voluntarily share from where they reflect on the impact the lessons have on their own growth and meaning making around their cultural identity. This information could be gained through academic research or through a funds of knowledge approach where both teacher and student are the learners investigating the local communities.

ELA	Literature & Identity	Assign textbooks or books that are written by and for Latinx, Asian American and other children of transnational to help them see themselves represented in literature. Have students complete a personal narrative, <i>testimonio</i> , of their own lives
ELA	Creative Expression	After reading and discussing important quotes from famous people from around the world, (examples: MLK, Nelson Mandela, Thich Nhat Hanh, Cesar Chavez, Dolores Huerta, Arundhati Roy), have students work in groups to create a skit or poem that captures their reaction to one quote in particular. After skit or poem presentations, have students write written reflections about their experience, particularly the affective experience.
ELA	Language, Identity & Heritage	Create activities in AP Spanish classes for students who are children of transnationals with heritage from a Spanish speaking country where the students can explore their heritage culture as well as how they navigate their sense of identity being from both the US and from their heritage culture, for example Mexico and the U.S., using texts that talk about the borderland. These activities can also be done in ELA classrooms. Activities could have students read selected texts and then create skits, poems, movement, visual art, etc. that represents their response. The students could reflect on their experience through a short writing activity
ELA/Foreign Language	Personal Reflection on their Lived Experiences	Provide students the opportunity to write their own personal narratives, this could be done as an assignment or part of their personal journals
STEM/STEAM	Research & Presentation	Project based learning in STEM or STEAM that is based on STEM related accomplishments from scientists/engineers/artists from other countries or research what industries your students' families work in using a funds of knowledge approach and incorporate lessons based on your findings.
STEM/STEAM	Art, Culture & Science	Learn about art and artists from students' heritage cultures, explore how in many other cultures, art, science and math are often intertwined. Give students the opportunity to create pieces of art inspired by these artists. This information could be gained through academic research or through a funds of knowledge approach where both teacher and student are the learners investigating the local communities.

STEM/ STEAM	Health & Spirituality (Same as the social studies lesson)	Students could explore the traditional spiritual, medicinal and other traditional practices that are part of their heritage. For example, Día de Los Muertos, Ayurvedic Medicine, traditional textile making, etc. For STEAM classes, this could look at the science and art integrated in these traditions. This information could be gained through academic research or through a funds of knowledge approach where both teacher and student are the learners investigating the local communities.
STEM/ STEAM	Community & Personal Reflection	Have organizations and companies talk to students that speak more than one language, and how bilingualism and biculturalism will support students personally and professionally. Students can reflect after the presentations on how they want to use their language and culture and how they are important to them

La Experiencia de Escribir Nuestros Testimonios

Christian

Writing my *testimonio* for this paper allowed me to reflect on the journey that my parents took to give me and my siblings a better life. Their daily struggles and sacrifices have given me this opportunity to share their story, our story, now 30 years in the making. Our story is a very familiar one not only within my extended family, but also in our communities and throughout the United States. We each have our own unique chapter in this story, and it is a story in search of the American dream. Writing this paper reminded me that I am forever in debt to my parents and that I will always carry their hard work, love and sacrifices with me. This brief narrative is one way that I can show my parents my gratitude for their sacrifices, though I am very aware that whatever I accomplish may never fully convey the depth of how grateful I am for all they have done for us. My parents and the life they built for us are what keeps me rooted in my culture, in my language, and in my professional endeavors. Without my parents' views on

education and their faith in my future, my dream to go to college and ultimately become a teacher would have stayed in a high school classroom.

Jyoti

Writing this paper, particularly the *testimonio*, was a combination of feeling vulnerable in the openness of sharing and feeling powerful in the rawness of personal reflection. I grappled with the middle-class privilege I lived growing up and the profound sense I often had of not belonging. I felt sadness, joy, and nostalgia all at once as I thought about all that both my parents did for us growing up as well as when I looked deeply at the limitations within their own humanness. I also became keenly aware of my imperfections as a daughter, sister, wife, mother while also seeing the beauty of my life story. I realize that we all have multiple stories within our lived experiences and I felt this paper was one place where I could share one of mine. I have always learned very much from hearing other people's stories and it is my humble hope that our stories in this paper can bring comfort to others who identify with our experiences. It was powerful for me to go through family photos and reflect on the life that I have lived and cathartic to put it into words and share it with the world.

Conclusión

DeKalb County is deeply diverse. Its communities are rich with language and culture. We have a long history of transnationals choosing to live in the area and growing deep roots. Members of these transnational communities have assets that mainstream community leaders and teachers can draw upon not only for the benefit of the entire county, but also to demonstrate commitment to the wholeness of these communities. When we can embrace the wholeness of those who have been historically fragmented and marginalized, we can all begin to heal from the

legacies of colonization, such as fragmentation, so we can see clearly who we are. With this clarity we can deepen connections and begin to imagine where we can grow and transform. It is our hope that this brief glimpse into our lives growing up in DeKalb and our ideas for drawing on transnational students' assets will inspire community leaders and educators to dig deep into the communities around them and support us where we are now. Bridges connect us and give a pathway to travel on together, in community.

References

- Access Genealogy. (2012). *Native American history of DeKalb County, Georgia*. <https://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/native-american-history-of-dekalb-county-georgia.htm>
- Amanti, C. (2005). *Beyond a beads and feathers approach*. In N. González, L. C. Moll, & C. Amanti (Eds.), *Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities, and classrooms* (pp. 131–142). Routledge.
- Anderson, W. D. (2015). *Atlanta's first buildings in pictures: 1830–1900* [Blog post]. <https://wdanielanderson.wordpress.com/2015/09/12/atlantas-first-buildings-in-pictures-1830-1900/>
- Anzaldúa, G. (2012). *Borderlands: La frontera* (4th ed.). Aunt Lute Books.
- Anzaldúa, G. (2015). *Light in the dark/Luz en lo oscuro: Rewriting identity, spirituality, reality*. Duke University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822375036>
- Atlanta Journal Constitution. (2019). Flashback photos: Buford Highway's evolution, 1951–2002. <https://www.ajc.com/lifestyles/flashback-photos-buford-highway-evolution-1951-2002/50oLdmBnY6M8LqXGxE7WzJ/>
- Baldillo, D. A. (2013). Shaping twenty-first-century civil rights advocacy: Latinos in metro Atlanta. *Norteamérica*, 8, 119–139. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1870-3550\(13\)71785-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1870-3550(13)71785-3)

- Burton, K., Conger, S., Crawford, R., Graf, E., Graham, P., Jordan, N., ... Zygmunt, C. (2010). Single-family residential development, DeKalb County, Georgia, 1945–1970. <http://www.dekalbhistory.org/documents/Single-FamilyResidentialDevinDeKalbCounty.pdf>
- Dameron, R. J., & Murphy, A. D. (1997). An international city too busy to hate? Social and cultural change in Atlanta: 1970–1995. *Urban Anthropology and Studies of Cultural Systems and World Economics*, 26(1), 43–69.
- Data USA. (n.d.). DeKalb County, GA. <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/dekalb-county-ga>
- de Jong, E. J. (2011). *Foundations for multilingualism in education*. Caslon.
- DeKalb Chamber. (2019). <https://www.dekalbchamber.org/education/>
- DeKalb County. (2019). Newcomer: The magazine for relocation, lifestyle and living in Atlanta. <http://www.newcomeratlanta.com/counties/dekalb/dekalb.html>
- Delgado-Wise, R. (2014). A critical overview of migration and development: The Latin American challenge. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 40, 643–663. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-071811-145459>
- Discover DeKalb. (2019). <https://discoverdekalb.com/things-to-do/shopping>
- Fillmore, L. W. (1991). When learning a second language means losing the first. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 6(3), 323–346. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0885-2006\(05\)80059-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0885-2006(05)80059-6)
- Flores, N. (2016). A tale of two visions. *Educational Policy*, 30(1), 13–38.
- Gandhi, L. (1998). *Postcolonial theory: A critical introduction*. Columbia University Press.
- García, O., Flores, N., & Woodley, H. H. (2012). Transgressing monolingualism and bilingual dualities: Translanguaging pedagogies. In A. Yiakoumetti (Ed.), *Harnessing linguistic variation for better education* (pp. 45–76). Peter Lang UK.
- González, N., Moll, L. C., & Amanti, C. (2005). *Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities, and classrooms*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410613462>

- History.com (2020, February 21). Trail of tears. <https://www.history.com/topics/native-american-history/trail-of-tears>
- Kasun, G. S. (2013). “We are not terrorists,” but more likely transnationals: Reframing understandings about immigrants in light of the Boston Marathon bombings. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 15(4), 227–233. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15210960.2013.844611>
- Kasun, G. S. (2015). “The only Mexican in the room”: Sobrevivencia as a way of knowing for Mexican transnational students and families. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 46(3), 277–294. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aeq.12107>
- Kasun, G. S., & Saavedra, C. M. (2014). Crossing borders toward young transnational lives. In J. Keengwe, & G. Onchwari (Eds.), *Cross-cultural considerations in the education of young immigrant learners* (pp. 201–217): IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-4666-4928-6.ch012>
- Kasun, G. S., Scott, J., Kaneria, A. J. & Delavan, G. (in press). Understanding and reimagining deaf bilingual education in Mexico: Toward expanding Deaf-Worlds through a decolonizing and transnational imaginary for North America.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The dream keepers*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Lambert, W. E. (1975). Culture and language as factors in learning and education. In A. Wolfgang (Ed.), *Education of immigrant students*. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.
- Lambert, W. E. (1977). The effects of bilingualism on the individual: Cognitive and sociocultural consequences. In P. A. Hornby (Ed.), *Bilingualism: Psychological, social and educational implications*. Academic.
- Lambert, W. E. (1981). Bilingualism and language acquisition. In H. Winitz (Ed.), *Native language and foreign language acquisition*. New York Academy of Science.
- Lewis, C., & Moje, E. B. (2003). Sociocultural perspectives meet critical theories. *International Journal of Learning*, 10. <http://www-personal.umich.edu/~moje/pdf/Journal/SocioculturalPerspectivesMeetCriticalTheories.pdf>

- Long, K. (2017, May 24). This small town in America's deep south welcomes 1,500 refugees a year. *The Guardian*. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/may/24/clarkston-georgia-refugee-resettlement-program>
- Mohanty, C. T. (2003). *Feminism without borders: Decolonizing theory, practicing solidarity*. Duke University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1215/9780822384649>
- Native Languages of the Americas. (2015). Native American tribes of Georgia. <http://www.native-languages.org/georgia.htm>
- Portes, P. R., & Salas, S. (2015). Nativity shifts, broken dreams, and the new Latino south's post-first generation. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 90(3), 426–436. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0161956x.2015.1044296>
- Saavedra, C. M. (2011). Language and literacy in the borderlands: Acting upon the world through *testimonios*. *Language Arts*, 88(4), 261–269.
- Sánchez, P. (2007). Cultural authenticity and transnational Latina youth: Constructing a meta-narrative across borders. *Linguistics and Education*, 18(3), 258–282. [doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2007.07.007](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2007.07.007)
- Smith, L. T. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples* (2nd ed.). Zed Books.
- Spivak, G. C. (1994). Can the subaltern speak? In P. Williams, & L. Chrisman (Eds.), *Colonial discourse and post-colonial theory: A reader* (pp. 66–111). Columbia University Press.
- Stump, S. (2018, July 3). 'One America': Small town welcomes thousands of refugees with Southern hospitality. *Today*. <https://www.today.com/news/clarkston-georgia-home-thousands-refugees-t132421>
- Tinker Sachs, G., Hendley, M. L., Klosterman, S., Muga, E., Roberson, A., Soons, B., Wingo, C., & Yeo, M. (2008). Integrating funds of knowledge in the ESOL practicum: The missing element. *GATESOL in Action*, 21(2), 23–30.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2012, March). *The Asian population: 2010*. (Report No. C2010BR-11). <https://www.census.gov/prod/cen2010/briefs/c2010br-11.pdf>

- U.S. Census Bureau. (2018, July 1). *Quick facts: DeKalb County, GA*.
<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/dekalbcountygeorgia>
- Valenzuela, A. (2010). *Subtractive schooling: U.S.-Mexican youth and the politics of caring*. State University of New York Press.
- Wood, B. (2002, September 19). Slavery in Colonial Georgia. *New Georgia Encyclopedia*. <https://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/slavery-colonial-georgia>