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Presentation of Bicultural Identity in Hispanic Children's Literature

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The University of Southern Mississippi

Presentation of Bicultural Identity in Hispanic Children's Literature

by

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Abstract

Children of all backgrounds can use literature as a means to understand the world in which they live. Therefore, it is important that children's books represent diverse cultures and experiences. This study analyzed Hispanic children's literature published in the U.S. that contained child characters with bicultural Hispanic-American identities. The aim of this study was to determine how the linguistic and literary elements in five books, which contained bilingual Spanish-English interwoven text, combined to present a bicultural identity and lifestyle in the United States today. The literary elements analyzed included themes, character portrayal, the roles of family and the elderly, and the presence of stereotypes. The linguistic elements that were analyzed included frequency and grammatical category of Spanish words used, presence of dialogue, and realistic use of Spanish. This work contributes to existing scholarship by revealing that, while the overall portrayal of bicultural identity was positive, there is still room for improvement in the incorporation of the Spanish language. This study emphasizes the need for accurate representations in children's literature today.

Key Words: Spanish, literature, language, Hispanic, children, identity, bicultural

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Chapter 1: Introduction

It is widely known that the Hispanic immigrant group is the largest and fastest growing ethnic group in the United States, and this has been the case for some time now (Naidoo, 2011). The introduction of this dynamic community to the United States has had many effects on the lives of both immigrants and modern United States' residents; Hispanic communities have greatly contributed to the cultural diversity of the United States. The interactions among the differing ethnic groups has led to the creation of a new human experience that has also sparked the formation of a bicultural identity in second-generation Spanish speakers (Oshri et al., 2014).

The Hispanic community in itself is a diverse group made up of people from many different Spanish-speaking countries. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) defines Hispanic or Latino as “a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race” (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014, p. 13). As of July 1, 2013, there were approximately 54 million Hispanic people living in the United States, which is about 17% of the total population. This means that Hispanic people represent the largest ethnic minority in the country. It is estimated that by 2060 the Hispanic population will have grown to 128.8 million, which will then be 31% of the United States population (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014).

One of the greatest effects of the influx of Hispanic migration to the United States can be felt in the classrooms across the country, as more and more schools are welcoming children that come from Spanish-only homes. From the fall of 2001 to the fall of 2011, the number of Hispanic students increased from 8.2 million to 11.8 million, an increase

from 17 to 24 percent (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014). Despite being the largest minority group in the nation, Hispanic children still remain the most segregated minority group in public school classrooms (Schon, 2006). This is an area of concern, considering that the number of students will only continue to increase, especially when taking into account the projection that in 2023, public schools will be 30% Hispanic (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014).

As children spend a significant amount of their time in the classroom, the interactions that occur in the learning environment can have a profound impact on their identity formation. The identity formed during the school years is considered to be the foundation that can affect child for his or her lifetime (Soto, 2012). Children's cultural identities are formed in part due to their interactions with people in their lives and the world around them; the major players in a child's life consist of familiar neighbors, friends, teachers, and people that children see in the media (Soto, 2012). For instance, Bernal et al. (1990) found that Mexican-American children form their identity as they cross back and forth between the language and cultural spheres that exist in their homes and communities, and within the social institutions they encounter. As the children navigate between the two identities, they also learn to code-switch, shifting between cultural behaviors and language as they become more fluent within the two cultures (Bernal et al., 1990).

The assimilation process can be very confusing and difficult for adults, and especially for children (Perez, 2011). According to Perez (2011), the acculturation process can be very stressful and lead to self-esteem issues. While there are many means of coping with stress, reading high quality literature is crucial in helping children better

understand and manage major life challenges (Roberts & Crawford, 2008). Children can use books to help them better understand the world around them, which includes better understanding their own culture and the conflict or confusion that may result when people of different ethnic backgrounds interact (Adkins et al., 2014). However, the plight of many Hispanic-American children is the lack of literature that accurately represents the lives they lead (Rice, 2005). Furthermore, many educators find themselves unable to adequately understand and convey what life is like for a Hispanic-American child (Barry, 1998). One means of remedying this issue is by introducing relevant bicultural or multicultural literature into the classroom or home setting.

It is difficult to attempt to define an area of literature as diverse and encompassing as multicultural literature. The Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC, 2014) says the following:

There is no single definition of the term "multicultural literature" as it is applied to books for children and young adults. At the Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC), we use the term to mean books by and about people of color. All children deserve books in which they can see themselves and the world in which they live reflected. (p. 1)

Literature of this nature originated from the call for inclusion and curricular reform by groups who had traditionally been marginalized in this society, and the term is generally used to refer to literature by or about people from such groups (Naidoo, 2011). There are different opinions, but it is understood that the definition includes books that reflect "racial, ethnic, and social diversity that is characteristic of our pluralistic society and of the world" (Dickinson & Hinton, 2007, p. 3). The lack of multicultural children's

literature is a pressing issue, especially when the deficit is in the classroom (Barry, 1998). Many minorities face marginalization in different areas of society and their daily lives, and, unfortunately, marginalization often occurs in a classroom setting (Benner & Wang, 2014).

The lack of representation in literature for Hispanic minority groups inside and outside of the classroom is very concerning. In today's children's literature, the Hispanic population is significantly under-represented. In a sample taken in 2014 of 3,600 books, only 1.5% were centered around Hispanic characters (Cooperative Children's Book Center, 2014). As Higgins (2004) wrote in her article about multicultural literature, "When compared to all children's literature, the percentage written about minorities is low and the percentage about the Hispanic community is even lower" (p. 47).

The aim of this study was to discover how the linguistic and literary elements of bilingual Spanish-English children's literature united to portray a bicultural identity and aspects of the bicultural lifestyle in the United States today. There is currently a lack of extensive research on the matter. The research presented here contributes insight into the identity that is presented in children's books and the possible implications that could be made by young readers. This kind of research is beneficial not only to scholars in the field and the children themselves, but also to educators across the country. By understanding more about the existing literature, educators and parents will be able to better assist and guide the students as they read. They will also have a knowledge of the criteria to utilize when selecting books for their children. This will be not only valuable to bicultural children, but also advantageous for the cultural education of their peers and

classmates. The following section of the thesis describes prior research related to the topic of this study, as well as indicates how it compares to from previous work.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

This chapter explores the significance of language and literature in identity formation, examines the second-generation Hispanic experience, and voices concerns regarding modern Hispanic children's literature. The study's research question and related hypotheses can be found at the conclusion of the chapter.

Significance of Literature in Identity Formation

Reading and being read to are ways for children to use their imagination to experience many different cultures and adventures (Jeffers, 2009). They can compare themselves to the characters, imagine what they would do in similar situations, and develop problem-solving skills. A well-written bilingual book not only features good stories and delightful illustrations, but also promotes multicultural respect and understanding, a winning combination for all involved (Jeffers, 2009). Literature can be used as a means of better understanding identity. In a study by Chappell and Faltis (2007), the researchers focused on the ways in which the messages communicated in literature help shape the identity of the reader. They found that the attitudes and beliefs present in a book can greatly affect how a child goes on to perceive himself and his cultural heritage. Barry (1998) noted that a positive representation of a minority character can promote an increase in self-esteem of a reader of the same ethnic background. The researchers also noted that children build community as a result of their identity affiliation (Chappell & Faltis, 2007).

Davis (2004) analyzed identity formation in multicultural literature, stating that identity formation takes place in fictional and nonfictional autobiographical works, coming-of-age stories, and the bildungsroman (a novel dealing with a person's formative

years or spiritual education). The identity formation and idea of self is also placed in the context of family, peers, and community (Davis, 2004). He described the ways in which these three types of multicultural literature help children define their perception of self and other, family values that are present, and which values they choose to accept or reject (Davis, 2004).

Throughout modern history, educators have emphasized the importance of readers' seeing themselves in works of literature, including being able to see similarities to their own experiences, history, and culture (Barry, 1998). Yet, in her book, *Celebrating Cuentos: Promoting Latino Children's Literature and Literacy in Classrooms and Libraries*, Naidoo (2011) noted that as a Latina child, she was unable to find herself in literature. For historically marginalized groups, it is important that they find characters similar to themselves, especially when considering the issues they must face such as assimilation, acculturation, and a bicultural identity. Books that include multiethnic characters can serve as guides for children to discover who they are and how they fit into their communities, the greater society, and history. In this way, children can relate to the characters, identify with familiar situations, and better understand other ethnic personalities (Lopez-Flores, 2006). The ideas expressed in children's books can also drastically shape how children develop an understanding of the political, social, and cultural norms that exist in the United States (Naidoo, 2011); Latino children can also form ideas about how the dominant culture of the world perceives their cultural group (Jans-Thomas, 2009). Children are able to see the ways in which Hispanics continue to be marginalized by society at large, even if they do not fully understand that that is what is happening (Naidoo, 2011). If the incorporation of literature successfully leads to

increased understanding, children will be better equipped as they grow older to know where they come from and accept their cultural roots, as well as be proud of their ancestors (Lopez-Flores, 2006).

The accuracy of portrayal of morals in children's literature is vital. In Hispanic cultures, values and beliefs are often a cornerstone of family life (Chappell & Faltis, 2007). It is crucial that standards of morality in literature are in line with practices that would appear in the child's everyday life. Key values found in many Hispanic cultures is the importance of respecting elders, having a strong sense of family, and being cooperative (Naidoo, 2011). These are themes that are often reflected in depictions of the Hispanic experience (Chappell & Faltis, 2007).

As a rule of incorporating multicultural literature and literature in the classroom, every student should not only be represented, but also be represented accurately. Negative images and stereotyping of people and cultures in children's fiction books are harmful to students whose ethnicities are being written about. Students should see themselves and their lives reflected in the books they read in a positive and honest manner (Higgins, 2004). Salvadore (1995) contended that all readers should see themselves and others in literature, because only then will they truly appreciate the diverse world in which we live; multicultural literature can also be used to highlight similarities that exist across different cultures.

The Role of Language in Identity Formation

As Higgins (2004) noted, "language is more than a reflection of the structural arrangement of communication in society, it is intimately linked to the creation and perception of reality itself" (p. 47). Therefore, bilingualism can also be a factor in the

shaping of a person's identity. Chappell and Faltis (2007) noted that the characters that children read about in books influenced how the readers perceived the concepts of the English and Spanish languages, of mixing and separating language and culture, and of keeping or eliminating the identity affiliations with the culture of the parent. In her study, Jeffers (2009) focused on how children are able to ultimately shape their own cross-cultural identity, finding that language use and ability to interact with local and transnational cultural themes heavily influenced how children went on to perceive themselves and their surroundings. The messages present in literature can go on to reinforce negative stereotypes, attitudes, and feelings toward self. Chappell and Faltis (2007) discovered that in seven Latino children's books this occurred when the main characters commented on what is "good Spanish," or if the main character expressed negative opinions toward code-switching (i.e., the practice of alternating between two or more languages or varieties of languages in conversation). Main characters' attitudes toward the parent culture can influence children's decision to embrace their ethnic background or whether they attempt to assimilate fully to an Americanized culture (Chappell & Faltis, 2007). It is for these reasons that it is of the utmost importance that children be exposed to work that is free from stereotypes and that presents the Hispanic-American cultural experience in a positive manner.

Additionally, a study conducted by the Pew Research Center yielded interesting results in regards to how Hispanic people perceive their identity (Taylor et al., 2012). While that study did not examine identity in regards to literature, it did provide insight into how people of Hispanic background perceive their identity in their daily lives. A major finding of the study was that many Hispanic people, 69%, prefer to identify with

their country of origin as opposed to the general categories of Hispanic or Latino (Taylor et al., 2012). Regarding bicultural identity, the number of adults that choose to describe themselves solely as American was only 21%, in contrast to the 47% that consider themselves to be “very different” from the average American (Taylor et al., 2012). A similarity between the study conducted by the Pew Research Center and this study was the importance of the Spanish language, with 82% of Hispanic adults saying they speak the language, and 95% of people saying they consider it important for future generations to speak Spanish as well (Taylor et al., 2012).

Literature as a Means of Understanding Culture

As previously stated, literature can be used to help a person understand his or her identity and culture, and it can also be a tool for understanding the culture of others. Smith (2002) noted that multicultural children’s literature is targeted for both insider and outsider groups, as the texts can address both the ethnic child reader and members of other racial groups. Similarly, Higgins (2004) stated that books can be used as a means to break down barriers and dispel prejudice, while simultaneously building community. She noted that stories, whether written or spoken, connect people and help them to know one another (Higgins, 2004). Specifically, children’s books serve as a means of shaping children’s understanding of power, status arrangements, and social norms (Grauerholz et al., 1997). Therefore, multicultural literature for children is a way to empower young readers to take pride in their own culture and as a way to introduce diversity in culture to others (Salvadore, 1995). Reading a book provides children with the opportunity to experience a culture different from their own and to understand the universality of childhood experiences that exists, regardless of racial backgrounds (Salvadore, 1995).

The Second-Generation Hispanic Experience

With the constant increase in Hispanic immigration over the years, there has naturally also been an increase in the number of second-generation Hispanics in the United States. Between the years 1980 and 2000, immigration was the main factor of Hispanic population growth, as the Latino immigrant population increased from 4.2 million to 14.1 million (Pew Research Center, 2013). However, since 2000, the primary contribution to Hispanic population growth has switched from immigration to native births (Pew Research Center, 2013). Between 2000 and 2010, there were 9.6 million Hispanic births in the United States, while the number of new immigrants was 6.5 million (Pew Research Center, 2013). Soon, the second generation will represent the majority of the Hispanic American population. According to a study on the rise of the second-generation population, even though the Hispanic immigrant population can be expected to continue to increase, the growth rate for the second generation has already gained sufficient momentum that it will remain higher than the first generation's, even if immigration continues to accelerate (Passel & Suro, 2003).

Second-generation Hispanic Americans often experience a disconnect between their home life and school life (Naidoo, 2011). Children, in particular, may struggle with striking a balance between the differing dynamics of their life and cultural experience. Often children feel pressured to choose one cultural experience or the other, as opposed to integrating and embracing both aspects of their identity (Oshri et al., 2014). If a child experiences one language at home and another at school, there could be potential for confusion. While this dual heritage can be a blessing, it can also be a source of grief and of uncertainty for some people (Lopez-Flores, 2006). According to Barry (1998), the lack

of connection could also lead to serious conflict. Barry (1998) argued that if a child chooses to reject the home culture, this could lead to a lowered sense of self-esteem or disconnect with the parental figures in the child's life. If the child chooses to reject the school setting, this can lead to lessened academic success and decreased academic opportunities. Situations such as these could be avoided by incorporating the home culture into the school setting through the use of books in the classroom (Barry, 1998). With the help of literature, children can better navigate connecting their home life and their school life. There is a great need for children to identify with characters that speak as they do (Lopez-Flores, 2006).

Accuracy of Portrayal in Modern Hispanic Children's Literature

It is crucial that Hispanics be accurately represented in literature because misrepresentations can be harmful not only to Hispanics, but also non-Hispanics. Literature is one of the first encounters, along with television and school teachers, that a child will have with the world outside once he begins to realize its existence through readings with his parents or siblings (Gomez, 2003). A skewed representation can negatively affect the perception of the Hispanic community and misrepresent their ideals and values (Nathenson-Mejia & Escamilla, 2003). Miscommunications of this nature can have serious detrimental effects in regards to relations among different ethnic groups and the ways in which they perceive one another (Naidoo, 2011). On the other hand, if a book adequately captures what it means to be Hispanic in the United States, greater understanding of cultural practices could occur on both sides (Rice, 2005). In her study, Higgins (2004) discussed the ways in which multicultural literature can be used to break down barriers; for instance, they can break down prejudices, while establishing a sense of

community. The use of multicultural literature is an invaluable tool that allows children to understand each other. It is more important now than ever to promote understanding among the different segments of the population, given that the demographic and cultural makeup of the United States has dramatically changed over the last twenty years and will continue to change in the future (Gomez, 2003).

Evaluating Modern Multicultural Literature

There are a few studies that are similar to this study; these will be reviewed in this section. Most studies that have been conducted that are similar to this one have been performed with the intention to better understand classroom dynamics and to communicate the necessity of incorporating multicultural literature into the classroom. While this thesis reinforces the importance of making multicultural literature available to students in the classroom, the focus of the research is analyzing what the literature presents as bicultural identity.

A study by Barry (1998) found that at that time, there was a lack of Hispanic representation in books, especially in books that were distributed in school libraries. He also found that in a study examining the decade of 1986 to 1996, the list of Newberry Medal books for multiethnic representation in children's literature contained no portrayals of major or minor Hispanic characters (Barry, 1998). While that situation has improved over the years with more materials published and more representation for books about minorities, there is still a lack of literature for and about Hispanic children (Naidoo, 2011).

In her study, Higgins (2004) analyzed thirty multicultural children's books for quality and authenticity. Her sample included books written by and about African

Americans, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Latinos. Her study was intended to find quality literature that could be used within in her own classroom and the classrooms of other teachers. Through her research, she was able to create criteria for evaluating the texts that could also be used by her fellow educators. Higgins (2004) found that of the Hispanic populations represented in literature, Mexican Americans are the most widely written about, which is fitting, as they represent the largest majority of the Hispanic immigrant population in the U.S., at over 65% (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014). However, there is still a need for all Hispanic cultural and subcultural groups to have adequate representation in the literary field and in classrooms across the United States (Naidoo, 2011).

One study analyzed Hispanic children's literature through the lens of a family literacy program known as the "Libros y Familias Program" (Keis, 2006). Keis (2006) chose to examine children's literature because he found that it was an effective means for promoting dialogue, raising critical consciousness, and helping oppressed people find their voice; the program also served as an example of the ways in which children's literature can be used to build community and inspire personal transformations. The selection of books for the program was essential, as they were used to help validate the cultural and life experiences of the immigrant families in the community, who often found themselves marginalized and disenfranchised (Keis, 2006). The simple text and culturally relevant illustrations also permitted those with limited literacy to participate fully in the dialogue (Keis, 2006). Keis noted the importance of providing books that reflected children and their families in authentic and positive ways, and he documented

the ways in which the literature provided an opportunity for self-reflection, especially in regards to each person's identity and values.

Another similar study was conducted that analyzed a sample of children's literature to better understand how children perceive the culture around them (Chappell & Faltis, 2007). However, that study focused on attitudes toward Spanish, Spanglish, and bilingualism, as opposed to examining the presented identity. Those authors performed a close reading of each text and coded the different words and phrases that appeared in discourse among the characters to better understand what each book's author was trying to achieve or communicate about the Spanish language and culture. They also coded every comment alluding to Standard Spanish, Spanglish, language use, culture, geographical and social spaces, home, family, and identity affiliations (Chappell & Faltis, 2007). One common feature that the authors found concerning the topic of bilingualism was that often children separated the two languages by speaking one at home and one at school. As far as the shaping of identity, the researchers found that children shape their identity based upon the communities to which they are exposed; for instance, often the elderly served as the children's connection to their heritage, so in many works there was an established relationship with grandparents or another senior family member (Chappell & Faltis, 2007).

This study contributes to the current literature by adding the element of identity to the current body of research, as well as examining components of the bicultural lifestyle. While there has been an increase in publication of Hispanic children's literature, there is still a lack of research on the topic. Much of the existing research focuses on the ways in which the Hispanic texts can be incorporated into the classroom. While some studies

have touched on elements of identity of child readers, there is not a wealth of information on how the reading experience presents identity to the child. This study examined how the designated elements of the texts presented what it means to be Hispanic in the United States, due to what the books communicate that it means to be Hispanic in the United States. This research is an effort to bridge the gaps that exist in the current literature and contribute to better understanding of what a child will find when reading modern literature about bicultural children. The information obtained from the review of literature for this study influenced the following research question and accompanying hypothesis to be explored:

How do children's bilingual Spanish-English children's books present bicultural identity and lifestyle through linguistic and literary elements in the text?

The hypothesis regarding this research was that the usage of linguistic and literary elements in the text would work to highlight positive aspects of the Hispanic cultural experience, but fail to accurately relay an experience that is representative of a modern Hispanic-American lifestyle and bicultural identity. It was believed that family interactions would be portrayed positively, but that the value of the works would be diminished due to the inclusion of stereotypes. The hypothesis regarding the linguistic elements was that the Spanish language would be correctly used, but not substantial when compared to the English used. The following chapters document how modern adolescent literature with interwoven texts presents the bi-cultural identity of a child living in the United States today.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this study was to assess a sample of existing children’s literature that used interwoven Spanish and English text.

Materials

The sample consisted of the following five books: *Grandma’s Gift* (Velasquez, 2013), *Dear Primo: A Letter to My Cousin* (Tonatiuh, 2010), *I Love Saturdays y domingos* (Ada, 2004), *Abuela* (Dorros, 1997), and *Abuelo* (Dorros, 2014).

Table 1. Publication Details of Texts.

Title	Author	Publication Year	Intended Audience	Number of Pages
<i>I Love Saturdays y Domingos</i>	Ada	2004	5-8 years	32
<i>Dear Primo: A Letter to my Cousin</i>	Tonatiuh	2010	4-8 years	32
<i>Abuela</i>	Dorros	1997	3-7 years	48
<i>Grandma’s Gift</i>	Velasquez	2013	4-8 years	32
<i>Abuelo</i>	Dorros	2014	4-8 years	32

These texts were chosen because they served as a diverse representation of existing Hispanic children’s literature in the United States. The criteria for selecting the books included their content, English and Spanish language use, and appropriateness for elementary school-aged children. It was important that each book have a child main character growing up in a bicultural environment in which he or she interacted with Hispanic culture and the culture of the United States. The texts were also selected because they all were written with Spanish and English interwoven throughout the text. Lists of award-winning books, as well as scholarly articles (Association for Library Service to Children, 2015; Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, 2013;

Chappell & Faltis, 2007; Higgins, 2004) were used in order to secure a sample that was well-respected within the literary community. The frequency with which the books appeared either on award-winning lists and/or the frequency with which they were included in other similar studies was also used to select the books. Each book was partially analyzed in advance to ensure that the book met the desired qualifications for the sample. The selection of the sample was very important for this study, as the body of current Hispanic children's literature, while growing, is still limited overall. The sample needed to be as representative as possible of the existing literature concerning the bicultural Hispanic-American experience.

Procedure and Analysis

The goal in analyzing the texts was to identify trends and universal themes, as well as linguistic elements that communicate what it means to have a bicultural identity and lifestyle in the United States today. The procedure for analyzing each text was to perform a close-reading of each work with notes taken during the reading process (cf. Higgins, 2004). To ensure uniformity in analysis, the researcher searched for the same elements in each narrative. Each of the five books was evaluated using an evaluation form (see Appendix A) adapted from a similar study (Higgins, 2004) that also analyzed multicultural children's literature. In her study, Higgins (2004) analyzed 30 multicultural picture books (featuring minorities of African American, Native American, Asian American, and Hispanic American heritage) and 5 multicultural chapter books for quality and authenticity. Her assessment of quality included literature that had no distortions or omissions of history, stereotypes, or loaded words (Higgins, 2004). She also analyzed the presentation of lifestyles, use of dialogue, standards of success, the roles of females,

family, and the elderly, possible effects on the child's self-image, illustrations, and copyright date (Higgins, 2004). However, adjustments were made to better fit the purpose of this study and to better address the sample; this study altered the evaluation form to allow for a thorough analysis specific to Hispanic children's literature. Higgins's (2004) original evaluation form included generalized statements regarding literary aspects and the depictions of characters. For example, "There is no stereotyping in the text of the ethnic group being portrayed" (Higgins, 2004). The statements were determined to be true, somewhat accurate, or false. The evaluation form for this study utilized some of Higgins's topics such as the presence of stereotyping, depiction of lifestyle, role of family and the elderly, and the possible effects on the child's self-image. Instead of a scale, open-ended questions were crafted for this study to allow for an in-depth analysis.

Davis's (2004) framework of analysis was adapted for this study. In his study, Davis analyzed identity formation in multicultural literature, with his original work focusing on Asian-American literature. His model was adapted for this study by applying it to the lens of Hispanic-American children's literature by assessing elements that were relevant and specific to the Hispanic cultural experience. An essential aspect of Davis's study that was used in this study included analyzing the dynamics and relationships among family, friends, and peers as they interacted with the child main character. The selection of Davis's framework was also appropriate because the books from the selected sample each fall into one of more of the three categories (autobiographical, coming of age, bildungsroman) of works Davis described. Davis's framework offered the opportunity to assess the books within the scope of the journey of self-discovery, a theme indicative of coming-of-age works. The books in this sample all presented a child as he or

she navigated the world around him or her, while also learning more about him or herself. Similar to Davis's study, this study analyzed the aspects of the child's journey of self-discovery that later influenced their perception of their cultural heritage and overall growth. Davis's theoretical framework was paired with the evaluation form adapted from Higgins's (2004) study to provide a thorough analysis of each book. The inclusion of Higgins's evaluation form was necessary, as it further deconstructed important aspects of multicultural literature. The works of Davis and Higgins were complementary to one another as they both highlight the importance of family in the child's growth and self-discovery. Higgins (2004) allowed the researcher to take Davis's initial concept one step further, and analyze the topic as it related to each specific book. Higgins's (2004) checklist added new dimensions to Davis's work by also incorporating elements that were specific to Hispanic literature such as relevant stereotypes and cultural interactions. Davis's framework provided a broad view assessment, while Higgins's evaluation form and the components of her checklist allowed for an in-depth analysis of literary elements. That is to say, Davis's framework was used more heavily to analyze and understand overall themes found in the works, while Higgins's evaluation form was used to isolate elements of the text that later combined to shape the portrayal of identity. The nature of the bicultural identity and lifestyle conveyed by the combination of these elements was of particular interest in this study.

As mentioned earlier, linguistic elements in the texts were analyzed through the performance of close readings of each text. It was imperative to examine the types of words used by the authors and the frequency with which they appeared in order to detect the possible existence of patterns among the works. The books were first read to

determine the frequency of words that appeared both in Spanish and English. The total number of Spanish and English words and the total word count were taken and used to determine the percentage of Spanish words present in the text as compared to the percentage of English words. This information was crucial for textual analysis because, in some situations, Spanish words added a splash of diversity to the work, while in other situations a more thorough use of the Spanish language was realistic to a situation a Spanish-speaking child might encounter. After the total number of words had been determined, each appearance of a Spanish word or phrase was then categorized by type. The categories included noun (also further separated into the semantic categories of animals, food, objects, emotions, locations/places, and other), verb, expressions, pronouns, complete sentences, and adjectives. A tally was taken for each book in each category. Table 2 below exemplifies the types of words belonging in each category for one of the works, *I Love Saturdays y domingos* (Ada, 2004) and serves as an example of how words were classified in the study.

Table 2. Frequency of Spanish Elements in *I Love Saturdays y domingos*.

Linguistic Element	<i>I Love Saturdays y domingos</i>
Noun	<i>vestido</i>
a. animals	<i>jirafa</i>
b. food	<i>huevos rancheros</i>
c. objects	<i>casa de muñeca</i>
d. emotions	<i>orgullo</i>
e. locations/places	<i>el circo</i>
f. other	<i>domingos</i>
Verb	<i>es (ser)</i>

Table 2. Frequency of Spanish Elements in *I Love Saturdays y domingos* (continued)

Linguistic Element	<i>I Love Saturdays y domingos</i>
Expressions	<i>¡Feliz cumpleaños!</i>
Pronouns	<i>Me (gustan)</i>
Complete Sentences	<i>Mira el pez grande.</i>
Adjectives	<i>bonito</i>

The types of words chosen by the authors are relevant because it is a crucial aspect of the accurate representation of the Hispanic culture. The authenticity in the use of the words is also an important component when attempting to portray a realistic Hispanic experience. Similarities and differences in the content of the material within each book were recorded. There was no rating or ranking system; instead, final conclusions were made based upon the full analysis of each book and the patterns, whether linguistic or literary, that were apparent in the texts. For example, the analysis of the linguistic elements showed that authors used certain types of Spanish words rather than others, while the literary elements presented patterns that ranged from how characters interacted to what conflicts existed for a Hispanic-American child. The next chapter presents the findings on the subject matter, including overarching themes and patterns discovered in the texts.

Chapter 4: Results

This section of the thesis introduces the results of the analysis of the five books in the study's sample. The major trends and findings for each work are described, and the tables in this section present the information gathered from the sample. The linguistic information in the following tables is divided by Spanish elements in the texts (Table 3) and an analysis of the word count of the five works (Table 4).

Analysis of Sample

I Love Saturdays y domingos (Ada, 2004)

I Love Saturdays y domingos (Ada, 2004) is a book that describes how a young girl (no name was listed in the work) spends her weekends. Each weekend she spends Saturday with her paternal grandparents that are non-Hispanic, and Sundays are spent with her Hispanic family. Through her time with each grandparent, the female character, who is also the first-person narrator, learns about the world around her and her cultural background. The female character and both sets of her grandparents are the major characters in the book. Her parents and other relatives appear in illustration, but do not speak or engage in conversation. The time she spends with each set of grandparents is presented in a parallel structure. This allows for the reader to find differences and similarities between the two sides of her family.

The child is presented as knowledgeable about her cultural heritage. She understands Spanish and engages in conversation with her Hispanic grandparents. Part of the story also highlights learning about her cultural heritage from both sides of her family.

The most striking feature of the book is the presentation of the bicultural identity. The narrator embraces and appreciates both sides of her family. She is presented as knowledgeable about her family history and equally enjoys the time she spends with each set of grandparents. The book in part is a journey to discovering both aspects of her culture. The multicultural experience itself is portrayed as enriching, as opposed to burdensome or conflicting. The positivity of the experience is solidified with the major life event of the child's birthday party, which, in many cultures, is a time for family and celebration. This event was a crucial moment for the author to relay her message. The author could have chosen to showcase a cross-cultural interaction that was chaotic or filled with mishaps. Instead, she presented the union of the two worlds as a harmonious time. Her grandparents even coordinate her birthday present: "*Abuelita* and Grandma must have planned this surprise together" (p. 26). Another example of the celebration of both cultures is the combination of the traditional "Happy Birthday" and a traditional Hispanic birthday song, "*Las mañanitas*" (p. 30). This serves as an example of the ways in which a child balances her different heritages in a positive manner.

The overall theme present in the work is the importance of family, with an emphasis on both sides of the child's heritage and family history. The Hispanic cultural experience is seen through the food described in the book and the elements of the birthday party. The food includes papaya juice and *huevos rancheros*, as compared to the milk and pancakes served by the European-American Grandma. This book also provides insight into aspects of European-American culture through the parallel portrayal of both cultural experiences.

The role of family in the text is the defining characteristic in the book, as it is through her grandparents that the girl discovers her cultural history and more about the world around her. She uses the time she spends with her grandparents to appreciate her family and learn from them. She even engages in Spanish conversation with her Hispanic grandparents as she experiences different daily activities and major milestones with them. While family is important, more specifically, it is the elderly that play the most significant role as they are her connection to her cultural heritage. Both sets of grandparents also serve as the symbol for the joining of her two worlds, and it is through their positive interactions that the child and young readers are presented with a positive multicultural experience. The parallel presentation of her interaction with her grandparents also allows the girl and readers the opportunity to compare and contrast different aspects of the narrator's multicultural life and background.

Aspects of the work that could be perceived as stereotypes of Hispanic culture include the narrator's grandmother growing up on a farm. Her grandfather, *Abuelito*, is shown growing up working on a farm, designated in the text as a *rancho* (p. 21). This can be considered stereotypical because it depicts the Hispanic character as working in a rural setting (Gomez, 2003). The book also says that *Abuelito* was left in charge of his family at the age of twelve when his father left Mexico to look for work in the United States. While the situation for children in the United States is not exactly the same as the one described in this book, the loss of a parent due to a work situation or deportation still occurs. According to the Applied Research Center, this is a reality for a total of 5,100 United States children of immigrants to date, and it is projected to occur for some 15,000 more within the next five years (Houser & Rodriguez, 2013).

The interwoven Spanish text in the book adds to the work. The Spanish words used in this book represent 16.22% of the total words used, which was the highest percentage for the works in the sample. The Spanish words used in the book only appear when referring to the Spanish side of the family or in conversation with the Spanish grandparents. The words used are predominantly nouns. Of the nouns, the greatest usage came from appellatives, especially *Abuelito* and *Abuelita*. There were also a number of adjectives used. The work also had the highest number of complete sentences in Spanish, with a total of nineteen. The incorporation of such a large number of sentences also allowed for greater diversity in the type of words used, with twenty-one verbs and fifty adjectives appearing in the text (see Table 2). The sentences were often very basic—composed of usually a single noun and verb combination—which was comparable to the English sentences that appeared in the text. An example from the text is “*El azul es mi color favorito,*” ‘Blue is my favorite color’ (p. 26). The conversations between the characters were also only one to three sentences each time. The Spanish words were sometimes defined in the text immediately following their appearance, as seen in “*un buen rato,* for a long time” (p. 24). At other times the words were not defined side by side, but could be understood using context clues from the previous page, which generally described the European-American experience.

Dear Primo: A Letter to My Cousin (Tonatiuh, 2010)

Dear Primo is a story about two young boys, Charlie and Carlitos, who are cousins that live in different countries. Charlie lives in America, while Carlitos lives in Mexico. The two boys are the major characters, with Charlie serving as the narrator. They decide to become pen pals, and their letters written to one another become the basis

of the story and the means by which they share the details of their daily lives. The letters allow for each boy to share his own experiences, while also learning about his cousin's life. The parallel manner of sharing stories and experiences provides readers with the opportunity to compare and contrast the lives of the two boys. In the preview of the book written by the author, he notes that his intention is to introduce young readers to the idea that community can be larger than just their neighborhood and school.

The boys describe how they get to school, what sports they play with their friends, foods they like to eat, games they play with their friends after they finish their homework, what they do in the summer for fun, grocery shopping, celebrations in their neighborhood, entertainment, and holidays. The Mexican cultural aspects described by Carlitos are playing soccer with friends, his mom's making of *quesadillas* and *tortillas*, *mariachis*, *el Día de los Muertos*, and *piñatas*. Charlie describes things like riding the subway, eating pizza, video games, break dancers, Thanksgiving, and Halloween.

Charlie is not presented as knowledgeable about his Hispanic heritage. He has no knowledge of Spanish, with the exception of his use of the word *primo* when he addresses his cousin. The book presents his journey of learning more about his heritage. He, along with the reader, is able to discover differences and similarities between his life and the life of his cousin. Charlie is also presented as very comfortable with American culture, through his discussion of life in the city and his celebration of many traditional holidays in the United States. However, Charlie is presented as eager to learn about his heritage. He is very excited to hear from his cousin and is hopeful that he will get to meet him in the future.

The major themes in this work are family and friendship. The two cousins are connecting and sharing aspects of their lives. Another major theme of the work is commonality. The author presents the material in a way that shows that even though the two boys' lives may seem very different, they are actually more alike than they originally think. The book allows readers to see the differences and similarities that can exist in major life events, or even in a person's daily routine. The text conveys that even though the cousins live very far away from each other, they share many experiences, and technically they share the same name. The book thus makes a statement about a cultural experience, while also speaking to the human experience of seeking companionship and belonging.

Family is important in this work, because the relationship between Charlie and Carlitos serves as the background to the plot of the book. Carlitos also acts as connection to Charlie's Mexican-American heritage. It is interesting that Charlie learns about his cultural background from a peer, as opposed to an elder. The relationship between the cousins is also used as a tool to explore the differences and similarities in Mexican and American daily life. There is no interaction between characters outside of the letters between the two boys. Their parents are briefly mentioned, but the characters are not seen engaging with their parents. For example, Carlitos's mom makes him *quesadillas*. Also, the characters are seen shopping with their parents. Overall, the book has a positive message, as both characters are eager to learn more about their cousin's life. The book also ends with their idea to meet one another.

The method in which the author introduces cultural concepts is effective, because it appears natural for two cousins who have never met to describe their lives to one

another. It may also benefit the reader that the lives of each character are mirrored, because they can associate the unknown Spanish words with things with which they are familiar. For example, Carlitos describes two games that he plays after school (*trompos* ‘tops’ and *canicas* ‘marbles’). Young readers can associate these games with things they may do after school such as video games, hopscotch, or jump rope.

There were no aspects of the work that were found to be stereotypical. The elements of the culture that were included were introduced by Carlitos. As Carlitos lives in a village in Mexico, his descriptions of the cultural elements were not stereotypical or demeaning. Instead, they were able to be informative and potentially a learning device for the reader. Elements included Carlitos’s life on his family’s farm and also his descriptions of playing *fútbol*, *trompos*, and *canicas*, with his friends, his description of holidays and celebrations, and his mother making *quesadillas* and *tortillas*. These elements are used to portray a traditional experience as opposed to a stereotypical one. It is specific to Carlitos’s experience in his village, and not intended to be a generalization of the entire country of Mexico.

The Spanish words in the text are 6.59% of the total words that appear in the book, which is the lowest percentage in the sample. The words in the text are all nouns, with the exception of one adjective. The Spanish words are spoken exclusively by Carlitos in his letters that he writes to Charlie; there is no dialogue that occurs in the book. Instead, the Spanish words are interwoven into English sentences as seen here: “Every morning the *gallo* crows and crows” (p. 3). The Spanish words that appear in the text appear as stand-alone words as there are no conjunctions, interjections, or verbs. The Spanish words used are more of vocabulary words the reader could learn, and there is a

glossary included in the back of the book. Many of the words Carlitos uses are related to food and animals. The illustrations also greatly aid in the understanding of the words used in the book. For example, the animals are seen in illustrations with their Spanish translation beside them. Other Spanish words are defined in the text using context clues. For example, “We have a *burro*, *pollos*, and a *gallo*. Every morning the *gallo* crows and crows” (p. 3).

Abuela (Dorros, 1997)

Abuela is the story of a young girl, Rosalba, and her grandmother, Abuela, as they venture on an imaginary flight in the city and throughout the world taking in the sights and discussing what they see. Rosalba is both the main character and the narrator. Her grandmother is also a major character. The minor characters that appear in the book are other members of their family and people they see below them in the streets.

Rosalba is presented as very knowledgeable about her Hispanic heritage. She both speaks and understands Spanish. She also has some understanding and knowledge of her grandmother’s life before she moved to the United States: “Abuela speaks mostly Spanish because that’s what she spoke where she grew up before she came to this country” (p. 2). Rosalba is also knowledgeable about Spanish as she is able to describe words in the English language that are of Spanish origin: “Mangos, bananas, papayas—those are all Spanish words” (p. 30). Rosalba also experiences the culture of the United States as she visits the Statue of Liberty and travels around the city with her grandmother.

The theme of family is present in the work as the book describes how much Rosalba enjoys spending time with her grandmother. They often have adventures, and they share similar interests. This particular afternoon they spend together is also a way

for Rosalba to learn more about her grandmother's life and other cultures as well. They travel all around the city and the world observing different people and places. There is also a theme of imagination, as Rosalba and her grandmother cannot actually fly around the world. This allows young readers to access their imagination while also learning more about Hispanic culture. Lastly, there is the theme of adventure, which is mentioned not only in the sense of Rosalba and Abuela's travels, but also of Abuela's move to the United States. The book ends with the promise of more adventures to come for the two of them.

Family is a crucial element in this story as the bond and relationship between Rosalba and her grandmother are a driving factor in this story. Rosalba and her grandmother also go visit Rosalba's aunt, uncle, and father on their journey. Abuela's family is mentioned whenever she and Rosalba travel to her unidentified home country. They see Abuela's cousin Daniel below them.

The role of the elderly is also an important feature of this book as Abuela provides Rosalba with information about her cultural background and serves as Rosalba's connection to her heritage. Abuela's move to the United States is an important part of the plot, since Abuela teaches Rosalba about her home country and the immigration process. Having the characters visit places related to Abuela's immigration to the United States is a way for the author to describe some of the experiences Abuela had as an immigrant to a new country.

There are not many significant interactions among people from different ethnic backgrounds. Even though Rosalba and Abuela do not interact with people from different ethnic backgrounds, they do appreciate seeing people working and living in the city. The

book primarily focuses on the time spent between Rosalba and Abuela. The only other significant interaction is when Rosalba and Abuela visit Rosalba's aunt and uncle. They visit their store, but no Spanish appears in dialogue among the characters.

There were no stereotypes depicted in the book, as a major component of this book is the use of imagination. This does not allow for stereotypes because it is not a traditional setting. The book presents its cultural information in a way that is informative, thus removing the opportunity for the readers to make assumptions or draw false conclusions. Cultural aspects include discussion of Abuela's immigration to the United States and her and Rosalba's imaginary visit to Abuela's home country. The incorporation and the description of the borrowed Spanish words (*banana*, *papaya*, and *mango*) that were incorporated into the English language implies the benefits of the Spanish influence in the United States. If that information were presented in a stereotypical manner, it would have a negative connotation.

The Spanish words used in the text represent 12.76% of the total words that appear in the book. The majority of the words are nouns, with the greatest percentage of nouns coming from words used to refer to people, or names. There are also nine complete sentences that are used in the book. These sentences, such as the one seen here, "*Pero quiero volar más*," 'But I want to fly more' (p. 22) represent more variety in the type of words used as compared to the other books. The Spanish words used in the book are defined later in the text. An example of this in *Abuela* is "'*El parque es lindo*,' says Abuela. I know what she means. I think the park is beautiful, too" (p. 6). The dialogue in the book occurs only between Rosalba and her grandmother. Interestingly, the dialogue is in Spanish, but the verb that follows the dialogue is in English. "'*Tantos pájaros*,' Abuela says" (p. 8).

Grandma's Gift (Velasquez, 2013)

Grandma's Gift tells the story of a young boy, Eric, who spends his winter holidays with his grandmother. Eric and his grandmother learn from one another as they make a traditional Puerto Rican Christmas dish known as *pasteles* and as they explore the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The work not only incorporates Eric's Hispanic heritage, but also his African American background. The author was inspired to write this semi-autobiographical work because as a child he was unable to find heroes in literature that looked like he did (Velasquez, 2013). Eric serves as the main character and narrator. His grandmother, Grandma, is also a major character, while his parents only appear as minor characters with no dialogue.

Eric is presented as knowledgeable about his Hispanic heritage. He understands Spanish, but he does not speak in Spanish in the book. Eric often has to act as a translator for Grandma, as she does not read or understand English. "I'd translate a lot of things for Grandma—sometimes I feel like I'm going to school for two" (p. 3). He is very receptive to his heritage, stating "Christmastime in El Barrio was always like magic" (p. 5). Eric is also very respectful of tradition and greatly enjoys the time he spends with his grandmother. He also enjoys when his grandmother tells him about her childhood growing up in Puerto Rico. Through the combination of Eric's experiences, the author highlights both the positive and sometimes challenging aspects of forming and maintaining a multicultural identity.

The themes present in the work include the importance of family and the importance of tradition. Family is an essential element in this work as the relationship between Eric and his grandmother is the focus of the book. The time that they spend

together is a time that they both experience new things and share aspects of their culture. Tradition also is a part of this work with the inclusion of the making of the pasteles. This is something that Grandma does each Christmas, and it is something she shares with Eric. In many ways this work can be seen as a celebration of Eric's relationship with his grandmother. Eric's parents are flat characters and are only seen in a dinner scene where they do not speak or interact with Eric or his grandmother. They even incorporate aspects of Grandma's cultural background when they make a trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This day was very important for Eric and a very significant moment in his life, as he realizes he first wants to become an artist. Lastly, there is a theme of believing in yourself and your dreams. This theme is communicated through Eric's experience in the museum. As he and Grandma are making their way through the paintings, they see a familiar face, Juan de Pareja, a slave and assistant to painter Diego Velázquez. Velázquez later set de Pareja free, allowing him to become a famous painter himself. After Eric sees the painting of de Pareja, he begins to believe that he, too, could one day become an artist. His grandmother supports and encourages this dream when she buys him a sketchbook and colored pencils for Christmas.

Eric's grandmother acts as his connection to his cultural heritage. As Grandma only speaks Spanish, Eric has learned to translate for her and help her as she ventures throughout the city in areas that she is not comfortable with. One of the most gripping moments in the books is when Grandma becomes nervous when she leaves El Barrio to travel to the museum with Eric.

Grandma is also seen sharing life lessons and traditions with Eric. It is evident that she loves him a great deal, when she is willing to step out of her comfort zone to spend the day with him.

Grandma never really traveled beyond the twenty blocks that make up El Barrio, where she knew everyone and everyone knew her. I could tell she was nervous, but I couldn't help being excited....When we got off the bus right in front of the museum, we didn't see anyone from Puerto Rico on the streets and no one was speaking Spanish. (p. 22)

Grandma is painted as being very nervous throughout the entirety of her visit to the museum. She becomes frazzled when she has to pay the attendant. Eric is called to act above his years to take control of the situation and calm his grandmother. This serves as another example when the author portrays a realistic aspect of the multicultural experience. The characterization of Grandma as nervous speaks heavily to the demeanor of non-English speaking women in the United States. The author's choice to describe Grandma as "nervous and shaky" (p. 22) is a choice that could greatly impact young readers. This was a very honest illustration of the anxiety someone might face in an unfamiliar setting. This particular scene in the book added dimension and character to the story. Grandma's visit to the museum is also significant as she is the one that educates Eric about Juan de Pareja. The dynamic between Eric and his grandmother is important because it lets readers see the characters interact with their Puerto Rican heritage (e.g., making pasteles, visiting *La Marqueta*) and Eric's American heritage (e.g., visiting the museum), with the painting of Puerto Rican Juan de Pareja uniting the two worlds.

The glimpses into Hispanic culture that are incorporated into the text are not stereotypical, because this is essentially a memoir-text; Velasquez wrote this book based on an experience from his childhood. For that reason, he presents a respectful account of his grandmother's and his cultural experience. He is also presents a realistic experience that contains both positive elements and challenging experiences.

The Spanish words used in the book represent 9.31% of the total words used in the book. Many of the words are related to food, as a major portion of the plot is dedicated to the trip to *La Marqueta* and the making of the traditional *pasteles*. *La Marqueta* provided a forum for Grandma to both speak Spanish and be comfortable as she is surrounded by other Spanish-speaking characters. The dialogue in the book is exclusively between Spanish-speaking characters and occurs between Grandma and the vendors and when Grandma is speaking to Eric (even though he never responds in Spanish). The dialogue is also where all of the complete sentences appear. An example occurred in the market place was, "*Pues aquí tenemos los mejores,*" 'Well here we have the best' (p. 9). There are also many adjectives present in the work.

Abuelo (Dorros, 2014)

Abuelo is the story of the lessons a young boy learns through spending time with his grandfather, Abuelo. Together they explore the land around them. The young boy later uses the lessons he learns to cope with his move to a new school and big city. The young boy serves as the main character and narrator. His grandfather is the other major character, and a school bully and his parents serving as minor characters. All minor characters are mentioned and seen in illustrations, but do not speak in the book.

The boy does not directly acknowledge his heritage, but he does understand Spanish and is able to speak some Spanish. It is not clear how the child perceives his heritage, but he is expressive about enjoying the time he spends with his grandfather. The child does not make any mention of his or his grandfather's background throughout the book. The illustrations, however, could be described as having a Southwestern feel, with the inclusion of desert scenery, horseback riding, and the wardrobe of the characters.

A major theme in this work is family. The book is based around the relationship the boy has with his grandfather, the time they spend together, and the lessons he learns from his grandfather. This book also has a theme of courage, since the boy must face his fear of moving to a new city and a new school. He also channels his inner strength to face a bully, which became a very powerful message in the book. The importance of family is a recurring aspect of the Hispanic cultural experience, but the work speaks more to the human experience, as it does not highlight specific aspects of Hispanic culture.

The elderly are important in this story, specifically the boy's grandfather. He speaks the majority of the Spanish in the text. He also teaches the boy life lessons, especially the importance of courage and the different ways in which someone can be strong. The boy remembers his good times with his grandpa as a way of coping with the transition. He incorporates things he learned from Abuelo into his new move to his new city and school, such as looking for the stars in the new city and not becoming worried when he gets lost. The young boy continues to gain inner strength from his grandfather through his belief demonstrated on the last page of the book, "Abuelo, he always rides with me" (p. 32).

The only interaction to occur of people with different ethnic backgrounds is the interaction between the boy and the bully at school. This is the only book in the sample to show a situation of conflict between characters of differing backgrounds. The situation is not described in detail, nor is it violent. However, the illustrations demonstrate a tense situation that the character handles in a non-violent manner. The cause of the bullying is not stated specifically. It seems that the author was implying that it was because the boy is new at the school. However, there is room for the interpretation that it could be racial tension or bullying based upon the boy's background. The interaction with the bully is very effective as it is an issue that children in the United States might face.

There were no stereotypes portrayed in the work, because it does not reference the cultural background. The only indication of a cultural background is the use of the Spanish language. Instead, *Abuelo* focuses more intently upon universal life lessons instead of a specific Hispanic cultural experiences. Examples of the life lessons are the importance of finding inner strength, having patience, and adapting to change.

The Spanish words in the text make up 11.07% of the total words present in the book. As the content did not allude much to the bicultural experience, the inclusion of the Spanish language is the only tie-in to the culture of the boy and his family. With that being said, the use of Spanish in this work is very basic. The conversation between Abuelo and the child indicates that the child understands Spanish and uses it in his daily life. He uses it when thinking of his grandfather or things his grandfather taught him, as in this instance, "There are many ways to be strong, *fuerte*," (p. 13). The Spanish words are defined directly before or after the word appears. This gives the book somewhat of an unnatural rhythm of speech as it would not usually be typical for a speaker to repeat

himself. The majority of the words are nouns and adjectives, and the complete sentences that are used in the text appear only in the dialogue.

Trends in the Sample

The most prevalent occurrence discovered in the sample was by far the importance of family. Each main character of every book had a relationship with a member of their family that could be considered significant in their lives. The importance of family is a common theme in literature, but it is also a key value of many Hispanic people (Chappell & Faltis, 2007). In four of the five books (*Dear Primo*, *Abuela*, *I Love Saturdays y domingos* and *Grandma's Gift*,) the family member is the main characters' connection to their heritage and the means through which they learn more about their cultural background. The relationship was the focus of each of the five works, intensifying the significance of the importance of family.

While the role of family was a common theme throughout all five works, there were some differences that were recorded. In *Abuelo*, *Abuela*, *Grandma's Gift* and *Dear Primo*, one family member conveyed the cultural message to the child character, while in *I Love Saturdays y domingos*, both sets of grandparents played a role in the perpetuation of cultural knowledge. This created more of a sense of unity within the family unit, whereas in the other books one character carried the responsibility of educating the child. In four of the books, *Abuelo*, *Abuela*, *Grandma's Gift* and *I Love Saturdays y domingos*, the family members spent a significant amount of time together. In *Dear Primo*, the characters were in communication, but did not spend time together. All interactions between the boys occurred through the letters, whereas in all the other four books quality time was spent together in person. In the four books, the characters spent time doing

things together such as going to the circus, going to the museum, or traveling the plains. *Abuela* was the only scenario that was completely imagined, resulting in a relationship that was realistic but a situation that was not. *Abuelo* is the only work to show the effects of the removal of the primary character relationship, resulting in the main character being forced to take what he had learned from his Abuelo and apply it for himself. In *Abuela*, *Dear Primo* and *Grandma's Gift*, the child characters takes an instructional role, where they are also providing information about different aspects of life; whereas in *Abuelo* and *I Love Saturdays y domingos*, the child character only receives information, and there is no switching of roles.

The presence of an elderly family member was another common pattern in the literature. In four out of five of the books in the sample (*Abuelo*, *Abuela*, *I Love Saturdays y domingos* and *Grandma's Gift*), an elderly family member was identified as a main character. The child engaged in conversation in Spanish with the elderly character and spent significant amounts of time with him or her. The grandparent figures in these books were used to share cultural history. They also provided the majority of the Spanish words used in the text through their dialogue and interactions with the child character. These four books also share a characteristic of the child main character's speaking and understanding Spanish. This is implied to have occurred due to continued contact with the elderly Spanish speaker. These books also contained the child characters that were the most knowledgeable about their cultural background upon the start of the book.

A commonality that is related to the presence of the elderly family member or grandparent is the absence of the parent. In all five books, the parents are seen in

illustration, but have limited to no interaction with the children. The only book in which a parent has dialogue is *Abuela*.

A common occurrence in the sample was the works falling into the category of a coming-of-age book. Each book represents some sort of discovery the characters must make about themselves and the world around them. In all five books, the main characters reach a new level of understanding about themselves or their heritage. The two works with a conflict that resulted in growth were *Grandma's Gift* and *Abuelo*. Both boys must take responsibility in some form. In *Grandma's Gift*, Eric must step up to help his grandmother cope with leaving the comfort of El Barrio, while in *Abuelo*, the young boy must move to a new school and stand up to a bully. The coming-of-age genre is very popular in children's literature (Davis, 2004).

Hispanic tradition and cultural symbols were incorporated into three of the five works (*Dear Primo*, *Grandma's Gift*, and *I Love Saturdays y domingos*.) Hispanic food appeared in all three of these works. These foods included *quesadillas*, *pasteles*, and *huevos rancheros*, respectively. Music was also described in all three of the works, in the forms of a birthday song "*Las mañanitas*," and a description about *mariachis*. *Piñatas* appear in *Dear Primo* (Tonatiuh, 2010) and *I Love Saturdays y domingos* (Ada, 2004). *Grandma's Gift* (Velasquez, 2013) incorporates Spanish art through the trip to the museum that Eric takes with his grandmother. *Dear Primo* incorporates the most Hispanic culture (Mexican) because Carlitos describes aspects of his life in Mexico. Carlitos describes *el Día de los Muertos*, parties in December known as *posadas*, and a childhood game known as *trompos*. Even though the main character, Charlie, is not

experiencing these events firsthand, he and the reader are able to learn about them through Carlitos's letters.

Another component in the sample was that all five main characters in each of the five books were only children. This may have occurred in order for the authors to focus solely on the child protagonist. It does not appear that this was meant to speak to the Hispanic cultural experience. An additional finding was that three of the books were presented in a modern-day urban setting (*Abuela*, *Grandma's Gift* and *Dear Primo*.) This may have been because there are many major cities with substantial Hispanic populations (Pew Research Center, 2013). However, recent studies by the Pew Research Center (2013) indicate that 54% of the Hispanic population now resides in suburban America.

During the analysis of the texts, the background of the authors became of interest to this study. When analyzing stereotypes it appeared that authors that identified as having a Hispanic background were more likely to create a work that was free of stereotypes. Of the four authors, two actually grew up in a Hispanic country; Tonatiuh grew up in Mexico City and Ada grew up in Cuba. Both authors moved to the United States when they were in high school. While Velasquez did not grow up in a Spanish-speaking country, he knew Spanish as a child. He was also exposed to his cultural heritage through the time spent with his grandmother, which later served as the inspiration for his book *Grandmother's Gift* (2013). Dorros is the only author not to have grown up with exposure to the Spanish language. He was born in the United States in Seattle, Washington, and took an interest in Spanish, later learning the language by traveling throughout Latin America (Dorros, 2014). It is possible that his acquisition of Spanish as a second language contributes to the unnatural rhythm present in *Abuelo*.

Linguistic trends were also found in the sample. The linguistic analysis is presented in two tables that categorize the types of words used and also document the percentages of English and Spanish language use. The words were sorted into categories to demonstrate the types of words that authors use most frequently in the books. Table 3 lists the frequency and type of each Spanish word that appeared in the books, while Table 4 presents the word count for each book, separating the number of English words and Spanish words that appear in each book, and calculating the total percentage of Spanish words for each work.

Table 3. Frequency of Spanish Elements in Texts

Linguistic Element	<i>Grandma's Gift</i>	<i>Dear Primo</i>	<i>I Love Saturdays y domingos</i>	<i>Abuela</i>	<i>Abuelo</i>
Noun	45	42	85	57	15
a. animals	0	6	11	5	0
b. food	18	5	4	4	0
c. objects	1	5	6	3	0
d. emotions	0	0	2	0	0
e. people/names	12	10	46	38	8
f. locations/ places	9	5	2	4	4
g. other	5	11	14	3	3
Verb	12	0	21	14	7
Expressions/ Common Sayings	3	0	5	2	0
Pronouns	4	0	7	2	2
Adverb	2	0	4	0	1
Adjectives	22	1	50	10	11

Table 3. Frequency of Spanish Elements in Texts. (continued)

Linguistic Element	<i>Grandma's Gift</i>	<i>Dear Primo</i>	<i>I Love Saturdays y domingos</i>	<i>Abuela</i>	<i>Abuelo</i>
Conjunctions	5	1	14	10	1
Interjections	3	0	4	2	1
Complete Sentences	8	0	19	9	5

In all of the books, nouns were the Spanish words that appeared the most frequently, with adjectives being the second most frequently used. Adverbs occurred the least in the sample, and interjections also occurred infrequently. In the four books in which complete sentences and dialogue in Spanish appeared (*Abuelo*, *Abuela*, *Grandma's Gift* and *I Love Saturdays y domingos*) while the sentence appeared in Spanish, the dialogue verb did not. This happened often in *I Love Saturdays y domingos* (Ada, 2004), as seen in this example, “‘*Mira los leones y los tigres*,’ says *Abuelita*” (p. 15). Also, in all five books Spanish was not spoken around characters that did not identify as Hispanic.

It was hypothesized that the Spanish language would be correctly used. Overall, the use of the Spanish language was correct; however, it did not always follow normal patterns of speech. At times in the works when words were translated in English, immediately following the Spanish translation, it created a pattern of speech that would not occur in normal conversation. Examples from *Abuelo* (Dorros, 2014) include “At first I could not see the stars, *las estrellas* (p. 28)” and also “I would ride with the wind, *el viento* (p. 6). These structures are unnatural because when switching between languages, it seems unlikely that the person speaking would feel the need to define the word they

just said. It is more likely they would assume the person with whom they are conversing would understand and the conversation would continue. Including the side-by-side translation also takes away the opportunity for readers to infer, as opposed to this version which interrupts the flow of the sentence by including the juxtaposed translation. The hypothesis that the frequency of Spanish language use would be much less when compared to English was correct, especially when considering that in all books in the sample, the total percentage of Spanish words used was found to be less than 17%, and in four of the five books, it was less than 15% (Table 4).

Table 4: Word Counts within Texts.

Text	Number of English Words	Number of Spanish Words	Total Word Count	Percentage of Spanish Words
<i>I Love Saturdays y domingos</i>	1043	202	1245	16.22%
<i>Abuelo</i>	313	39	352	11.07%
<i>Dear Primo</i>	623	44	667	6.59%
<i>Abuela</i>	554	81	635	12.76%
<i>Grandma's Gift</i>	1072	110	1182	9.31%

I Love Saturdays y domingos (Ada, 2004) had the highest percentage of Spanish words with 16.22% (Table 4), and it also had the greatest diversity in types of words used. Through the use of its 19 complete sentences (Table 3) and other insertions of the Spanish language, readers are exposed to a varied linguistic experience. The language use is such that it is not overwhelming to non-Spanish speakers, but also not merely a vocabulary lesson. *Dear Primo* (Tonatiuh, 2010) had the lowest percentage of total Spanish words used, with only 6.59% (Table 4). While it did have the lowest percentage, it did not have the lowest number of words ($n=44$) used. The book with the lowest

number of words ($n=39$) used was *Abuelo*, but in relation to its total number of words, it had 11.07% (Table 4). *Dear Primo* (Tonatiuh, 2010) had not only the lowest percentage, but also the least varied types of words used. The words that appeared were all nouns, excluding the appearance of one adjective.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Previous studies have focused on elements of Hispanic children's literature such as perception of language use (Chappell & Faltis, 2007), effectiveness of literature in promoting dialogue among families (Keis, 2006), and appropriateness of literature use in the classroom (Higgins, 2004). This study has contributed to current scholarship regarding Hispanic children's literature by examining the presentation of identity through the literary and linguistic elements of the text. The themes and presentation of characters were used to analyze what modern literature conveys as a multicultural identity.

The data obtained from the sample were analyzed in order to address the research question that guided this study, regarding how children's bilingual Spanish-English books present bicultural identity and lifestyle through the authors' use of literary devices and the Spanish language. Through in-depth analysis and categorization of text, this thesis has demonstrated how the works present what it means to be bicultural in the United States today for Hispanic-Americans. Major implications in the study were that overall, children have at least a mild level of awareness of their cultural heritage. They are aware of their multicultural background and are presented as eager to learn more about their heritage. The use of Spanish in the text was found to consist primarily of nouns. The Spanish in the text was also used by Spanish speakers, with dialogue in the text occurring exclusively among characters of a Hispanic background.

Overall, bicultural identity was presented positively. The child characters in the sample were presented as not only embracing their identity, but also being eager to learn more about their heritage while simultaneously adopting both American culture and the culture of the family's native country. With the exception of one *Dear Primo* (Tonatiuh,

2010), the children are presented as possessing previous knowledge about their cultural heritage and at least some knowledge of the Spanish language. In contrast to the study conducted by Barry (1998) in which he found there to be both a lack of representation of Hispanic characters in literature and inaccuracy in portrayal, this study found there to be no significant use of stereotypes or aspects of misrepresentation in the literature. This may be due to the authors in this sample being of Hispanic background, as they are more likely to portray the Hispanic experience authentically (Lopez-Flores, 2006).

The most important results of this thesis were the trends that were found in the literature. A major theme that was present across all five works was the importance of family. This characteristic is representative not only of the Hispanic experience, but also of the human experience. The presence of family and the interactions children have with their family are staples in children's literature (Saracho & Spodek, 2010). This study also found that not only was interaction with family presented as important, family was also used as a tool of perpetuating cultural history and information. Family was used as the vehicle for cultural knowledge to be shared and understood. However, with this particular occurrence, it was also noted that the most common depiction of family members existed in the form of grandparents. The exception to this rule appeared in *Dear Primo* (Tonatiuh, 2010), where the cultural information was provided by the main character's cousin, Carlitos. While this did not follow the trend of grandparent interaction, it was consistent with the use of a family member to provide cultural knowledge.

Another major pattern in the literature was the absence of the parents and of parental interaction. If parents were mentioned or did appear in a work, they had few to no speaking parts. They were often only seen as illustrations, and in all works were

considered to be minor characters. This pattern throughout the literature suggests that parents are unable to pass along their cultural heritage to their children. Parents were presented as having little to no involvement in the child's formation of bicultural identity or perception of self. It was through time spent with grandparents that the children in the stories were exposed to information about their heritage. This pattern is alarming as it may suggest that today's parents are uninformed or unconcerned with passing along and celebrating cultural history. However, this finding is not surprising given that previous work had identified a similar trend (Higgins, 2004). There were many similar findings to the work of Chappell and Faltis (2007), as both that study and this one found there to be a lack of parental involvement within the work. Instead, an elderly character serves as the cultural mentor to the child (Chappell & Faltis, 2007).

It is probable that the common appearance of the grandparents as the cultural curator occurs because it is more likely that the grandparents were immigrants to the United States. However, the absence of parents in the cultural education process is inconclusive with findings made by the Pew Research Center in 2009 during their study concerning how young Latinos come of age in the United States. They found that in regards to parental socialization, young Hispanics are being socialized in a family setting that strongly encourages the embracing of cultural roots (Pew Hispanic Center, 2013). More Hispanic people, 42%, report that their parents have discussed the importance of pride in their country of origin, as opposed to the 29% that reported that their parents encouraged their pride coming from being American (Pew Hispanic Center, 2015). This statistic indicates that parents are more knowledgeable and supportive of cultural heritage than they appear to be in the works sampled from Hispanic children's literature.

The children in the works were able to understand Spanish, with the exception of one child, in *Dear Primo* (Tonatiuh, 2010). As stated earlier, his depiction suggests that an important aspect of bicultural identity is a basic knowledge of the Spanish language, which serves as a reminder of the common acceptance of language as an important component of culture (Chappell & Faltis, 2007). In one work, *Abuelo* (Dorros, 2014), the use of the Spanish language was the only tie-in to Hispanic culture. Another interesting pattern in the sample was that in all five books Spanish was spoken only with characters of a Hispanic background. Chappell and Faltis (2007) found that in some cases bilingual language is viewed as diglossic; that is to say, Spanish is spoken in different social and geographical settings than English. This reinforces a notion of two compartmentalized identities, as opposed to one uniform identity. This was seen heavily in *I Love Saturdays y domingos* (Ada, 2004) as the female character speaks Spanish only when she is spending time with or referring to her Hispanic grandparents. Chappell and Faltis (2007) stated that the compartmentalization occurs because the mixing of languages can have a negative connotation and be seen by older generations as a behavior that is socially inferior to someone that speaks 'pure Spanish.' On the other hand, Chappell and Faltis (2007) discovered that in younger generations, bilingualism is perceived as a positive trait and a means to appear unique and demonstrate cultural pride. In three of the five books in the sample, the children spoke Spanish, and were able to understand the language when spoken to.

This sample included two books written by the same author, *Abuela* (Dorros, 1997), and *Abuela* (Dorros, 2014). The time span of publication between the two books is almost a period of 20 years, which allowed for a view of the changes over time in the

field of Hispanic children's literature. Dorros's (1997) first work, *Abuela*, was found to be more inclusive of cultural elements than the later work. For instance, there were several references to *Abuela's* immigration process to the United States. There are also references to *Abuela's* home country and certain foods and words that originated there. The later work, *Abuelo*, actually made no reference to any cultural elements, instead focusing solely on the relationship between the boy and his grandfather (Dorros, 2014). The two are seen exploring the country side on horseback, with *Abuelo* teaching his grandson about topics ranging from the stars, to strength, to appreciating nature's beauty. The times they spend together is centered more around life lessons than passing along cultural information. There is an interesting dynamic in *Abuelo* as he and the little boy are separated when the little boy moves away to a new city. This forces the little boy to apply what he has learned from his grandfather and to discover his inner strength. Another major difference was *Abuela* being based more on imagination, because a girl and her grandmother could not actually fly around a city. In this sense, *Abuelo* is more realistic than *Abuela* in its depiction of time characters spend together. The incorporation of Spanish is more natural in *Abuela* than in *Abuelo*, because the latter utilized a method of translation that juxtaposed the words creating a repetitiveness in the sentences.

Linguistic trends noted in the sample include nouns appearing as the most frequently translated words. This suggests that the Spanish in the books may be used as more of a learning tool for the non-Hispanic reader as opposed to an accurate representation of Spanish that would be used in conversation. The most authentic usage of Spanish occurred in the dialogue in the four books in which dialogue was used. The dialogue allowed for a flow of conversation, as opposed to the interwoven Spanish-

English sentences that became choppy with the side-by-side translation. The dialogue represented a more genuine interaction, as opposed to the stand-alone words which were reminiscent of a classroom lesson. The percentages of Spanish words in the text were much lower than the percentage of English words, proving that bilingual texts continue to be English-dominant. The greatest percentage was 16.22%, which is not even a quarter of the words present in the text. The low percentages in the texts demonstrate that the Spanish in the texts is minimal and often limited to a few words on each page. The usage of Spanish was most unrealistic in *Abuelo* (Dorros, 2014) as the Spanish words were translated immediately following the word, creating a sentence structure that would be unrealistic in daily conversation. This would be problematic in the context of the bicultural identity because it would be a scenario that is unlikely to happen in everyday life. In a conversation that involves code-switching or bilingual elements, the speaker would not repeat each word they said in the other language. The inclusion of Spanish language that appears in *Abuelo* (Dorros, 2014) seems to be more for the benefit of a non-Spanish speaking reader.

This study has determined that multicultural identity in Hispanic children's literature is presented in a positive manner, though it could be done more thoroughly. Current literature provides an introductory experience, as opposed to one that is more dimensional. Only one work in the sample, *Grandma's Gift* (Velasquez, 2013), provided both positive and challenging aspects of balancing a multicultural identity. The sample of books present the identity positively, but stop short of an in-depth presentation. It appears popular to include the child's journey of self-discovery as a way to have readers learn simultaneously with the child character. However, for the sake of the multicultural

character, it may be beneficial for readers to see a portrayal in which the child is knowledgeable throughout the entirety of the work. It may also be beneficial to showcase meaningful interactions among the parents and children. This would show that parents can also play a role in the transmission of cultural heritage. As it stands, it appears that grandparents are the only family members capable of passing along information. If parents played a more active role, then it would demonstrate that the knowledge of cultural heritage is important for all generations. It would also indicate that parents were able to successfully combine both American and Hispanic cultural traditions, as opposed to having to choose one or the other.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

There are many ways in which this study could be extended. One of the main limitations of this study is in the sample size of the texts selected. The texts were selected based upon their use of interwoven Spanish and English text and their inclusion of a bicultural main character. There was not a wealth of texts that utilized interwoven text written for the target age group of this study; many bilingual books are written using side-by-side translations as opposed to interwoven text. Identity portrayal could be analyzed in those texts as well. Future studies could use a more extensive sample in order to increase accuracy and identify more commonalities that occur across the literature. This study included books that featured some characters of Mexican-American and Puerto Rican-American background. It could be improved by analyzing or comparing different cultural groups. Future studies could also seek to discover the differences in the representation of people of differing Hispanic heritages. An expanded study could also

analyze changes that have occurred in Hispanic children's literature over the past few decades.

Another expansion of the study could be to interview multicultural children to discover their perception of what bilingual texts present as a bicultural identity. This would allow researchers to truly discover the impact portrayal of ethnic identity in bilingual texts can have on children of all backgrounds.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Literature can be used to explore new worlds, encourage the imagination, and expand on existing knowledge. Reading allows people to discover more about themselves and the world around them. For young readers, the books they are exposed to can shape how they perceive themselves and people of all backgrounds. While literature can often bring pleasure, it can also serve as an educational tool or a subconscious means of shaping identity. Therefore, children's literature can be one of the greatest resources when helping a child understand his or her life and the lives of others. It is for this reason that the accuracy with which children's literature presents subject matter is of the utmost importance.

What this thesis accomplished was gaining a better understanding of how Hispanic children's literature portrays bicultural identity through the inclusion of literary devices and the incorporation of the Spanish language. This thesis aimed to determine how these elements communicated what it means to have a bicultural identity. Five Spanish-English bilingual children's books were analyzed and were found to ultimately convey a positive image associated with having a bicultural identity, though there were still areas in which the portrayal could be improved. Although the books presented the children as somewhat knowledgeable of their cultural background, the characters were still in the process of gaining a full understanding of their heritage. However, this could be due to the age of the target audience—a child at the early phase of their education would not be expected to have an all encompassing knowledge of his or her heritage. The emphasis on the importance of family was found to be a positive element; however, the lack of parental involvement in all five texts was concerning. Some stereotypes were still

found in the works, such as Hispanic people working in rural settings, as seen in *I Love Saturdays y domingos* (Ada, 2004). It was determined in this study that stereotypes are less likely to be present in the work when it is written by someone of a Hispanic background. For example, the unnatural feel of the Spanish text in *Abuelo* (Dorros, 2014) could be due to the fact that the author is not a native speaker. He was born in the United States and actually learned Spanish as an adult through his travels in Latin American countries (Dorros, 2014). In works in which the texts are written by authors of a Hispanic background or authors that grew up in situation similar to that of the character depicted, the works tend to be more similar to a memoir, which may add to the accuracy of the portrayal. Linguistically speaking, in all the works, the Spanish language incorporated in the text constituted less than 17% of the total words used. It was also found that dialogue was the most realistic use of the Spanish language, as the interwoven Spanish-English text sometimes created a pattern of speech that would be unnatural in everyday conversation, because a speaker would not translate each word while speaking. Regarding the types of words, nouns were used most frequently, which suggests that the Spanish in the books may serve more as a learning tool than an authentic representation of the language.

This thesis has also shown the need for accuracy when depicting the bicultural experience. It is not only important that multicultural children see themselves portrayed authentically in literature, but also that people of a non-Hispanic background can view a representation that is truly indicative of the Hispanic bicultural experience. While the books can be perceived as positive representations, this study stresses the importance of authenticity not only in the cultural aspect, but also through linguistic elements.

Authenticity should not be sacrificed for a translation that is more convenient for the reader. Seeing an accurate depiction of Spanish language usage exposes the young reader, Hispanic or otherwise, to a true cultural experience. When authors sacrifice accuracy for ease of reading, they forego the opportunity to enlighten young readers of a true Hispanic experience. Inaccuracy in portrayal could possibly cause confusion among young readers or insecurity if their experiences do not mirror what they read in books. This work also notes the impact of realistic portrayals that highlight both positive and challenging aspects of the bicultural experience, as opposed to solely positive experiences. However, it is noted that this study included a sample that was targeted for young readers. It is possible that the emphasis on a positive experience was intended for the younger audience.

This thesis contributes to current scholarship by adding the element of identity when assessing Hispanic children's literature for quality and authenticity. Parents and educators can use these findings to make intentional decisions regarding books that will be beneficial for their children or students to read. This research is important because it calls for accurate and realistic portrayals in literature that can benefit people from all walks of life by providing insight into the Hispanic experience.

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Appendix A: Evaluation Form

Adapted for this study from Higgins (2004)

Title:

Author:

Publication Date:

Reasons for Inclusion:

1. Is the Spanish spoken in the book included in dialogue? Does the dialogue occur among Spanish and non-Spanish speakers?
2. What overall themes are present in the work? Are the themes representative of the Hispanic cultural experience and/or human experience?
3. What is the presentation of the child in the work? Is the child knowledgeable of his or her cultural heritage?
4. What role does family play in the story?
5. What roles do the elderly play in the story?
6. What interactions occur among people from different ethnic backgrounds?
7. Are stereotypes of the Hispanic community present in the text, such as the Spanish speakers being portrayed as naive to aspects of American culture?