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Exploring the Educational Experiences of Students of Mexican Descent with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Status

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EXPLORING THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS OF MEXICAN
DESCENT WITH DEFERRED ACTION FOR CHILDHOOD
ARRIVALS STATUS

by

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A DISSERTATION

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In the movie *The Wizard of Oz*, the power to transform her life was with Dorothy all along: in the magic from the ruby, red slippers she wore throughout her journey along the yellow brick road. Yet, she needed to go on her journey and encounter the Scarecrow, Cowardly Lion, Tin Man and all of the other characters in order to understand her power. The journey and these characters helped her learn about herself, what she valued in her life, and who she could rely upon when faced with great obstacles.

My son's bookshelf held my ruby, red slippers; yet, I did not recognize this the many times I walked into his room in the past year. The tales of metaphorical quests filled with heroes, shapeshifters, allies and mentors eventually showed me how to tell the shared story of the heroic participants from this study. How to tell this story was right in front of me when I walked into my son's room; yet, I needed to go on this dissertation journey to recognize this and to discover the people I could rely upon, and to find a mentor who would point me toward that bookshelf.

I offer my great appreciation and acknowledgment to the heroes, heralds, allies, and mentors who were part of the yellow brick road of this dissertation journey. First, I want to thank my family and friends; in particular my son, Kevin, and my sister, Ginny, both of whom are my heroes. My son continues to show me a universally accepting worldview, and my sister is an example of true faith. Next, I want to thank my dissertation chair, Dr. Arthur Hernandez, and members of my dissertation committee, Dr. David Campos, and Dr. Sharon Herbers.

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Elizabeth A. Holbrook

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Elizabeth A. Holbrook, PhD

University of the Incarnate Word, 2017

In 2012, an Executive Order created DACA, providing some youth with undocumented

citizenship status access to post-secondary options and a way to avoid deportation. With DACA,

a student population previously hidden and lacking entrée became more visible and gained ways

to seek post-secondary options. The newness of this population created a lack of research about

students who have experienced the transition from having undocumented to DACA immigration

status. Researchers, educational practitioners, and non-profit organizations needed knowledge of

how this impacted their student identity development and how they navigated education

processes. This study examined the unique strategies these students used to negotiate their

student experiences and how this influenced their student identity development. This study can

be important for 2 reasons: (a) these students with DACA status voiced their experiences; and,

(b) education practitioners, non-profit organizations, and legislators can increase knowledge of

the concerns and impact DACA played on their identity formation.

       The purpose of this study was to describe the educational experiences of students of

Mexican descent with DACA status and the impact of those experiences on the student identity

development of these college students. The theoretical framework for this study was

bioecological systems theory. Qualitative research methods were used with a narrative inquiry

design. Data were gathered through interviews and arts-based research activities with 4 purposefully selected participants. Three layers of data analysis were used including 5 phases of data analysis, analyzing while transcribing, and the Developmental Research (DRS) sequence. This produced six domains: (1) Mexico schooling versus U.S. schooling; (2) openings versus barriers; (3) law breakers versus law followers; (4) obscured versus visible; (5) detours versus gateways; (6) dreams versus realities. Findings showed 6 strategies participants' used to negotiate their educational experiences and form their student identity development: (1) Maintain memories of Mexico in native language and with knowledge there is no return; (2) Accept unique immigration circumstances fully and with clear cognizance; (3) Find creative ways to avoid detection; (4) Blend in until it is safe to expose undocumented status; (5) Cast aside confinements of undocumented status and enjoy new freedoms of having DACA while accepting remaining struggles; (6) Limit the scope of future planning while staying aware of precarious situation. Recommendations included 3 ways to better assist these students. Conclusions were: (1) Their educational experiences were unique due to their immigration status and the time and context; (2) Their student identity was impacted, not formed; (3) The strategies were general, yet some tactics were unique; (4) The impact on student identity was demonstrated in the strategies, an interactive process of acting upon the environment with agency; an iterative process which influenced their development.

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Chapter One: Undocumented Immigration Status

In 2012, over 11 million undocumented immigrants resided in the United States (Passel, Cohn, Krogstad, & Gonzalez-Barrera, 2014; Pew Hispanic Research Center, 2014). The term undocumented refers to those who enter the United States without inspection or with fraudulent paperwork; or enter with a visa and then do not return to their country of origin within the time frame allotted by the U.S government. While the term illegal immigrant is often applied to this population, members prefer the term undocumented immigrants (Suárez-Orozco & Yoshikawa, 2013; Gonzalez, 2011; Perez, 2012); or unauthorized immigrants (Pew Hispanic Research Center, 2014). People from countries throughout the world comprise the undocumented population in the United States; the greatest number comes from Mexico, with Texas and California having the largest population of people with undocumented immigration status (Pew Hispanic Research Center, 2014).

Within the population of those with undocumented immigration status, about 1 million were 18 years of age or younger, and about 75% came/were from Mexico (Passel & Lopez, 2012; Pew Hispanic Research Center, 2014). Often these minors were brought to this country by their parents, and were not aware their entry into the United States was unlawful. Between 65,000 and 80,000 undocumented youth, who have been in the United States five years or more, graduated from high schools in the United States annually. In areas close to the Mexico border, students with undocumented status can comprise almost half of a graduating senior class (Perez, 2012).

History of Latin American Immigration

The history of immigration for Latinos from Mexico into the United States often reflects a porous border when this best suits U.S. economic needs, yet an impermeable border when

those economic needs subside. Strong economic and family ties influence and shape the entire border region on both sides of the border (Orrenius, Saving, & Zavodny, 2016).

The modern day border between the United States and Mexico can be traced back to the creation of a border after the U.S. Mexican War (1846 – 1848) under the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Current border states, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California, were originally part of Mexico. This treaty also naturalized 75,000 to 100,000 Mexican citizens who chose to stay north of the new border to have citizenship from the United States (Chomski, 2014; Durand, 2016).

After the war, Mexican immigration flow was small with a few thousand persons per year entering the United States. Mexican citizens who entered the United States often returned to Mexico, but this changed toward the end of the century. By 1882, increasingly restrictive immigration laws regarding European and Chinese immigrants, such as the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, created an increase in Mexican immigration, as a need for workers in transportation, mining and agriculture continued to rise. Mexico was a legal labor source and the creation of a railroad system in Mexico facilitated transportation to border cities, where immigrant workers could then cross into the United States and fill labor shortages. The outbreak of the Mexican Revolution in 1910 brought a new surge of immigrants across the border, and the trend of a rising Mexican population in the United States continued throughout the early 20th century. While the U.S. Congress passed the Emergency Immigration Act of 1921, which set quotas for those immigrants entering the United States, those from Latin American countries were not subject to this quota system. By 1930, it is likely that about 1.5 million U.S. residents were of Mexican-American descent or Mexican Nationals. The lack of work opportunities created by the Great Depression led to a response by the United States of legally forcing Mexican immigrants,

including those with U.S. citizenship, back to Mexico through forced repatriation (Chomski, 2014; Massey, Durand, & Malone, 2002).

When the United States entered World War II in 1941, the need for agricultural labor forced the U.S. government to ask the Mexican government to enter the Emergency Farm Labor Agreement of 1942. The agreement allowed Mexican farm laborers to legally work in the United States on a short term basis in agricultural jobs. The Mexican government entered this agreement cautiously, after the deportation experiences during the 1930s. This agreement is often referred to as the beginning of the Bracero (Spanish for "manual laborer") program. While intended to be a short term solution to address a need for agricultural workers, various forms of Bracero legislation in the United States continued until 1964 that created an open economic border for those workers and their families who fit the needs of the U.S. economy (Chomski, 2014; Durand, 2016: Massey et al., 2002; Orenius et al., 2016).

The passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 marked the first time that Mexican immigration became restricted under federal law in the United States. While this Act was seen as pro-active civil rights legislation at the time, for it abolished former quota systems for immigration from Europe, Asia, and Africa, this was the first time Latin American immigration was addressed and restrictions placed on Western Hemisphere immigrant populations into the United States. Family reunification, job skill status, and refugee status became the primary means of determining immigration possibilities. Mexico still provided the greatest number of immigrants into the United States between 1965 and 2000; yet, the passage of this law changed the more open economic border between the neighboring countries to one of defined boundaries with more rules for work exchange. The family and economic ties remained and Mexican immigrants continued to enter the United States; however, now Mexican

immigration was in spite of the newly created legislation, thus creating a rising population of Latinos unlawfully present in the United States (Chomski, 2014; Massey et al., 2002; Olivas, 2012).

The Immigration and Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 was a reaction to the 1970s U.S. economic problems, and was seen as a means to further regulate immigration. While this law allowed for millions of unauthorized/undocumented immigrants to seek a path to citizenship, it also severely restricted employers from hiring those without citizenship by criminalizing such types of employment. Employers found ways to circumvent IRCA. For example, subcontracting manual labor work prevented the possibility of criminal indictment. The intent of IRCA of 1986 was to curb unlawful entry and residence in the United States, however, the opposite occurred since its passage. Immigrants from Mexico continued to enter the United States, and were able to find work with wages higher than available in Mexico and from employers willing to bypass the law (Chomski, 2014; Olivas, 2012). The former circular pattern of migration by Mexican citizens into the United States was interrupted, with more Mexican immigrants settling permanently in the United States without authorization (Durand, 2016).

In 1996, the United States Congress passed the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) and the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA). IIRIRA created tougher penalties for unlawfully present immigrants and greatly increased the number of Border Patrol agents. PRWORA forced tougher restrictions on access to public services for both undocumented and recent legal immigrants. Detection of undocumented immigrants and the creation of an impermeable border continued to advance as priorities (Massey et al., 2002).

The terrorist attacks of 9/11 added a new layer of restrictions for undocumented immigrants. As border security tightened, the ability to migrate back and forth between Mexico and the United States became riskier. Increasingly, once an immigrant made it into the United States, one could avoid arrest and deportation more easily by staying permanently in the United States, as opposed to crossing back and forth across the border (Alba, 2016; Chomski, 2014; Orrenius et al., 2016). Orrenius et al. (2016) argue economic forces are currently still the primary driver for Mexican immigration into the United States, with families being swept into the United States when accompanying family members who seek economic gain. One obstacle to seeking this economic gain legally is due to current immigration policies. Legalizing one's status for those with unauthorized presence in the United States requires returning to Mexico to apply for legal status and then wait for approval. This approval can take three to ten years to process, an unreasonable time frame for those needing an immediate income (Orrenius et al., 2016). By 2012, 11 million undocumented persons resided in the United States, and, of these persons, 5.9 million were of Mexican descent (Pew Hispanic Research Center, 2012).

Legal Decisions

After a 1975 Texas law withheld funds to school districts which educated students without citizenship, one school district in Texas tried to deny K-12 education to undocumented students. The subsequent legal encounters resulting from this culminated in the United States Supreme Court decision *Plyer v. Doe* (1982), which grants access to education for K-12 education regardless of the student's immigration status. The decision was based in part on the position that undocumented children were not brought to this country of their own free will and therefore could not be discriminated against based on their parents' decisions. It was also seen as detrimental to society to deny educational access to anyone of the appropriate age to attend a

K-12 school (Olivas, 2012; Perez, 2012). *Plyler v Doe* is seen by some as the equivalent of *Brown v. Board of Education* regarding school access and civil rights protection for undocumented students. (Olivas, 2012).

A challenge to *Plyler v. Doe* came in 1994 with the passage of Proposition 187 in California. While primarily aimed at eliminating health and other state benefits for undocumented residents, Proposition 187 denied educational opportunities for undocumented children and required school officials to report undocumented students to authorities. After a series of court challenges, these dictates of Proposition 187 were struck down (Olivas, 2012; Sutton & Stewart, 2013).

Post-Secondary Education

While *Plyler v. Doe* provides the right for students with undocumented citizenship status to attend K-12 schools, this provision ends when these students graduate from high school and try to attend post-secondary schooling; junior college, college, university, trade/technical school. Historic barriers to transitioning from K-12 education to post-secondary education for undocumented students included bans to admission in some states, and the large financial costs of post-secondary education. Until recently, South Carolina did not allow undocumented students to enroll in state colleges and universities at all. Private colleges and universities can accept or reject students with undocumented status at their own discretion nationwide (Perez, 2012).

The 1996 PRWORA and the 1996 IIRIRA banned undocumented students from applying for federal financial aid for college through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), creating financial barriers to higher education for these students (Chomsky, 2014; Gildersleeve, Rumann, & Mondragon, 2010; Nunez, 2014). Some states responded to IIRIRA by

providing In-State Residential Tuition (ISRT) to undocumented students and creating state-funded financial assistance opportunities. By 2013, 18 states allowed undocumented youth the opportunity to seek state financial assistance for college. Among these are the border states California, Texas, and New Mexico (Nienhusser, 2014; Nunez, 2014; Perez, 2012).

Legislation and Executive Orders

The possibility for legal presence in the United States and a path to citizenship for students with undocumented citizenship status came in 2010 when the Development Relief and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act went before the United States Congress. The 2010 DREAM Act Bill did not get enacted (Perez, 2012). In 2012, President Barack Obama issued an Executive Order creating a way for undocumented youth to prevent deportation from the United States via Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) (Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2014). After the large response to DACA in 2012, President Obama issued an Executive Order providing an expanded version of DACA in 2014 (see Appendix A) (http://www.uscis.gov/immigrationaction; 2015).

Legislation. Various versions of what was proposed in the DREAM Act Bill had been introduced in Congress from 2001, but none were enacted into law. The 2010 version of the DREAM Act Bill provided much hope for the undocumented student population because it addressed a large number of concerns previous versions did not.   After narrowly passing in the House of Representatives, the 2010 DREAM Act Bill fell five votes short of passing in the Senate (Perez, 2012).

The 2010 DREAM Act Bill would have provided the opportunity to apply for conditional legal residence in the United States for those who arrived in the United States prior to their 15th birthday, had permanent residence in this country for at least five years, and had maintained

good moral character. Those who qualified could eventually seek citizenship. The definition of good moral character, however, was one area of debate, as specifics regarding this definition were not listed. Some researchers view this as a possible reason the 2010 DREAM Act Bill did not pass (Perez, 2012). The 2010 DREAM Act Bill also had provisions to repeal legislation which opposed instate tuition rates for undocumented students (Fissha, 2011; Perez, 2012).

Executive orders. The 2012 Executive Order by President Barak Obama created DACA to provide immigrant youth who qualify a means to stay present in the United States. To receive DACA status, one must have arrived in the United States prior to the age of 16; have been a continual resident since June 15th, 2007; have been present in the United States on June 15, 2012 and on the day of application; be at least 15 years old when applying for DACA; have graduated high school, have a GED, an honorable military discharge, or be in school; have no criminal record, and not be a threat to national security. While not a path to citizenship, DACA status allows those who qualify to avoid deportation from the United States and obtain 2-year work permits (Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2014).

DACA has been sought by a large number of immigrants from countries throughout the world. By September 2014, 702,485 DACA applications had been taken by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 610,375 had been accepted, 32,395 denied, and 59,715 were still pending (Kosnac, Cornelius, Wong, Gell-Redman, & Hughes, 2015). The greatest number of applicants and recipients of DACA are of Mexican origin; and the states with the largest number of applicants are California, Texas, Illinois, New York, Florida and Arizona (Salas, Preciado & Torres, 2016). While there have been 702, 485 DACA applications submitted, the number may not reflect the number of those with undocumented status who qualified for DACA. Fear and lack of information possibly deterred potential DACA applicants. Within the immigrant

community, concerns exist about revealing one's identity to the federal government, especially if an application is denied, or if a future President or Congress will use this information to deport those who applied for DACA status (Kosnac et al., 2015; Salas et al., 2016).

With DACA, immigrants with undocumented citizenship status who qualify can legally seek employment, get a driver's license, and travel legally within the United States. For many, this is the first opportunity to travel by air and to move about freely (Gonzales & Terriquez, 2013; Nunez, 2014). Those with DACA cannot travel back and forth between their country of birth, except for extreme circumstances and with government approval (Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2014), cannot enlist in the United States Armed Forces, and cannot receive federal student financial aid for post-secondary education (Perez, 2012).

In November, 2014 President Obama issued an Executive Order to expand DACA. The new Executive Order included those born before June 16th, 1981 with continual presence in the United States since January 1st, 2010. It also provided 3-year work permits as opposed to 2-year permits (see Appendix B for a comparison of the benefits/provisions of the DREAM Act, 2012 DACA, and 2014 DACA).

On February 15th, 2015 the 2014 expansion of DACA was placed on hold pending resolution of Texas' legal action in federal court. This case, *United States v. Texas*, was heard before the U.S. Supreme Court, and on June 23, 2016 a 4-4 split vote from the Court blocked the 2014 Executive Order expansion of DACA (Liptak & Shear, 2016; Park & Parlapiano, 2016).

Overview of Literature

Literature regarding students with undocumented/unauthorized immigration status in the United States continues to expand, with literature related to students with DACA status also expanding or in current development. It is important to note that literature regarding students

with DACA status is currently limited due to the short time since its inception (Gonzales, Perez, & Ruiz, 2016; Salas et al., 2016), so it was deemed necessary to review relevant literature discussing both student populations. Some studies focus on internal processes for students who are undocumented or have DACA status and suggest citizenship status plays a key role in identity development (Ellis & Chen, 2013; Gonzales et al., 2016; Hernandez, Hernandez, Jr., Gadson, Huftalin, Ortiz, White, & Yocum-Gaffney, 2010; Nunez, 2014; Perez, Cortes, Ramos, & Coronado, 2010). Aspects of identity development for those who have undocumented or DACA status explored in the literature include individuals addressing challenges (Ellis & Chen, 2013; Morales, Herrera, & Murray, (2011); sense of shame (Ellis & Chen, 2013; Perez et al, 2010); bi-cultural identity (Ellis & Chen, 2013; Hernandez et al., 2010; Nunez, 2014); liminality (Gonzales et al., 2016; Suarez-Orozco, Yoshikawa, Teranishi, & Suarez-Orozco, 2011) and silence (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2011). Some studies focus on external factors and/or systems affecting students who are undocumented or have DACA status related to parental interactions (Lad & Braganza, 2013; Nienhusser, 2013; Perez, Espinosa, Ramos, Coronado, & Cortes, 2009; Perez et al., 2010; Jauregui & Slate, 2009), K-12 school interactions (Lad & Braganza, 2013; Nienhusser, 2013) and larger university and governmental system interactions (Acosta, 2013; Diaz-Strong, Gomez, Luna–Duarte, & Meiners, 2011; Rincon, 2010).

Ellis and Chen (2013) use grounded theory to create a stage model of identity development for students with undocumented status. This model focuses on overcoming obstacles while discussing shame and bi-cultural identity. Both Gonzales et al. (2016) and Suarez-Orozco et al. (2011) discuss the concept of liminality as part of the personal identity of students who are undocumented or have DACA. Liminality is described by these researchers as a feeling of being in the middle; not having a place of belonging due the lack of certainty of a

future, and not having citizenship in the place where their lives take place. Suarez-Orozco et al.

(2011) created a developmental identity model for undocumented students based on

Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) bioecological systems theory. In this model, the student's

documentation status plays a role as they enter the dynamic bioecological system, which, over

time, creates developmental outcomes influenced by citizenship status.

Research indicates a range of concerns felt by the parents of these students. At one end

of the spectrum, parents fear and have a lack knowledge regarding how to navigate school

systems or act as advocates (Lad & Braganza, 2013; Nienhusser, 2013), while hope for and

support of their child's success are at the other end (Perez et al., 2009; Perez et al., 2010;

Jauregui & Slate, 2009). For K–12 school personnel, educator lack of knowledge of the

experiences and concerns about how to help undocumented students (Nienhusser, 2013) are

countered by great desire to provide assistance (Contreras, 2007; Lad & Braganza, 2013; Perez et

al., 2010).

Diaz-Strong et al., (2011) find undocumented students face difficulties in the college

matriculation process due to admissions and financial aid barriers particular to their immigration

status. Further research indicates undocumented students utilize community colleges as a

gateway to university studies in order to cut costs (Diaz-Strong et al., 2011), and often lack

knowledge of tuition rates and state financial aid (Nienhusser, 2013).

According to Rincon (2010), families continue to fear discovery by Immigration and

Customs Enforcement (ICE) despite President Obama's assertion that finding or deporting law

abiding families without legal presence in the United States are not a priority for ICE. Recent

expansion of authority whereby ICE authorizes immigration enforcement to city and county law

enforcement officials, however, creates a belief there is racial profiling and feelings of

criminalization of Latinos (Acosta, 2013). This generates a reluctance to seek assistance, including legal and educational assistance protected by federal court rulings (Rincon, 2010). Parental work conditions affect educational opportunities and decisions of undocumented students (Flores & Horn, 2010; Lad & Braganza, 2013). For those with DACA, their status does not ensure financial and personal stability, as many find themselves in "holding patterns" regarding future opportunities for education and work due to the 2-year renewal process needed to keep DACA (Martinez, 2014, p. 1873).

The literature includes articles with members of the academic educational community advocating for greater educational access for students with undocumented and DACA immigration status. Some researchers endeavor to garner support for their position by personalizing the matter through individual stories from these students and their teachers. (Hernandez, Mendoza, Lio, Latthi, & Eusibio, 2011). Appeals have been made to President Obama which include to "reject the 'sink or swim' approach to immigration…refocus and revitalize teacher preparation…revamp and prioritize second language education" (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2009, pp. 332-334), along with arguments calling for granting ISRT rates for undocumented students (Teranishi, Suarez-Orozco, & Suarez-Orozco, 2011).

Statement of Problem

Within the larger context, the socio-economic and legal history along the Texas/Mexico border created migration patterns which places families with undocumented status on the Texas side of the international border. This immigration status impacts family members' living conditions and choices, particularly choices related to employment, housing, healthcare, and education (Alba, 2016; Chomski, 2014; Orrenius et al., 2016; Romo, 2016). Within a smaller context, the arrival of DACA has changed the personal lives of the students who now have this

immigration designation. This change reverberates to the exterior layers circling their lives; from the educators with whom they interact daily, to the schools they attend, the larger non-profit and governmental organizations which serve them.

Students with DACA, no longer with undocumented but rather "DACAmented" (Gonzales & Terriquez, 2013) status, feel freer to openly voice their life concerns as part of making their immigration status public knowledge (Salas et al, 2016). The students have begun more openly seeking post-secondary options, and they have more actively shared their voice through student and public policy organizations (Gonzales & Terriquez, 2013; Salas et al., 2016). Yet, the newness of DACA leaves gaps in the depth of these voices and a lack of research driven by the life stories of students who have experienced the transition from having undocumented to DACA immigration status.

Historically, many of the children with undocumented status in these families feared negative judgment, discriminatory practices, and even deportation for themselves and their families, and therefore kept their immigration status hidden from educators working in the school system. These educators often did not know who was undocumented and therefore could not assist students with creating post-secondary opportunities. (Kosnac et al., 2015; Nienhusser, 2013). This formerly hidden student population has been revealing itself as part of applying for DACA status (Gonzales & Terriquez, 2013; Kosnac et al., 2015) and subsequently more openly applying for college admissions and financial aid (Salas et. al, 2016). Research indicates educators who work with these students most intimately do not fully understand their perspectives and experiences. Educators in the school system-teachers, counselors and administrators-are ethically bound to serve all students, but these educators often do not fully

understand how to serve students who were formerly undocumented and now have DACA classification (Gonzales et al., 2016; Nienhusser, 2013; Salas et al., 2016).

Learning theorists, such as Bandura (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015) and Bronfenbrenner (1979), view identity development within social learning and developmental perspectives. Both of these theorists see those within proximity of children during their formative years greatly influencing identity development ((Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007). Through daily and ongoing contact, teachers play a large role in identity development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), particularly in influencing the student aspect of identity development (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015). For those who view education as a holistic developmental process, missing the citizenship status piece of exploring a student's identity development and how it impacts a student's worldview and educational experiences is problematic and in need of address (Ellis & Chen, 2013; Hernandez et al., 2010; Perez, 2010).

Non-profit organizations serving this student population need to hear these voices in order to better serve them. Additionally, non-profit organizations which serve the educators of these students and the students themselves lack information. The College Board, a non-profit organization which provides and conducts the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and provides information regarding college admissions and financing for all students, disseminates college matriculation information targeting students with undocumented status (Rincon, 2012). Part of the College Board's mission is to increase college access for underrepresented populations by "rethinking" (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2010) the financial aid process with a more inclusive mindset (Rincon, 2012).

The College Board's annual Prepárate conference is dedicated to the needs of Latino students, and the needs of students who have undocumented citizenship status or have DACA

status are topics this conference has highlighted (Rincon, 2012). With the inception of DACA, the literature and webinars disseminated by this organization have expanded to include information for this student population. The number of changes regarding the needs and possibilities for these students means the College Board's resources need continual revision and additional sources (Vazquez & Barragan, 2016). Additional non-profit organizations needing more information regarding students with DACA include the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, United We Dream, Dream Activist and other non-profit organizations concerned with the educational rights and opportunities of immigrant youth (Salas, et. al, 2016).

From the time of the completion of this study to the present, changes in the political climate in the United States further increased a need for this research. This research was conducted immediately prior to the United States Supreme Court ruling in June, 2016 which halted the 2014 expansion of DACA. These students made their presence known to the United States government four years or less prior to this ruling, only to feel threatened by the possibility of a legal reversion to their former status (Lyptak & Shear, 2016). The 2016 United States presidential election further increased concerns for students with DACA immigration classification (Garcia, 2016; National Immigrant Law Center, 2016). Statements made by the President-elect during the 2016 election campaign, which were interpreted as anti-immigrant, along with the President-elect's promises to end DACA altogether, led to petitioning to postsecondary institutions and elected officials for protection of students with DACA status (D. Doyle, personal communication, December 6, 2016; UTSA faculty, staff & alumni, personal communication, November 18, 2016). At one public forum dedicated to the post-election concerns of students with DACA, South Texas elected officials listened to personal stories of

students with DACA and asked these students to share the stories as a means to garner support for legislation (Salazar, 2016). These voices are present in this study.

Purpose statement

The purpose of this study was to describe the educational experiences of students of Mexican descent with DACA status and the impact of those experiences on the student identity development of these college students.

Research Questions

The foci of this inquiry were:

1. What strategies do students of Mexican descent with DACA status use to negotiate their student experiences?

2. How do these strategies influence the development of their student identity?

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was based on Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2006) bioecological theory of human development. This expansion of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) earlier ecological systems theory has both sociocultural and developmental aspects; sociocultural as it examines the dynamic interaction of an individual within multiple layers of environmental factors; developmental because the individual moves through time while adding psychological layers to the individual's sense of self. In this study, the individual was a student with DACA status.

Presented in the 1970s, Bronfenbrenner's (1979) original model is a psychological theory of human development which positions individuals acting within multi-layered contexts, which continually interact as a dynamic process. The individual is the central circle of the model, which is then surrounded by a microsystem (family, friends, and others part of daily interactions). This

is then surrounded by the mesosystem, (a series of interactions between members of the microsystem). The next layer is the exosystem (two or more external processes affecting the individual such as the parents' relationship to work), and the final layer is the macrosystem (broad cultural influences such as socioeconomic factors or ethnicity). In this early model, individuals were continually interacting with the environment, with an emphasis on social learning (see Appendix C for a representation of ecological systems theory).

While the original model was mainly context centered, Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2006) most recent discussion of the now bioecological systems theory emphasizes proximal processes as the means of describing the individual's interactions within the multilayered system. The authors also see the original model as too simplistic. The revised theory still includes the original layers, yet moves towards a more developmental theoretical framework of human development and posits four defining characteristics (1) Process, (2) Person, (3) Context, (4) Time (PPCT). Process refers to proximal processes, ongoing interactions over time between the individual and the multiple levels of the environment. In this newer theory, layers of the system are more interactive, not only between each other but also within themselves. Multiple interactions within and between layers can occur simultaneously rather than as a singular occurrence.

Regarding the person, or individual, Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) place more emphasis on human agency, with disposition, resources, and demand adding to the proximal processes. The individual has the ability to act on the environment, not just react to it. While context is an integral part of the original model, interactions with symbols and objects are an additional feature in the newer theory. Thus, the modern interaction of human and the technology present in social media is accounted for. Time is represented by the chronosystem,

and is placed under the layers of the model, moving from left to right. This reflects the individual's movement through time, and plays an important role in making this a developmental theory. There is movement in a direction and growth over time.

Definition of Terms

Erikson's (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015) eight stages of psychosocial development and Chickering and Reisser's (1993) theory of student identity development guide the definition of terms in this study. Erikson's (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015) eight stages of psychosocial development provide an approach to identity development which spans the human lifetime. These stages are viewed as a series of crisis or intersections where experiences propel individuals to move toward a direction which shapes identity. The third through sixth stages represent age ranges relevant to this study and include: initiative versus guilt (ages 4 to 5); industry versus inferiority (ages 5 to 12); identity versus role confusion (ages 13 to 19); intimacy versus isolation (ages 20 to 29). Chickering and Reisser's (1993) theory of student identity development lists a series of seven vectors college students move through as part of their development process. These stages or tasks include developing competence, managing emotions, moving through autonomy through managing independence, developing mature interpersonal relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, and developing integrity.

Both Erikson's (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015) and Chickering and Reisser's (1993) stage models influence the definition of student identity development for this study; the former for this study examines a series of crisis which shaped the participants' identity formation, and the latter for the tasks imply agency on the part of individual in their identity formation. However, the following definition is designed to align more fully with the Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) theory.

For the purposes of this study, the student identity is informed by encountering educational experiences, which is defined as the holistic process present when fully moving through all of the layers of the bioecological systems theory model. In order to define student identity development, this study aligns with Bronfenbrenner and Morris's (2006) PPCT feature of the theory. Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) do not use the specific term student identity development, but this study considers the proximal processes facilitating an individual's development within the multi-layered system as a means of forming the identity development piece of this term. The individual, or person, engages in proximal processes and therefore aligns with the process and person per PPCT.

Regarding context per PPCT, this study views this as the surrounding layers of the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem in relation to being a student, and thus influencing the student piece of student identity development. For the purpose of this study student identity includes academic, emotional, social, and moral formation of student identity within the context of the student's surroundings. Regarding time as per PPCT, this study follows the participants from their entry to K-12 school in Mexico and completes the chronosystem of the study when the students identify themselves as a college/university student in present circumstance at the time of the interview.

The term strategies refer to a set of proximal processes, or tactics, these students use because of their unique status as individuals of Mexican descent with DACA immigration classification. These strategies can be general and useful for navigating multiple types of systems. The unique factor is these students had the distinction of going from undocumented status to having DACA status. More specifically, because these students have DACA

classification and are of Mexican descent, how do these students employ strategies within their unique set of life experiences?

Design

Within a qualitative research paradigm, I used a narrative inquiry design through following life stories. I chose qualitative research for this study seeks to understand and explore a cultural group, rather than explain and predict future trends (Hamilton, 1994). Aspects of ethnographic and phenomenological designs informed the study design, however these were only influential in limited ways. Regarding ethnographic design, I spent time volunteering with an organization which assists students gain DACA immigration status. Regarding a phenomenological design, depth of personal experience on the part of the participants was explored (Creswell, 2008; Merriam, 2002). I chose narrative inquiry because it addressed the research questions and aligned best with the theoretical framework.

The research questions sought answers related to personal processes or *strategies* used to navigate systems over time, something found in the plot of narrative inquiry (Linde, 1993). Both narrative inquiry and the bioecological theoretical framework operate chronologically and are process-oriented. Bioecological systems theory was conceptualized as developmental (Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994) with processes changing an individual's identity development as one moves across time. Narrative inquiry design proceeds in the same way by following a life story over time, with a beginning, middle, and end following a chronological plot which has outcomes (Merriam, 2002). Narrative inquiry also captures experiences in a temporal manner, for the reflection of the shared life story is told within the context of the historical time the story is shared. It is also collectively temporal when a set of interviews are within a shared context for the participants (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

The research questions sought to understand the participants' role in their identity development in a dynamic, not stagnant, manner which is demonstrated through strategies employed by these students. Bioecological systems theory is process oriented and places individuals in dynamic interactions with multiple layers of influences; the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem. These systems connect to the individual and to each other, most particularly in the case of the mesosystem, which connects microsystem agents to each other (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). Correspondingly, narrative inquiry examines the story three dimensionally in terms of interaction, continuity, and situation (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000); narrative inquiry analysis includes ways to look for connections (Linde, 1993).

I chose narrative inquiry design as it was well suited for the intended audience, educators, non-profit organizations, and legislators who work with DACA students. Stories have the ability to emotionally move, motivate and provide a window to cultures and personal experiences of often hidden populations (Kristof & WuDunn, 2009; Merriam, 2002). For the participants, this provided voice (Patai, 1993); for educators this can provide better insight (Contreras, 2007; Lad & Braganza, 2013; Nienhusser, 2013; Perez et al., 2010); and, for non-profit organizations and legislators this can provide a means to generate public concern for a population they are championing. Sharing stories often garner more public support than providing statistics (Kristof & WuDunn, 2009). Narrative inquiry can be powerful in a study of students who have DACA status for it can make public, concerns usually kept private (Jauregui & Slate, 2009). Both educators and non-profit organizations can modify and create educational tools/maps/lessons to serve the student population based on previously unmet needs discovered with this information. Legislatures seeking personal stories (Salazar, 2016) can find these in this study.

Method

Because this study has a narrative design which focuses on life stories, interviews are the primary source of data (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, Merriam, 2002). I interviewed college students of Mexican descent with DACA classification who wanted to share their life story. While these stories were the primary source of data, additional data were gathered using an arts-based activity (Leavy, 2015).

Clandinin and Connelly (2000) find oral history interviews the most common method to gather data when using a narrative inquiry design. They ask researchers to use caution by not focusing completely on the information gathered, but also on the processes of the participant. While this study used "annals and chronicles as a way to create a framework" (p. 112) for the interview protocol, the interview method in narrative design requires probing to examine tension in the stories and to increase a phenomenological perspective on the part of the participant. So, I followed the interview protocol with the knowledge that probing questions not listed in the interview protocol would be used to gather more in-depth data. Participants' initial cognitive and emotional responses to the interview protocol questions guided whether or not more elaboration was needed and therefore more probing questions.

Arts-based activities are seen as ways to increase communication and facilitate deeper exploration of personal experiences (Leavy, 2015), and can be a means to enhance the data (O'Donoghue, 2009; Smithbell, 2010). Described by Leavy (2015) as "a set of methodological tools used by researchers across the disciplines during all phases of social research including data generation, analysis, interpretation, and representation" (p. 4), arts-based methods allow participants to identify, explore, and explain intuitively. While much of the data collected in the initial interviews recounts events, I sought to understand the impact of these events on the

psychological processes of each participant. Exploring intuitive processes through the arts-based activity provided the participants an opportunity to share emotional aspects of their identity formation. At the end of the first interview, participants learned they would have the opportunity to re-visit significant life events as part of the arts-based activity and have the opportunity to better clarify the importance of these events. During the follow-up interview, participants chose significant life events and re-examined these with a new lens of reflexivity. For participants, this revisiting of the initial collection of qualitative data with an arts-based method provided understanding of the participant's individual complex emotional and intellectual processes, enhancing meaning to situations. It also provided a creative means of member checking (Leavy, 2015).

The use of critical assessment on the part of the researcher while conducting arts-based research methods can provide more credibility regarding the relevance of the data gathered. During this study, I considered and utilized three questions to maintain critical assessment of the arts-based method (O'Donoghue, 2009). First, I thought about the conditions created for interpretation. Second, I asked who would have access to seeing this art and how is it being open to interpretation. Third, I thought in terms of ethics and ask what perspectives they bring and if they are transparent about this perspective.

Arts-based research methods allow for making connections between, within, and across multiple levels of human intrapersonal thoughts and feeling while also making these connections through human interpersonal interactions. Through arts-based research methods, smaller and larger human systems can connect in dynamic ways (Leavy, 2015). This aligns with the layered systems and proximal processes of the theoretical framework of this study.

Arts-based activities can also broaden the audience this study will inform by generating interest by those whose traditional primary focus is the artistic means of presenting information and then follow the cause as a result of the art (Smithbell, 2010). It can also create more interest within the intended audience for this research. Educators and non-profit organizations dedicated to the advancement of students with undocumented and DACA status were the primary audience for this study, and the appeal of data presented in an interesting and creative manner allows for unique intellectual and emotional connections.

I used multiple layers to analyze data including Yin's (2011) five phases of data analysis, analyzing while transcribing (Evers, 2011; Riessman, 1993) and Spradley's (1980) Developmental Research Sequence. Yin's (2011) five phases to analyze data include compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting and concluding. This is not a linear process; instead it is one where revisiting different levels in an iterative manner provides ongoing interaction between levels. These five phases were used as an overarching guide for analysis.

Analyzing while transcribing (Evers, 2011; Riessman, 1993) and Spradley's (1980) Developmental Research Sequence provided more specific means to analyze the data. During transcription, I listened for tension points and moments of emotional importance placed on events as per the participants' tones and inflections (Riessman, 1993). Then, I used transcripts from the data to create domains of connected concepts and built a sequential taxonomy using Spradley's (1980) Developmental Research Sequence (DRS). I used this analysis to share findings to re-tell a plotted, structured, coherent story combining the participants' stories into one story (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Linde, 1993; Reissman, 1993). Additionally, when I shared findings I employed elements of literature, including plot and character development devices (Foster, 2003; Vogler, 2007; Welcker, 2014)

Participants

I used purposive, or selective, sampling (Yin, 2011) because I learned certain personal characteristics of the participants were necessary to achieve critical factors for providing strong narratives. The critical factors deemed important were participant desire to share a story worthy of research, willingness to collaborate, and trust with the researcher. These participants sought to tell their stories and demonstrated this by asking to be interviewed and by making efforts to participate in a situation where there was very little compensation. The unique nature of their life experiences deemed their stories research worthy. The procedures called for the need for collaborative participants willing to return for a follow-up interview. Additionally, the sensitive nature of the study associated with the participants' revealing personal identity layered with the potential fears associated with discussing one's immigration status called for trust between the participant and me. This trust yielded thick, rich descriptions from the participants regarding their experiences (Creswell, 2008; Merriam, 2002; Yin, 2011).

It was important that all participants were of Mexican descent in order to fit the parameters of the study. The setting for gathering data varied slightly based on where each student attended college; however, all participants attended public high schools in Texas. This was important since state policies about financial aid and tuition can impact the transitioning process to post-secondary education (Nienhusser, 2014). Residency as part of determining admissions options was a consideration kept common with the participants, as well as K-12 school policies and procedures for working with students with DACA. Interviewing students from Texas and attending college in Texas also adhered to the historical and socio-economic context of this study (see Appendix D for a comparison of the participants).

After obtaining IRB review and approval (see Appendix E), I conducted individual interviews with four participants, twice per participant. These participants attended 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities. The initial interviews were lengthy, ranging from one hour to one and a half hours per interview. The follow up interview with each participant allowed for a time for personal introspection on the part of both me and the participant, which enriched the collected data.

Obtaining saturation, where substantive data with extensive points of connection existed, determined terminating data collection. To ensure these connections existed, I analyzed during the data collection process. I also knew substantial knowledge could be obtained from the data collected. Janesick (1994) advises qualitative researchers to avoid seeking a specific number when conducting qualitative research, for it is not a paradigm geared to numeric standards. Instead, he recommends researchers "focus on the substance of the findings" (p. 215) and sufficient data collection will be evident when "the relationships and patterns between and among categories leads to completeness in the narrative" (p.215). Completion of interviews was determined when the stories collected provided the potential for numerous connections for analysis via the DRS (Spradley, 1980) and when a substantive story, with knowledge to be gained from the telling of the story, became apparent to me.

Protection of participants included full disclosure of the purpose of the study, methods used, time commitments, benefits of the study and measures to safeguard confidentiality. I orally and visually reviewed and obtained signatures for voluntary consent forms, which explained the limits of confidentiality. Measures to protect participant confidentiality included conducting interviews in private settings, protection of raw data by limited access storage and use of pseudonyms for participants, schools, and any other identifiable data (Creswell, 2008; Merriam,

2002). Cross-cultural ethical concerns kept in mind included trust, reciprocity, power balance, and possible language differences (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Significance

This study can be significant for participants of this study, education practitioners, non-profit organizations, and legislators seeking to assist immigrant students with DACA status. For the participants, it can provide voice as part of forming their own student identity development. For high school teachers, counselors, and administrators, it can provide perspectives related to student identity of formerly undocumented students now with DACA status. Knowledge of the social and academic experiences and the impact of those experiences of these students' while navigating the high school system can help secondary practitioners serve them better (Chen, Budianto, & Wong, 2010; Nienhusser, 2013). For post-secondary educators- admissions counselors, financial aid officers, instructors, and higher education administrators- this study can provide insight into how transitioning from undocumented to DACA status has impacted the student identity of these students prior to and during their time in the college or university setting (Barnhardt, Ramos, & Reyes, 2013; Nienhusser, 2014, Perez, 2010). Research indicates post-secondary educators need to adjustment student services to meet the needs of this student population (Nienhusser, 2014). This study can provide perspectives of unmet needs which can be addressed.

For participants, this study provides an opportunity to share lived experiences and contributes to the voice of a community that often works together yet may not be heard by those outside the community (Gonzales et al., 2016). In the past, the community of undocumented immigrants has worked within its own networks to ensure employment and educational opportunities (Durand, 2016; Ornelas et al., 2016; Gonzales et al., 2016). Because these students

had DACA at the time the data were collected, their access to educational and employment opportunities had expanded. However, their lack of knowledge regarding navigating the system may have been limited due to a lack of role models (Gonzales et al, 2016).

Often veiled in the past, undocumented students who have sought and received DACA status have revealed their presence and identities in a divided climate. Their voice can be part of a dialog regarding a national concern which is reflected in American schools (Huber, 2011; Kosnac et al., 2015; Morales et al., 2011). With the recent Supreme Court's decision *United States v. Texas*, which prevents upholding the 2014 Executive Order expanding DACA, those who currently have DACA status may eventually represent a small, unique population sector with increasingly limited growth. New member access to receive DACA status per the 2012 Executive Order would seemingly decrease because, as time passes, meeting the qualifications become more difficult for youth to fulfill. Furthermore, as DACA is the result of an Executive Order by President Barak Obama, his exit from the office of President of the United States in 2017 means the Executive Order itself can be revoked by the next president. It is possible DACA will no longer exist, and interviewing these students was part of entering a window in history which was opened for less than 5 years.

As a narrative study, this research can provide further depth to current knowledge of the lives of DACA students due to the personal nature and revelations. As DACA status is a relatively new experience, the number of studies is limited. Broadening the amount of research regarding students with DACA status would benefit the educational community as a whole (Gonzales et al., 2016; Gonzales & Terriquez, 2013; Martinez, 2014; Kosnac et al., 2015). Aspects of identity regarding both those who have undocumented and DACA status have been

studied (Ellis & Chen, 2013; Gonzales et al., 2016; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2011), but not using the theoretical framework, design and methods used in this study.

This study is also significant for non-profit organizations dedicated to finding ways to meet the needs of Latino students who are preparing to go to college. They could benefit from this study by knowing more about a sector of Latino students whose voice has not been heard fully. These non-profit organizations, such as the College Board, United We Dream, and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund among others, have made efforts to provide pathways to college for Latino students from the first generation in their family to receive a college degree. These organizations have also made efforts to specifically target the student population who have undocumented or DACA status as those whose they want to specifically address as part of this mission to increase college access (Salas et al, 2016). While these organizations serve large populations, learning more specific aspects of individual student identity development and the needs of these individuals who are part of the larger population can provide details sometimes obscured in more general studies.

Limitations

While the data gathered for this study reached full saturation regarding participants' experiences as per the design of this study, this may not be sufficient to provide full insight to this experience within this community. Further limitations included the nature and quality of access to participants due to the historical timeframe of the interviews, and whether or not participants' fully revealed relevant experiences due to self-protection and a need to protect family members whose citizenship status is undocumented (Contreras, 2009; Jauregui & Slate, 2009; Kosnac et al., 2015).

Timeliness may have generated interest in this study, yet it may have presented limitations to this study. Because DACA status is relatively new, this study provides perspectives from those with short term experience. The long-term impact of DACA status has yet to be explored (Martinez, 2014). Additionally, in the time since DACA's inception, there are different sets of college students who have DACA status. Those who were fully aware of their undocumented status and sought DACA as young adults, and those whose parents sought DACA status for their children while their children were still in K-12 schools. The latter set of students may not have fully experienced the same level of obstacles faced by the former students and may have had a more limited sense of the changes DACA has played in their life (Gonzales & Terriquez, 2013; Kosnac et al., 2015). Students from both the former and latter of these groups were interviewed for this study.

The data for this study were gathered prior to denial to uphold the 2014 expansion of DACA via Executive Order by the United States Supreme Court on June 23rd 2016. However, coverage of this pending case was present in the media while interviews for this study were taking place. As Texas was one of the primarily litigants seeking to stop DACA 2014, this may have increased fears for the participants due to a possible concern for lack of local governmental support for undocumented residents (Park & Parlapiano, 2016; Werlin, 2015). This, along with U.S. legislative changes and a presidential campaign with immigration as a key topic, brought media exposure to the issue which may have influenced the willingness of participants to share their stories. The emotional response to a publicly discussed issue which has personal and private implications could have shaped the telling of each narrative.

The fear associated with having had undocumented citizenship status prior to getting DACA may have established a level of mistrust participants would find difficulty overcoming

(Contreras, 2009; Ellis & Chen, 2013; Jauregui & Slate, 2009; Kosnac et al., 2015). Most

students with DACA status are members of households or families with mixed status citizenship

(Gildersleeve et al., 2010; Yu & Brabeck, 2012). While the participants may feel some level of

protection associated with DACA, parents, siblings and other relatives may have undocumented

status and not share the level of protection granted with DACA. This may have caused

participants to be guarded when sharing information and to provide limited information in order

to protect family members.

Chapter Summary

This study addressed the gap in knowledge of the educational experience which impact

the student identity development of students of Mexican descent who have DACA immigration

status. This student population, formerly part of the over 11 million-member undocumented

immigrant population in the United States, has only recently been provided a means to having

recognized presence in the United States via DACA. A formerly hidden student population has

revealed itself. Research regarding this student population provides an opportunity to discover

strategies these students used to negotiate their student experiences, as well as how the unique

aspects of their citizenship status impact their identity development and possible implication

related to this.

This chapter introduced statistical information regarding this population then provided a

socio-economic context regarding the history of immigration between Mexico and the United

States, primarily along the Texas border region. It also provided comparisons of the three

legislative and executive actions in the United States most affecting those with DACA: The

DREAM Act Bill, 2012 DACA, and 2014 DACA. This study addressed the following problems:

(a) The lack of voice students from this population have experienced in research and other public

forums; (b) The lack of knowledge by educators as to how to better work with this student population; and, (c) The need for non-profit organizations who serve this student population to better understand their student identity development as a means to disseminate useful information.

This chapter also introduced the theoretical framework, design, and methods used for this study. This study was guided by a theoretical framework based on Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2006) bioecological systems theory. This psychological theory or human development situates individuals in a series of rings of external environmental forces which place individuals in ongoing interactive processes as an individual passes through time. Thus, this theoretical framework is both sociocultural and developmental. This was a qualitative research study using narrative inquiry design to gather the life-stories of the participants. These stories are to be re-told as one story following a beginning, middle, and end within an organized plot (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Merriam, 2002). Methods to gather data were interviews and an arts-based research activity (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Merriam, 2002; Leavy, 2015). Multiple layers of data analysis were used including Yin's (2011) five layers of data analysis, analyzing while transcribing (Evers, 2011; Riessman, 1993), and Spradley's (1980) Developmental Research Sequence (DRS).The significance of this study to students with DACA status, educators, and non-profit organizations included: (a) A chance to hear the voice of the participants; (b) The opportunity for educators to hear perspectives related to student identity of formerly undocumented students now with DACA status; and, (c) More information for non-profit agencies who serve these students. Limitations to this study included those related to the timeliness within current socio-political concerns and participants' fears of self-revelation were also discussed.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

The purpose of this study was to describe the educational experiences of students of Mexican descent with DACA status and the impact of those experiences on the student identity development of these college students. The foci of this inquiry were:

1. What strategies do students of Mexican descent with DACA status use to negotiate their student experiences?

2. How do these strategies influence the development of their student identity?

This study was framed in a theoretical framework based on the ecological systems theory originally developed by Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1986, 1984), and later bioecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), a social sciences framework developed over the course of several decades. I used qualitative research methods following a narrative inquiry design by re-telling the life stories of four college students of Mexican descent with DACA immigration status.

As DACA status has only existed since 2012, literature regarding this subject was limited, with some still in development. I found a more expansive amount of literature when searching the related topics of students with undocumented/unauthorized immigration status in the United States (Gonzales et al., 2016; Salas et al, 2016). The participants in this study had undocumented immigration status prior to receiving DACA status, so literature regarding students with undocumented immigration status pertained to them at some point in their lives. Literature about students with undocumented status was the primary focus of this review, with additional reference to studies regarding those with DACA status. To organize the literature, this review was structured to follow the model of Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006). I discuss the literature categorically as related to the layers of the theory; starting with the individual, followed

by the microsystem and mesosystem, the exosystem, and finally the macrosystem. In each section, I first discuss literature regarding students with undocumented status, then I review more recent literature regarding students with DACA status if it exists in that category.

Additionally, a model created by Suarez-Orozco et al. (2011) to better understand the lives of students with undocumented status of Mexican-American descent in the United States influences the structuring of this literature review and will be of ongoing reference. The Suarez-Orozco et al. (2011) model is based on the ecological systems theory originally developed by Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1986, 1984), and later bioecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). The terminology as related to one's immigration status from the Suarez-Orozco et al. (2011) model transmits well to this study of students with DACA status. Before these students received DACA status, their immigration status was undocumented as per the Suarez-Orozco et al. (2011) model, so it provides a strong intermediary scaffolding between this study and the theoretical framework of Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006).

Suarez-Orozco et al. (2011) more precisely apply bioecological systems theory to undocumented students in the following ways. The individual is framed within a lens of one's documentation status, race/ethnicity, trauma exposure, experiences with authorities, and is situated within a microsystem consisting of family status and processes, school contexts, and neighborhood processes. Within this microsystem is a mesosystem which interconnects members of the microsystem. Encompassing the microsystem is an exosystem (civic systems, networks of information, potential work conditions). The most outer layer is the macrosystem, comprised of economic, historical and cultural contexts, public policy, and media representations. This review uses these terms provided by Suarez-Orozco et al. (2011).

Research centering on immigration is not without political implications not only in the general public, but also within the world of education, and for a researcher to ignore this would be remiss (Suarez-Orozco & Yoshikawa, 2013). Academic research related to events associated with DACA were not timely enough to keep abreast of the continually changing policies and implications. I followed popular media coverage via television news and documentaries, newspapers, magazines, and internet sites to stay better informed of pertinent information which may affect the participants. Literature developed within frameworks associated with critical race theory is also discussed as part of exploring these political implications (Linde, 1993; Nunez, 2014; Oliviero, 2013).

Literature Regarding Student Perspective: Individual

The central circle of the model, the individual, represents psychological processes within each person. Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2006) most recent model espouses the idea of agency on the part of individuals within the bioecological system while seeing disposition, resources, and demand shaping this agency. Suarez-Orozco et al. (2011) name documentation status, race/ethnicity, trauma exposure, concerns of deportation, and experience with authorities impacting this agency. Understanding liminality, an ambiguous state of not being able to move forward, is considered by Suarez Orozco et al. (2011) critical to exploring the individual in this model. This section reviews literature related to these concepts.

Students with undocumented status. Gonzales et al. (2016) find liminality on ongoing concern for students with undocumented status. Students are found to be caught between friends and family, adulthood and childhood, achievement and non-attainment, and loyalty to Mexico versus the United States. Their friends, through their school experience, are tied to the United States, while many family members, usually grandparents and others from their parents'

generation, live in Mexico. As their peers go through rites of passage associated with gaining adulthood, such as driving a car or getting a job, they are not able to follow a similar path. For these students attaining college options as a reward for hard work in school may not happen. Contrary to their peers with citizenship status, college may be unattainable. For those who have been in the United States for many years and have actively assimilated through language use and cultural norms, being identified by others as Mexican does not align with how they present themselves.

Researchers find undocumented status plays a role in identity development (Ellis & Chen, 2013) and can lead to an uncomfortable bi-cultural identity (Hernandez et al., 2010). Straddling two cultures often places the students in an uncomfortable position of choice between the old country, an unfamiliar place, and the United States, a place of more recent memories (Suarez-Orozco et al. 2011). There can be a sense of disconnection, and shame derived from a need to keep secrets and experiencing discrimination (Perez et al., 2010). Undocumented students report fears associated with being discovered and then being deported, and suffer from esteem issues regarding uncertainty about their future (Contreras, 2009; Jauregui & Slate, 2009). Undocumented Latino students experience feelings of rejection (Perez et al., 2010). Researchers call for a need to address the psychological and emotional needs of undocumented students by offering educational and counseling services at both the K-12 and post-secondary level (Perez et al., 2010).

Researchers have found positive aspects of undocumented status. These include greater resiliency, empathy for other marginalized populations, and motivation to achieve (Contreras, 2009; Ellis & Chen, 2013). Students with undocumented status develop coping skills (Hernandez et al., 2010) and can develop a sense of autonomy, a sense of purpose, choose to

fight microaggessions which take place against them, and are committed to completing college (Huber, 2011; Morales et al., 2011; Jauregui & Slate, 2009). Findings also indicate a desire to serve the community (Garcia, 2013) and civic engagement related and not related to their undocumented status (Perez et al., 2010).

   Students with DACA status. Recipients of DACA feel positive economic rewards from the status (Kosnac et al., 2015); however, because students do not qualify for federal financial aid, the ability to finance college is still a concern (Salas et al., 2016). Salas et al. (2016) argue DACA alleviates some of the concerns associated with liminality. Those with DACA no longer miss the rites of passage of getting a driver's license or obtaining a job, and now have increased post-secondary educational opportunities. For those with DACA status, the need to reapply every two years creates a type of "holding pattern" leading to feelings of uncertainty about one's future and social mobility (Martinez, 2014, p. 1874).

   For students with DACA status, a sense of happiness and relief that their concerns have been addressed can also be accompanied by cynicism regarding long term solutions and lingering feelings of insult that this is a "token gesture" to garner Latino votes (Martinez, 2014, p. 1884). A new identity label used by those who received DACA, DACAmented (Gonzales & Terriquez, 2013), became a means of dissociating from the former immigration status of undocumented and a sense of "coming out" from hiding (Martinez, 2014, p. 1875).

Literature Regarding Family and School Influences: Microsystem and Mesosystem

   Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) place people and objects with whom one has daily interactions, such as family members and school personnel, as the defining characteristic of the microsystem. For undocumented students, Suarez-Orozco et al. (2011) name microsystem members in the broader conceptual terms of family member documentation status, school

contexts, and neighborhood characteristics. The mesosystem reflects an interaction between microsystem members, thus this section of the literature review examines both the microsystem and mesosystem.

Students with undocumented status. Ellis and Chen (2013) find undocumented students feel tension points with family members. They often act as language brokers for older adult members of the family, and thus upset family power structure and balance. A response can be a disconnect from family. Additionally, many students with undocumented status live in mixed status homes; some children/family members have U.S. citizenship while others do not, creating additional tension (Gildersleeve, et al., 2010; Yu & Brabeck, 2012). Parents can be reluctant to participate in school events out of fear, or a belief that schools have better knowledge of how to steer their children into academic success for they often lack college-going literacy (Gildersleeve et al., 2010; Lad & Braganza, 2013). Students with undocumented status are usually part of the first generation in the family to attend college (Contreras, 2009; Gildersleeve et al., 2010).

For Latino students with undocumented status, supportive parents, friends, and participation in school activities help them have higher levels of academic success than students with undocumented status who do not have these areas of support (Perez et al., 2009). Families provide a strong support network and the love of parents is important. Highly motivated students feel committed to completing college as their families are a source of this motivation (Jauregui & Slade, 2009; Perez et al., 2010).

Some students with undocumented status felt they had "lucked out" in K-12 education (Lad & Briganza, 2013, p. 10) by happening into an educator who worked with them in spite of their status. Others feared school officials and were not well informed by teachers about how to

work through their undocumented status (Contreras, 2007; Lad & Braganza, 2013). Perez et al.
(2010) found caring school personnel matter greatly to students with undocumented status.

Nienhusser (2013) found schools with a large number of students who have
undocumented status serve this student population better than schools with a small number of
students with undocumented status, even if the smaller number of these students are in more
economically affluent neighborhoods. Researchers ask for school personnel, career and
academic counselors in particular, to create pathways for students with undocumented
classification (Perez, 2010). This can be accomplished through awareness of who has
undocumented status and applying knowledge interactively with these students. Finding financial
resources, creating outreach networks, and training faculty and administrators to be sensitive to
the social and emotional needs of students with undocumented are solicited (Nienhusseer, 2013).
School counselors are asked to offer support groups to help students with undocumented status.
These support groups can provide a safe place to speak, let students know they are not alone, and
help them overcome feelings of isolation and discrimination (Chen et al., 2010). Counselors are
also asked to conduct activities with these students such as one-to-one meetings, informational
presentations, and dissemination of scholarship applications (Nienhusser, 2013).

Regarding interactions with parents and educators at the K-12 school level, academic
literature differentiating students with undocumented status and students with DACA status was
extremely difficult to find. At the time of this study, literature searches yielded information
almost exclusive to those regarding students with undocumented status.

Students with DACA status. There is a sense of relief that deportation is no longer an
ongoing concern for the students themselves who have DACA, but there are usually still
concerns regarding family members who do not qualify for DACA (Martinez, 2014). Fear is

present, as nearly two-thirds of DACA recipients know someone who has been deported (Gonzales & Terriquez, 2013). The US Department of Education provides guidelines to K-12 educators when working with students with DACA/undocumented status. These guidelines address many concerns, including modeling cultural sensitivity, bullying associated with immigration status, sensitivity to immigration-related paperwork, providing support groups, learning about laws/policies that affect these students, and connecting these students to resources (US Department of Education, 2015).

Literature Regarding Institutional Influences: Exosystem

Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2006) exosystem is comprised of two or more external processes affecting the individual. Suarez-Orozco et al. (2011) define this as family interactions with authorities, parental work conditions, networks of information, and civic institutions. Examples given are interactions between parents and authorities, such as ICE; or interactions between secondary school and higher education institutions. The section discusses literature regarding the interactions of these larger processes. This includes research associated with interactions with ICE, employment opportunities, networks of information, post-secondary educational institution transitions, and government health and tax institutions.

Students with undocumented status. Rincon (2010) discusses fears families with undocumented classification feel regarding being reported to ICE by those who work as legal and educational resources. These fears can keep parents from seeking legal and educational assistance. Parents of students with undocumented status often work in low-wage occupations without access to healthcare or other benefits. These families are usually very poor when entering the United States and are willing to accept work conditions not tolerable to those with U.S. citizenship (Bean, Brown, & Bachmeier, 2016). Traditionally, informal networks within

the community of those who have undocumented status connected new immigrants to jobs, housing, and educational opportunities. The information is often communicated via family connections (Durand, 2016; Ornelas et al., 2016; Gonzales et al., 2016).

Career development is a concern for the students themselves. College students with undocumented status are often not able to get employment because of limitations on completing employment applications or traveling for work. Attending graduate school often becomes a best possible option (Ortiz & Hinojosa, 2010).

Family, schools and peers provide informal networks of information regarding post-secondary processes (Perez, 2010). At the high school level, recommendations include better dissemination of college admissions and financial aid process information which is particular to students with undocumented status, and developing a rapport which makes students with undocumented status comfortable with revealing their immigration status (Nienhusser, 2013; Perez, 2012).

Researchers find different types educational institutions can better facilitate educational transitions for students with undocumented status by interacting better as part of the transitional process. The transitional disconnects are most evident when students move from high school to community colleges or universities, or community college to four year universities (Diaz-Strong et al., 2011; Nienhusser, 2013; Nienhusser, 2014). Students of Mexican origin with undocumented status are more likely to leave high school, and less likely to enroll in institutions of higher education than those of Mexican descent born in the United States (Covarrubias & Lara, 2013; Gonzales, 2011; Perez, 2012). Furthermore, students with undocumented status take more time to complete college, often due to necessary breaks taken to seek employment as a means to make up for lack of financial aid opportunities (Contreras, 2009; Gonzales, 2011).

For those working in higher education the responsibility of assisting students with undocumented status transition to post-secondary institutions includes knowing and sharing their understanding of university opportunities (Diaz-Strong et al., 2011; Nienhusser 2014). Those working in higher education also need to know their own legal obligations, as well as the rights and legal situations students with undocumented status encounter (Barnhardt et al., 2013; Gildersleeve et al., 2010). In some cases, college admissions officials find circumnavigating systemic norms is a means to provide access. One admissions counselor in California shares his difficulty in turning down a student with undocumented status, yet was able to get the student a full tuition scholarship after going directly to the university president for nontraditional funds (Rodriguez, 2010).

In the past, those with undocumented citizenship status have had limited access to healthcare in the United States. Access to healthcare has been dependent on citizenship status coupled with extenuating factors. Currently, individuals with undocumented status do not have access to kidney dialysis in the United States, however pregnant females who have undocumented immigration classification receive healthcare during pregnancy in the United States because the baby will be born with U.S. citizenship (Melo & Fleuriet, 2016).

Those with undocumented status pay federal income taxes to the United States government by getting an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The Institute of Taxation and Economic Policy (Gee, Gardner, & Wiehe, 2016) estimates that in the past, over half of those with undocumented immigration status have filed and paid personal income tax, with an estimated contribution of $1.1 billion dollars. With sales and local taxes included, the total tax contribution by those with undocumented immigration status has been estimated at over $11 billion dollars annually (Gee et al., 2016).

Students with DACA status. Research indicates that with the inception of DACA, family interactions with authorities, civic institutions, parental work conditions, and networks of information by students now with DACA and their families have changed (Gonzales & Terriquez, 2013; Salas et al., 2016). With DACA, a new type of mixed status household exists. Prior to DACA's commencement, members of households could contain a mix of those with undocumented immigration classification and those with U.S. citizenship status; now, those having DACA status in a household brings a third type of status to put into the mix (Salas et al., 2016).

For those who have chosen to apply for DACA, one of the greatest fears associated with their self-revelation is how this application process exposes family members who do not qualify for DACA. The application process to the United States Immigration and Citizenship and Immigration Services places one in a database easily accessible to ICE (Salas et al., 2016). Work opportunities for the parents of students with DACA have not changed significantly as the result of DACA. There also becomes an added level of responsibility for the family member who has DACA, for this is the family member who can legally own a car, have insurance, and be a certain, legal, economic provider for the family. This could potentially pressure a student with DACA to not move away from parents (Salas et al., 2016).

The use of the Internet has provided a new type of informal and formal network of information students with DACA access to stay current. These websites include those from United We Dream (2016), The Dream.Us (Pacheco, 2016), Golden Door Scholars (2016), and My Undocumented Life (2016). The websites provide scholarship, legal, and personal support for students with undocumented or DACA classification. Students with DACA status are organizing to keep their DACA status as the upcoming change of administrations in the U.S.

presidency appears to threaten the existence of DACA through informal networks. This

organizing has taken place in the form of petitions and letters being sent via e-mails to potential

supporters and college administrators (D. Doyle, personal communication, December 6, 2016;

UTSA faculty, staff & alumni, personal communication, November 18, 2016).

More states are allowing students with DACA to attend colleges and universities using

ISRT rates, and offer students with DACA status state monies for financial assistance. However,

the belief that DACA will significantly change college and university access can be dampened

when the realization that access to funding is still limited. Their DACA classification still does

not qualify a student for federal student funds for college via the FAFSA, so they still need to

seek outside employment more than students who can access FAFSA funds (Salas et al., 2016).

The ability to travel and study abroad safely is also regarded as a positive aspect of DACA.

Upon receiving DACA one college graduate, formerly with undocumented status and working as

a nanny, realized DACA made going onto medical school more realistic. However, she had to

sit out of school for two years, and felt like DACA's parameters which lacked citizenship

potential meant "this is so small compared to what I need to be happening right now" (Martinez,

2015, p. 1881).

Salas et al. (2016) recommend more training of university personnel regarding the

challenges students with DACA face. They ask for training at the college and university level

about the different types of immigration statuses, including the criteria for getting DACA.

College counseling services need to be aware of the stresses associated with DACA status, and

university college placement centers need to coach students with DACA regarding how much to

disclose to potential employers about their work status. University offices also need to know

how to refer students with DACA to legal services (Gonzales & Terriquez, 2014; Salas et al., 2016).

Having DACA can change access to healthcare for the recipients. Those with DACA who are employed by a company with healthcare benefits can now obtain these benefits, if the company provides them; however, family members who still have undocumented immigration status cannot receive these benefits (National Immigration Law Center, 2015). Those with DACA immigration status cannot access healthcare via the Affordable Care Act, nor are they subject to the tax penalty of not enrolling (Buchholz, 2015). Those with DACA can now pay federal income with their assigned Social Security number, as opposed to using an ITIN. The Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (2016) reports that if DACA 2012 and DACA 2014 had been fully enacted and implemented personal income tax collection would have increased by $442 million dollars per year (p.4).

Literature Regarding Broad Cultural Influences: Macrosystem

The macrosystem in the bioecological systems model (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) is a large system comprised of broad cultural influences such as socioeconomic factors or ethnicity. The Suarez-Orozco et al. (2011) model makes these general terms more specific by naming them as economic, historical and cultural contexts, public policy, xenophobia versus tolerance, and media representations. The literature in this section explores these large systemic processes.

Students with undocumented status. Research indicates most families of students with undocumented status come from lower socio-economic status (SES) homes where parents earn poverty or near-poverty level wages. The students also attend schools in lower SES areas, which tend to have lower academic standards (Gildersleeve et al., 2010). Greenman and Paul (2013)

indicate immigrants who cross the border into the United States legally tend to come from a better socioeconomic position than immigrants who cross the border without authorization. Families with students of undocumented status tend to be poor, and thus attend more impoverished schools and live in substandard housing (Gildersleeve et al., 2010). Not all students with undocumented status are Latino; however, Latino students with undocumented status are more likely to struggle academically (Chan, 2010).

Nunez (2014) advocates incorporating the concept of intersectionality, the creation of multiple socially constructed identities, for studies of Latino experiences. Nunez (2014) asks researchers to add the layer of cultural history when conducting studies with Latino students with undocumented and other immigration statuses, as these external forces shape student identity. While an historical context is provided in Chapter One, additional information to note regarding the broader context surrounding those with undocumented and/or DACA immigration status is historic xenophobia in the United States, and more recent attempts to overturn *Plyler v. Doe* and measures to criminalize Latinos with undocumented status.

The role of xenophobia as part of immigration policy in the United States has been present since the inception of legislation calling for quotas in immigration, tracing back to the 19th century (Chomski, 2014). After World War II, the global uneasiness associated with the Cold War lent to stories of spies and other potential subversives slipping into the United States (Bean et al., 2016). In the mid-1960s, the change in immigration policy, which added a quota system for those emigrating from Mexico, heightened the spotlight on the number of people from Mexico entering the United States (Bean et al., 2016). This pervasive sense that immigrants not only take jobs, but are also a national security concern was further exacerbated after the terror attacks of 9/11 (Alba, 2016; Chomski, 2014; Orrenius et al., 2016).

In 1994, California voters approved Proposition 187 which excluded undocumented immigrants from healthcare, public education, and other services. In 2011, Alabama House Bill 56 harshly punished undocumented immigrants with one provision requiring public schools to ascertain immigration status of students. Both of these attempts were nullified in the Federal Court of Appeals (Sutton & Stewart, 2013). In Arizona SB 1070 requires police officers to determine immigration status of those deemed reasonably suspicious, creating a belief Latinos experience racial profiling. As of 2013, Georgia banned students with undocumented status from attending five top-tier universities (Acosta, 2013). Academics view these measures as examples of xenophobia and a lack of tolerance exhibited in the United States (Acosta, 2013; Sutton & Stewart, 2013).

Legislatures, state-by-state, and/or the university systems within each state determines parameters for who is eligible for ISRT for students with undocumented status. Twenty states currently provide ISRT, and other states have this under consideration (Soria, Mendoza & Shaikh, 2014). Findings from a study at The University of Texas in Austin (UT-Austin) indicate undocumented students who receive ISRT stay at UT-Austin at similar rates than Latinos with citizenship (Flores & Horn, 2009). Passage of this type of legislation can be challenging as was found in North Carolina (Sanders, 2010). Legislators, educators, and journalists who supported ISRT legislation, which failed, learned they need a strategy of informing the public of the economic and social benefits for the entire population when ISRT is provided for students with undocumented status (Oseguera, Flores, & Burciaga, 2010).

In the United States, the media portrays immigrant populations negatively when the economy is in a downturn (Romo, 2016). Media, representations of Latinos via television and film, often criminalize them by portraying Latinos as drug dealers or other law breakers

(Menjivar, 2016). Romo (2016) discusses the broad generalizations and collective racialization of all Latinos as Mexicans, and argues that despite in-group differences, Mexican-Americans, Mexicans, and Latinos are treated in the media with a sameness which promotes stereotypes.

Students with DACA status. Students with DACA share the previously discussed broad economic, historical and cultural contexts, public policy, xenophobia versus tolerance, and media representations which have encompassed those with undocumented status. Within the macrosystem, there is some additional literature specific to those with DACA status. These articles are regarding public policy and media representations of those with DACA classification. Regarding public policy, Oliviero (2013) argues that creating an "immigration state of emergency" (p. 3) has been an ongoing historic means used by politicians to reinforce nativism in the United States. This argument further examines the way politicizing immigration concerns further creates institutional barriers for those more marginalized due to their race, gender and immigration status and thus creates vulnerable populations. President Obama's administration had the highest number of deportations, and Oliviero (2013) argues DACA was an attempt to pacify some members of immigrant communities in light of these deportations. According to Oliviero (2013) DACA's enactment could enforce a sense of just versus unjust deportations.

Media representations of students with DACA often focus on the high achieving students with DACA who were denied college opportunities, while ignoring the lives of average students who qualify for DACA. After interviewing one average student with DACA, one writer asks, "There are typically 2 narratives about the estimated 1.1 undocumented minors in the United States. They are either criminals or university-bound valedictorians. But what about all of the teenagers like Matias, who fall somewhere in the middle?" (Pandika, 2016).

Additional Discussion

Those opposed to providing educational and employment opportunities for students with undocumented and DACA classification argue the presence of immigrants with unauthorized status threatens the security of the border between the United States and Mexico, job security for native born citizens, and the environment. Others present positions stating students with undocumented or DACA status take college opportunities away from U.S. citizens (Progressives for Immigration Reform, 2014; Vaughn, 2014).

Theorists positing from a Critical Race Theory stance argue the social constructs of race, class, gender, and sexuality impact all populations, yet the Latino population encounters the additional layers of immigration status, ethnicity, language, and culture. These play roles in educational access and attainment for Latino students (Covarrubias & Lara, 2013; Irazzy, 2012; Perez Huber, 2009). More specifically, "pathways through high school, partners on the journey, and divergent destinations" (Irazzy, 2012, p.297) place students on educational roads constructed by institutions, and these institutions reflect social constructs with institutionalized racism. Perez Huber (2009) asserts racist nativism, the assigning of differences to non-whites as a means to ensure White cultural dominance, contributes to internalizing negative images regarding self, racial group, and immigration status. In a subsequent publication, Perez Huber (2011) discusses how xenophobia manifests in racist nativist microaggressions in California public education. The primary example of microaggession is the institutionalism of the English language and its proclaimed hegemony in the school setting. Reasserting power through multiple languages is called for by the author.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a review of literature to address the research questions and purpose of this study. Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2006) bioecological systems theory was used to categorically arrange the literature. These categories included: the student perspective: individual; family and school influences: microsystem and mesosystem; institutional influences: exosystem; and broad cultural influences: macrosystem. Terminology from a model created by Suarez-Orozco et al. (2011) based on bioecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006) was used to better understand the lives of undocumented students of Mexican-American descent in the United States and also influenced the structuring of this literature review. The terminology related to one's immigration status from the Suarez-Orozco et al, (2011) translated to this study of students with DACA status, as their immigration status was undocumented prior to receiving DACA. This provided a strong intermediary scaffolding between this study and the theoretical framework of Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006). Additional discussion included arguments against providing educational and employment opportunities for students with undocumented or DACA status and arguments from a critical race theory framework.

Chapter Three: Methodology

The purpose of this study was to describe the educational experiences of students of Mexican descent with DACA status and the impact of those experiences on the student identity development of these college students. After providing an overview of the theoretical framework, foci of inquiry, design, data collection methods, analysis, and ways I presented findings for this study in this introduction, I explain in detail these aspects of the methodology.

The theoretical framework of this study was based on the ecological systems theory originally developed by Bronfenbrenner (1979, 1986, 1984), and later bioecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), a social sciences framework developed over the course of several decades. This psychological theory sees individuals operating over time within a multi-layered set of external social forces in an interactive manner. In this model, the individual has agency, and is not just responding to external forces; the individual has the ability to make decisions and some level of control in how they respond to environmental circumstances. Because these external forces are continually present as the individual moves through time, this model is both socio-cultural and developmental (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Suarez-Orozco et. al., 2011).

The foci of this inquiry were:

1. What strategies do students of Mexican descent with DACA status use to negotiate their student experiences?

2. How do these strategies influence the development of their student identity?

This study used a qualitative research approach with a narrative inquiry design. Qualitative research is best suited for studies investigating human experiences within context, setting, and participant point of view. Qualitative research investigates human interaction

processes while recognizing the subjective nature of research (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Multiple design possibilities exist within the qualitative research paradigm including

ethnographic, phenomenological, and narrative designs (Creswell, 2008; Merriam, 2009; Guba &

Lincoln, 1994). Qualitative research studies can draw from multiple influences regarding design,

with the final design choice based on which design best addresses the research questions

(Creswell, 2008). This study incorporated aspects of ethnographic and phenomenological

design, providing the lenses from multiple academic fields found in interdisciplinary

triangulation (Janesick, 1994), with narrative inquiry design deemed most appropriate to address

these research questions.

I chose narrative inquiry design for it has an epistemological view that knowledge can be

acquired by examining research worthy stories as a way to understand the meaning people

ascribe to their lives (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Merriam, 2002). Narrative inquiry design

seeks to understand and represent human experience by attending to it, telling the experience,

and analyzing the experience by looking at textual structures. In narrative inquiry, the source of

data comes from language (Riessman, 1993).

I used interviews with participants and collaborative arts-based activities as the primary

data collection methods. The interviews and arts-based activities followed protocols adherent to

narrative inquiry design (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Leavy, 2015; Linde, 1993; Riessman,

1993). The data collection methods I used created both data triangulation and investigator

triangulation, as both data sources and data evaluation derived from multiple perspectives

(Janesick, 1994). The arts-based activities followed initial interviews with each participant as a

way to collaborate with participants (Liamputtong, 2008), offer reflexivity for me and the

participants (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Riessman, 1993) and to

provide a creative way for participants to member check focused portions of the interviews (Cooper, 2010; Leavy, 2015). To provide theory triangulation (Janesick, 1994), I used three levels of data analysis. First, for an overarching guide to analysis, I used Yin's (2011) five phases to analyze data; compiling, disassembling, reassembling, interpreting, and concluding. Next, I analyzed while transcribing (Evers, 2011; Riessman, 1993). For the third level, I used Spradley's (1980) Developmental Research Sequence to connect the data in an organized taxonomy.

To present findings, I used elements of literary storytelling practiced by writers sharing stories of notable journeys (Foster, 2003; Vogler, 2007; Welcker, 2014). First, I used Foster's (2003) overarching guidelines for stories of "quests" (p.2). According to Foster (2003), writers adhere to patterns to provide readers ease and relate-ability. Foster (2003) also provides criteria for a story to be a quest which include a protagonist, a journey, a stated purpose, obstacles, and the real purpose. Next, I followed a more detailed outline of storytelling which calls for the use of point of view, characterization, plot development, and conflict. Finally, I used Vogler's (2007) literary archetypes, typical human personalities based on Jungian psychology, to present characterizations of the participants and the people they encountered on their journey.

Research and Design: Characteristics of Qualitative Research

While quantitative research methods draw from a positivistic paradigm which objectively seek to explain relationships that exist in measurable data collected by using numerically based instruments, qualitative research methods draw from a constructivist paradigm which seek to explore human experiences and acknowledges the subjective nature of research by considering the researcher the instrument (Creswell, 2008; Holliday, 2007; Merriam, 2002). Quantitative researchers gather numeric data from large populations with the goal of describing, interpreting,

and even predicting, future outcomes for similar populations. Qualitative researchers gather verbal or visual data from small populations using interviews and observations to help them find themes for better understanding of that particular group of participants. Where quantitative researchers create a hypothesis and then gather numeric data as a means to either support or refute the data, qualitative researchers stay flexible regarding where the verbal and visual data will lead them and allow the themes from research findings to emerge (Creswell, 2008).

Trustworthiness is a critical concern regarding all research (Marshall & Rosssman, 2011; Yin, 2011). Historic key standards for quantitative research include objectivity, researcher lack of bias; validity, measuring what was intended to be measured; reliability, measuring this consistently over time; and generalizability, applying findings to the general population. This is based on the concept that the nature of knowledge has absolutes and can be verified (Creswell, 2008; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). More recent standards for research more inclusive of the qualitative paradigm include credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Marshall &Rossman, 2011). Using transparency by making data available for inspection, an approach in methods which is orderly in procedures, triangulation of data collection, and multiple levels of analysis achieve these standards in the qualitative paradigm (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Yin, 2011). Qualitative research sees knowledge as not something acquired by seeking absolute answers but rather acquired by learning various worldviews in order to understand different perspectives (Creswell, 2014).

Qualitative research is a subjective approach with high levels of dependence on verbal and/or visual data, personal interactions and contextual implications (Creswell, 2008; Holliday, 2007; Merriam, 2002). The subjective nature of qualitative research calls for researchers working with participants to create "a trusting relationship, where both are committed to better

understanding the experience being explored, and allows for greater access to the richness of their experience" (Worthen & McNeill, 2002, p. 140). Hennink (2008) states, "in the interpretive paradigm, which encompasses much qualitative research, language and communication are central to the research process, the resulting data and its interpretation" (p. 23) creates a hermeneutical framework not codified with numbers. I chose qualitative research methods for this study because I sought to explore perspectives of experiences in the lives of the participants in a depth and manner reflected in qualitative research.

Design Decisions

Initially, I considered both ethnographic and phenomenological designs for this study and these did inform my design choices. Historically situated in the academic fields of sociology and anthropology, ethnographic research seeks to describe or understand "a culture-sharing group's shared patterns of behavior, beliefs, and language that develop over time" (Creswell, 2008, p. 473). A critical component for researchers using an ethnographic design is fieldwork. Fieldwork places the researcher in the physical setting where participants are located and the researcher gathers data through observations and interviews. This immersion in the research site provides ethnographic researchers with thick, rich descriptions from both 'emic', insider, and 'etic', outsider, perspectives. Ethnographic researchers acknowledge their role in the interactive process of this type of research and openly discuss this role, as well as the limits their personal interpretations can play in results (Vidich & Lyman, 1994). While I had ties to students with DACA status through work and volunteer opportunities, and this influenced the depth of investigation made possible for the study, I did not deem this level of immersion acceptable to justify using an ethnographic design for this study.

Academically situated in the field of psychology and epistemologically situated in hermeneutics, phenomenological research relies on linguistic means to seek understanding the essence of a participant's experience, and how this fits into universal experiences shared by all humans (Merriam, 2002; Wolff, 2002). This essence is an emotional depth which includes one's physical senses as well as spiritual dimensions (Wolff, 2002). "Phenomenological inquiry is very similar to the interviewing techniques central to the training of counseling psychologists" (Worthen & McNeill, 2002, p. 120). In-depth interviews are the primary method to gather data and this primary method can have an intensity akin to therapy (Merriam, 2002). The cross-cultural implications of understanding humor, body language, while translation is taking place has the potential to make participants feel misunderstood during a vulnerable time (Liamputtong, 2008; Wolff, 2002). This calls for researchers working with participants to create "a trusting relationship, where both are committed to better understanding the experience being explored, and allows for greater access to the richness of their experience" (Worthen & McNeill, 2002, p. 140). The phenomenological aspects of trust, emotional depth, and sensory activation when interviewing the participants were present in this study, so this study was informed by phenomenological design.

Narrative Design

Academically situated in the disciplines of English language and interdisciplinary studies, narrative inquiry is consistent with the theoretical framework for this study by following chronological movement, while also accounting for multiple levels of interaction within and between individuals and ecological factors (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Merriam, 2002). Narrative inquiry provides a way to follow multiple life stories in a meaningful way; narrative inquiry is a way to understand experiences (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000). There are different

types of narrative inquiry designs. These include narrative inquiry designs which focus on analyzing specific semantic patterns used by the participants when telling their stories, designs with emancipatory purposes, and designs which use the broader concepts of plot development to analyze participant stories (Linde, 1993; Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Riessman, 1993).

I used plot development to analyze participant stories. Data were gathered from participant storytelling of life histories, and then I analyzed this data in order to re-tell a shared coherent story. In this study, the shared story followed a sequential plot, a series of themes, discussed from each participant's perspective. My re-telling of the collected stories kept in mind place, time, character, and point-of-view (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), with the shared story following the literary elements of context, character development, and plot development (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Linde, 1993; Riessman, 1993). This also adheres to the four defining characteristics of the theoretical model: (1) Process, (2) Person, (3) Context, (4) Time (PPCT) (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007). Context and time were evident in the movement of the stories; person was evident in character development; and process was evident in how the person interacted with context over time to create a plot.

Context. This discussion of how context presented in this study was informed by definitions of time and context from Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2007) PPCT theory. The movement over time in narrative inquiry is always situated in a context, and requires researchers using this design to maintain sensitivity to the historical context the participants, as characters, tell their stories from (Reissman, 1993). Narrative inquiry not only acknowledges the important role of context in each character's development, but also how context influences the plot development. Context is omnipresent (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Temporality is also an important context consideration during narrative inquiry for this recognizes the study captures

moments and snapshots of time and place within a broader historical context. Macro and micro

context co-exist and need to be captured for a full portrayal of studies using narrative inquiry

design (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

In this study, the movement over time began with the participants' first memories of

school in Mexico and ended during their college years in Texas, with the context being their life

in Mexico and the United States. Another aspect to this broad context is the setting for these

participants, who were living, working, and attending school in a South Texas city with a

majority presence Latino community. The broader context of immigration between the United

States and Mexico discussed in Chapter One was part of the framing of this narrative study, yet I

would be remiss to not add an additional layer to consider as part of the broad context. The

broad historical context regarding Euro-American dominance in the United States surrounds this

study. So, even though the immediate setting of the study was in a Latino majority population

setting,

> whether residents in a multiracial/multiethnic nation are aware of it or not, and
> despite their preferences and political beliefs, they are socialized in their homes
> and in their schools and by the mass media and popular and material culture to
> assume that ethnicity defined in racial terms is normal…Multiethnic/multiracial
> nation-states are segmented societies held together through rigid forms of
> sociocultural and political hegemony. (Stanfield, 1994, p.177)

Academics theorists from a Critical Race Theory perspective argue researchers need to

acknowledge levels of power differentiation associated with ethnicity as part of the larger

national context when studying Latino experiences in the United States (Irazzy, 2012; Perez

Huber, 2011).

At the micro, more temporal, level of context, this study was situated within a window in

time for those who received DACA status. When the window to gather data for this study

opened, the participants had revealed their presence and were accessing the benefits of receiving

DACA immigration status. Concerns this could change for themselves and fellow students in their same situation were relatively minimal. The data to create the shared story was gathered before this window appeared to start closing with the Supreme Court's decision to stop expanded DACA. The stories were also gathered prior to the perceived potential for the window to permanently close due to the outcome of the U.S. presidential election in November, 2016. In Chapter Two, I reviewed the Gonzales et al., (2016) discussion of liminality, a multi-level socio-cultural in between-ness students with undocumented status felt on a personal level. A unique micro level context to this study is how it was situated in historic liminality, a time between when students with DACA immigration status had recently emerged from undocumented status and before a heightened sense that they might get forced into submersion in the near future due to results from the United States Supreme Court decision regarding DACA and results of the 2016 presidential election (Garcia, 2016; Liptak & Shear, 2016; National Immigration Law Center, 2016).

Character development. In this study, I regarded student identity development as synonymous with the character development aspect of the narrative inquiry design. This is the person from the theoretical model (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007). As each participant told their story, each was the protagonist character in their own life story, adhering to the theoretical model where the individual is the central force studied (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007). The concepts of layered external social systems as per the theoretical model (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007) and intersectionality (Nunez, 2014) influencing the participants as their student identity development grew was incorporated into this design (Suarez-Orozco &Yoshikawa, 2011; Perez Huber, 2010).

As participants told their life stories, I had the ontological perspective their stories were informed by societal environmental influences and the constructs of their ethnicity, country of origin, gender and immigration status, thus influencing student identity development (Linde, 1993; Merriam, 2002; Nunez, 2014; Suarez Orozco et al., 2011). Research indicates students with DACA immigration presence operate within a set of imposed social norms associated with their immigration status, while simultaneously maintaining a sense of self influenced by environmental forces (Ellis & Chen, 2013; Gonzales et al., 2016; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2011). The dynamic relationship of self to social rules, personal choice and development, and relationships with institutions were incorporated into this study to understand how these interactions impacted the character development, also called student identity development (Linde, 1993). These stories showed the participants' student identity and simultaneously their character development form over time because participants shared their life stories in a loose chronology, while the interview protocol guided them to keep in mind place, time, character, and point-of-view (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Linde, 1993; Merriam, 2002; Nunez, 2014; Suarez Orozco et al., 2011).

Plot. The process from PPCT theory was most evident when the person, or the character developing a student identity, interacted with and within a context over time. These processes were evident when the participant/character encountered tension points (Riessman, 1993), and then used strategies/processes to navigate forward in their life which drove the plot of the story. True to narrative inquiry design, these plotted stories had a beginning, middle, and end while also having characteristics deemed research worthy (Linde, 1993).

Process, in the form of employing strategies used by these students was most evident when encountering tension points. Narrative inquiry acknowledges tension as a source of

creating a story worthy of research. Sources of tension include temporality, people, action, certainty, and context. Additionally, tension revolves around boundaries (Riessman, 1993). I found the tension points emerged when the participants/characters revealed the most impactful educational experiences which influenced their student identity development/person/character. Participants did not always follow an exact sequence in the telling of their life story, and this is normal when collecting data during narrative inquiry design (Riessman, 1993). Narrative inquiry is a design with dimensions with "four directions of any inquiry: inward and outward, backward and forward" (p. 50). Participants examine their feelings situated within external forces, while traveling back and forth in the dimensions of a past, present and future. During this study, participants were asked probing questions which provided more depth than the initial interview questions and were utilized as a means to expand in these multiple directions.

My role was to take these non-sequential collected stories and provide coherence (Linde, 1993) and to deliver an orderly plot development when re-telling the stories both individually and collectively (Riessman, 1993). The research-worthy characteristics involved finding critical educational experiences in the participants' lives, then examining the impact of these events on their student identity development/person/character. As part of the re-telling, I looked for connections between and within the stories (Linde, 1993), which could then be constructed into one story (Spradley, 1980). I collected these individual stories in order to re-tell a collective story with connections between and within the stories, and thus affording the element of coherence (Linde, 1993) and plot development (Riessman, 1993).

Further Design Decisions

Linde (1993) provides three criteria for narrative inquiry life stories which support the psychological and developmental theoretical framework for this study: each must be evaluative

by showing something about the speaker; reportable as a unique story with landmark episodes where morality plays a role; and have a series of related connections. In this study, participants of Mexican descent who were once undocumented and who eventually sought and received DACA status told and evaluated their life stories; the constructs surrounding them and their response to the constructs played a role in their student identity development. These stories included landmark events, educational experiences as per this study, and provided a unique and morally relevant story from each participant. Data analysis found connections regarding student identity development within the individual life stories and between the life stories of the participants (Linde, 1993; Spradley, 1980).

Methods: Credibility

Drawing from multiple sources, Creswell (2014) recommends eight ways to increase the trustworthiness, authenticity, and credibility of a qualitative research project: triangulation; member checking; rich and thick description; clarifying bias; presenting discrepant information; prolonged time in the field; peer debriefing; and external auditing. Not all of these need be present, but it is recommended to use multiple ways (pp. 201-203). It is not necessarily the number of approaches a researcher uses to increase trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility, but also the depth and manner in which each is employed (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Janesick (1994) provides five types of triangulation to strengthen the worth of a qualitative research study. These include: data triangulation; investigator triangulation; theory triangulation; methodological triangulation; and interdisciplinary triangulation. Not all of these need be present in every study (pp. 214-215). I used data triangulation; investigator triangulation; theory triangulation; and interdisciplinary triangulation.

Data triangulation (Janesick, 1994) requires multiple sources of data. From each participant, I gathered an initial interview transcript, a follow up interview transcript, a written sensory wheel completed by myself and the participant, and a haiku poem created by the participant. Investigator triangulation calls for multiple evaluators assessing data. This can include the use of member checks. To be a member check, "the researcher needs to find a way for the participant to review the material one way or another" (Janesick, 1994, p. 216). I asked participants for ongoing advice regarding changes in collected data they thought were needed, and the arts-based activities provided a creative way to member check data. Theory triangulation (Janesick, 1994) involves using multiple ways to interpret the gathered data. During analysis I used Yin's (2011) five levels of analysis, analyzing while transcribing (Evers, 2011; Riessman, 1993), and Spradley's (1980) DRS.

Regarding interdisciplinary triangulation, Janesick (1994) states, "by using other disciplines, such as art, sociology, history, dance, architecture, and anthropology to inform our research process, we may broaden our understanding of method and substance" (p. 215). As discussed in the design decisions section of this chapter, I used aspects of ethnographic and phenomenological designs; from the disciplines of anthropology and psychology respectively (Meriam, 2002). My final design choice, narrative inquiry, comes from the disciplines of English language studies and interdisciplinary studies (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Additional to gathering interviews as data collection, I used arts-based research methods. I employed interdisciplinary triangulation as a variety of disciplines informed this study.

Janesick (1994) advocates structure and method when conducting qualitative research, yet also cautions researchers to keep broader perspectives in mind and to avoid "methodolatry" (p. 215), "the slavish attachment and devotion to method that so often overtakes the discourse in

the education and human services field" (p. 215). For Janesick (1994), the overarching objective

is to seek knowledge about experiences which needs to be shared, and to find connections which

allow the researcher to present a research-worthy study. While I adhered to accepted, structured

methods when conducting this study, I was also guided by this larger viewpoint which indicates

quality of data, not quantity is a critical factor.

In the following sections of this chapter, I will clarify my biases and describe my time in

the field. In the data collection methods section, I discuss how I used triangulation and member

checking, and I describe the probing methods and arts-based activities which elicited rich, and

thick descriptions. In the analysis section, I discuss my use of triangulation and peer debriefing.

Using these strengthened the trustworthiness, authenticity, and credibility of this study (Creswell,

2014).

Researcher Perspective

As the researcher is the tool in qualitative design (Creswell, 2008) due to its subjective

means of exploration, I brought a lens to this study which required reflective practice and

disclosure of this perspective (Yin, 2011). Sharing my perspective can provide transparency as a

means to increase credibility (Marshall & Rossman 2011; Sieber, 1992; Yin, 2011).

Additionally, my engagement in learning about the lives of students with undocumented and

DACA immigration status via my work and volunteer experiences lends to credibility (Yin,

2011). Furthermore, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and Yin (2011) ask narrative inquirers to

acknowledge their position in terms of race, class, gender and position of power.

As a White, female high school professional school counselor, I was first introduced to

the predicament of undocumented students at a career mid-point, about ten years into my

profession. A graduating senior at the high school where I was employed, who was ranked in

one of the top two positions in the graduating class, suddenly began to fail his classes. His Calculus teacher knew this was inconsistent with his ability and with probing discovered he was undocumented. He revealed to her, another counselor, and myself that he was purposefully failing because he feared calling attention to himself by sitting in an honorary position on the graduation stage. More specifically, he believed he might be identified by the U.S. ICE agency and be deported as a result of such high visibility. He was ranked second in a graduating class of over 500 hundred students, made a perfect score on the math section of the SAT test, yet he was unsure of his college opportunities. Military recruiters were constantly contacting him due to his near perfect score on the Armed Services Vocational Abilities Battery, the test used for placement in the military. He was often promised an amazing future in the military, which ended when the recruiters learned of his undocumented immigration status, a barrier to serving in the armed forces. Members of the high school counseling staff tried to help him successfully transition from high school to a university, but even counselors with many years of experience had little knowledge of options and how to best meet the needs of this student.

I am still not sure who informed him that Texas had ISRT and state financial aid funds available to help him, or if he was ever informed of this at all. I am sure it was not me, for I did not know about these options at that time. At that time and in the suburban school I worked in, discussing ways to assist students with undocumented status, illegal immigrants, as was the oft used term, was not encouraged. He may have been one of the many students who was misinformed that he would have to apply to state colleges and universities as an international student, thus doubling the cost of tuition. I am not sure of those things, but I do know he came back to the high school a few years later armed with a degree in Nuclear Engineering from a premier public university program. He came back to say goodbye to educators, for he did not

see a way to legally seek employment in the United States and thought his best option was to

find work overseas.

In 2012, a student who had recently graduated from this same high school came to speak

to our counseling staff at the behest of his former counselor. He described his experiences as a

high school student with undocumented status. Ranked in the top 15% of his graduating class,

with strong SAT scores, and extracurricular involvement he was not only a strong admissions

candidate, he was a strong candidate for scholarships. Yet, he shared that as a student with

undocumented status he not only saw pursuing a college degree as impossible, he also felt he

needed to keep his immigration status a secret from the educators of that high school when he

attended it. He feared exposure for himself and his family, along with concerns about social

stigma or possible deportation.

While in high school, he eventually revealed his immigration status to helpful educators

during his senior year, and he did enroll in a 4-year university. At this university, he found other

students with undocumented status and became active in a student organization dedicated to

finding solutions for students with undocumented classification. He met fellow college students

who had rallied for passage of the DREAM Act; and when this failed, these students sought and

received DACA status as soon as possible. He joined them in seeking DACA, and has remained

extremely politically informed ever since. His story inspired my pursuit of this topic for this

dissertation. It seemed this was a hidden population existing in many schools yet was

underserved. As I explored this topic with fellow educators, it became apparent many educators

did not know enough about how to best serve the population of students with undocumented or

DACA immigration status. Additionally, I learned broaching the topic instilled an unusual scope

of reactions from fellow educators ranging from knowledgeable support, to embarrassed

ignorance, to racist and xenophobic revelations.

To build knowledge and greater perspective, I started assisting an organization which

helped students with undocumented status. This included helping students with undocumented

status apply for college, seek financial aid, and apply for DACA status. Working with this

student organization provided a level of entre into a private community. However, I am a native

born U.S. citizen so I cannot claim to have full insight into the life of being an immigrant with

undocumented or DACA classification, thus placing cross-cultural implications into this study. I

do not speak Spanish with a fluency level allowing me to translate easily some of the Spanish

terms the participants' used. For translation, I depended on them, which I found more

collaborative as we sought for the best words together.

As a professional school counselor with ethical obligations calling for student advocacy

regardless of ethnicity or citizenship status, I have put this research interest into practice in my

workplace. For the past two and a half years, I have led counseling groups for students with

either undocumented or DACA immigration status. In these groups, I assist these students with

college applications, financial aid, and scholarship searches. I also try to connect these students

with those at the post-secondary level who can help them navigate that system: financial aid

officials, and/or students with the same immigration status who now have experience navigating

these systems. The groups' primary objective has always been to assist with post-secondary

transitions regarding academic concerns, but has been my experience that personal concerns

usually become an aspect of these counseling groups. Relationships based on trust have been

created due to my commitment over time.

My placement through professional and volunteer work into the world of students with DACA played a critical role. This increased my working vocabulary and knowledge of political, social and personal concerns of the students. While this study is not constructed to be ethnographic, some ethnographic methods were needed in order to help me construct more organized and meaningful tools to ascertain narratives from the participants. Reflective practice on my part better enhanced credibility of the research, particularly because this was a narrative study exploring a sensitive topic (Holliday, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Reflection of observations from time spent with DACA students helped create a better initial protocol and guided probing questions during the interviews (Stewart, 1998).

Site and Participant Selection

Site selection. The importance of context to this study and the need to have established relationships with participants willing to be interviewed twice determined site selection. I chose South Texas as the general site to seek participants because the historical context of this study was a critical factor in the narrative inquiry design. To provide uniformity needed for a cohesive re-telling of a shared story, I chose a site in one county in South Texas, providing a level of geopolitical consistency. I collaborated with participants regarding meeting locations with their convenience and privacy the key considerations. All the meetings took place in public restaurants and/or coffee shops during quiet, low traffic times and in seating areas removed from interaction with others.

Participant selection. I obtained IRB approval with guidelines to protect the confidentiality of participants selected for this study (see Appendix E). A specific number of participants was not set at the outset of the study because I decided saturation was not determined based on number of participants; but rather the richness of collected data. For this

study, saturation meant the collected data provided substantive connections to analyze and then provide a shared story (Linde, 1993; Spradley, 1980; Yin, 2011). Starting immediately after interviewing the first participant, I started the three levels of data analysis: Yin's five phases of data analysis; analyzing while transcribing (Evers, 2011; Riessman, 1993); and, steps from the DRS (Spradley, 1980). After four sets of interviews, saturation was reached.

Through professional affiliation, I knew several college/university students of Mexican descent who fit the demographic criteria of the study. From this potential selection group, three more precise criteria needed to be met in order to fulfill the objectives of the study. First, the participant needed knowledge of their personal history related to citizenship and DACA. Second, the participant was willing to use personal introspection as part of the interview process, and have a point of view regarding their experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Finally, the participant was willing to return for a follow-up interview which involved arts-based activities (Creswell, 2008; Leavy, 2015; Merriam, 2002). My initial intent to use snowball sampling (Yin, 2011) became apparent as a wrong decision when, after the first interview, I firmly understood important factors needed beyond these three criteria to collect strong interviews were trust, along with eagerness, and confidence.

The first factor, trust, may not have been so easily attainable considering my physical appearance and the cross-cultural aspects previously discussed (Liamputtong, 2008). There needed to be a trust based on a relationship between myself and the participants, and it needed to be trust akin to that of an ethnographer doing fieldwork (Vidich & Lyman, 1994). Participants who knew me and knew my views were more likely to feel that in spite of my physical appearance, I was a supporter and would not judge nor betray confidences. My experience as a professional school counselor informed me there is rarely complete trust, but rather degrees of it,

and more was needed as opposed to less for the research questions to be answered well. The study needed a researcher who had developed the type of trust derived from respected professional and volunteer affiliations with the immigrant community. I turned to places of personal fieldwork to seek participants.

I chose the second factors, eagerness and confidence, because by having participants who deeply wanted to share their story, I believed they would be faithful to the time and emotional commitments needed to yield significant data. They also needed to be eager to get their stories right and keen to clarify their point of view during probing questions. This eagerness was also necessary when collaborating through the process of investigator triangulation, "the use of several different researchers or evaluators" (Janesick, 1994, p. 215). The follow-up interview called for participants to actively review educational events from their initial life story, evaluate these, and then provide a new perspective of experiences by completing the arts-based activities. The participants became a second set of eyes of judgment and evaluators of the data. They needed to have the confidence to correct me when they deemed my evaluations as incorrect.

The criteria and judgments used for the selection process yielded life stories with thick, rich descriptions (Holliday, 2007) from four participants, who were each interviewed twice. These participants came from different levels of public postsecondary education: two from the university level and two from the community college level. I completed interviews when the interviews, arts-based activities, and collaboration between myself and participants provided saturation of data substantial enough to provide connections for analysis (Creswell, 2008; Spradley, 1980).

Participants. The first participant I interviewed was the college student who introduced me to the DACA community and inspired the research questions. I decided to interview him first

for three reasons. First, I knew enough about him to not need to focus on tracking his most basic story, and thus I had the ability to focus on the probing questions. This allowed richer data collection. Second, our prior relationship ensured a collaborative interview experience, and he was not shy in correcting me when needed. Third, my dissertation chair advised me to go through one full cycle of data collection with one participant before proceeding in order to evaluate mistakes and make changes as needed. My prior relationship with this participant made it more comfortable to make mistakes. After this first interview cycle the collection of rich data and the processes which enhanced investigator triangulation (Janesick, 1994). Based on this initial data collection cycle and through self-reflection and consultation with my dissertation chair, I made the decisions to alter my participant selection process from snowball sampling to purposive sampling (Yin, 2011).

After completing the first participant's interview cycle, I conducted interview cycles with three additional college students. The layers of the Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2007) model were reflected in commonalities shared by the participants. All participants attended public high schools in the same county, were attending public universities in the same city at the time of the interview, and came from households with parents of Mexican origin who have undocumented immigration status (microsystem and mesosystem). All of their parents were employed outside of the legally recognized process of following I-9 employment eligibility verification, while also paying income taxes to the U.S. government. All of the participants were subject to equivalent socio-economic factors imposed by large bureaucratic systems such as adhering to equivalent high school graduation requirements, public university admission requirements, and access to state financial aid (exosystem). Participants also shared similar broad cultural influences, such as exposure to similar media sources, comparable socio-economic and political environments,

and common Mexican heritage norms all situated in a South Texas city with a Latino population majority (macrosystem).

Two males and two females participated, and ranged in age from 19 to 24. Two were attending public community colleges and two were attending public 4-year universities. All of the participants were fluent in Spanish, and have been fluent in English for at least five years. All of the participants took English at the AP or dual credit level when in high school and came to schools in the United States during their elementary school years. One of the participants came from a home with a single mother as the head of the household with the remaining three participants living in households with both biological parents. The family household sizes ranged from three to five members, and all the participants lived in homes with comprised of members with mixed immigration status. Two of the students went through dangerous means to enter the United States, the other two students overstayed a tourist Visa. (see Appendix D for a comparison of demographic information).

Data Collection Methods

One of the four types of triangulation I used in this study included data triangulation, "the use of a variety of data sources in the study" (Janesick, 1994). The data I gathered and used came from the following sources: an initial transcribed interview; a follow up transcribed interview; a researcher/participant collaborative five senses wheel; and haiku produced by each participant. The primary sources of data for this study were collected from interviews and arts-based activities. There were two meetings with each participant. At the first meeting, I conducted an audio-taped interview following the first interview protocol. The second meeting incorporated arts-based activities along with a follow-up interview adhering to a protocol (see Appendix E). Probing questions were asked during both interviews to enrich data collection.

The transcriptions from these interviews and the results of the arts based activities were used for data analysis. The initial interviews ranged in length from one hour and five minutes to one hour and 35 minutes. The follow-up interviews ranged in length from 30 minutes to one hour in length. The time from the initial interview until the time of the follow-up interview for completion of an interview cycle ranged from three to nine days per participant.

This study included arts-based research methods. The use of arts based research encompasses a variety of methods including theatrical performance, written expression, and visually based arts such as paintings and sculpture. (Dominquez, Duarte, Espinoza, Martinez, Nygreen, Perez, & Saba, 2009; Bagley & Castro Salazar, 2012). Arts-based research has the goal of illumination and the non-traditional means of providing voice, making it well-suited to bringing forward information related to the social justice concerns surrounding students with DACA status. Students with undocumented immigration status have performed theatrically to audiences as a way to construct a counter narrative to the framework of being *illegal* (Dominguez et al., 2009). Researchers have conducted post-performance in-depth interviews with both the theatrical players with undocumented status who have performed a production about their lives and members of the primarily Mexican-origin audience. This created a type of ethnography meeting performance art study (Bagley & Castro-Salazar, 2012). Through the arts, self-identity can be examined (Leavy, 2015).

In this study, the participants chose a specific event from the life story shared at the initial interview. This event needed to evoke strong sensory memories for the participant. Then, I guided participants through the descriptive Five Senses Activity (see Appendix E). Next, the participants used the Five Senses Activity to write a haiku as a means to artistically explore experiences which impacted their student identity development (see Appendix E). The

parsimony of a haiku invokes choice and a more precise illumination of an experience; and, the power of haiku can "invoke in the reader the experience of a unique and individual moment" (Porter, 2007). This can also be a fun activity for participants, thus creating an ease in eliciting data regarding potentially sensitive subject matter (Leavy, 2015). According to Leavy (2015), poems have a way of providing "new insights into the social world" (p. 79). Limiting words can increase validity and clarify a point of view. Poetry also provides a way to understand the writer's identity, particularly relevant in this study as personal identity is one of the core aspects of the theoretical model (Leavy, 2015; Porter, 2007).

Interviews. As a professional school counselor I have experience with interactive questioning to prompt responses; however, interviewing is different from counseling. To differentiate interviews from counseling, I practiced going through the protocol in advance and practiced using reframing questions to elicit depth and organizational control (Roulsten, deMarrais, & Lewis, 2003; Dick, 2006; Dilley, 2000). I conducted two open-ended, semi-structured interviews per participant using the interview protocols (see Appendix E) (Creswell, 2014). The first interview followed a sequence of meaningful events during the participants' lives, with a beginning, middle, and end (Merriam, 2009). During the interviews, I found some specific methods provided better data collection and better informed the analysis. In the first interview with each participant, probing was a critical factor as a way to gather more dimensional data from the participants. This meant asking questions which elicited examination by the participants of their experiences which moves inward, outward, backward and forward (Clandinin &Connelly, 2000). The interview protocol provided general questions which generated good data, yet using probing questions provided opportunities for the participants to encounter tension points in the telling of the narrative. Examining these tension points, which

included moments when participants' encountered facing boundaries, reframing their life story, experienced personal change, or questioned their core beliefs, was a critical factor in making these narratives worthy of research (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

At the end of the first interview, I gave each participant a preview of what would happen in the follow up interview. Without providing complete specifics of the activities, I informed participants they would be doing arts-based activities. I told the participants it would not involve "markers, glue, or any type of artistic drawing," but it would be a type of poetry that would draw upon vivid descriptions of an event. I told them I would guide them through a written exercise which was meant to aid them in writing a type of poetry. Then, together we brainstormed specific events during this first interview which stood out as most powerful in terms of memory and their ability to think of the sensory details.

At this point, investigator triangulation commenced (Janesick, 1994). The participants fully provided ideas regarding which event they wanted to use as inspiration for the poem. They also began correcting and clarifying my perceptions regarding events shared during the interview. This member checking, a process of reviewing the collected material (Janesick, 1994), continued into the next interview. I asked for this review, not only for triangulation reasons, but also as good ethical practice. I provided a place and the means for participants to tell their stories, and the participants provided input regarding interpretations of these stories (Merriam, 2002). For those exposing themselves through participation in research, shared hegemony provides an opportunity toward equitable, ethical research practice (Liamputtong, 2008).

Arts-based research activities. I scheduled the second interviews with each participant as soon as possible to ensure better retention and connection to the first interview. The time

between the first interview and the second interview ranged from three to nine days. In the follow-up interview, I asked participants to identify a single critical experience from the list of possibilities created at the end of the initial life story interview. To provide more options and continue a level of shared hegemony, I asked each participant if some other experience had come to mind since our discussion about this at the end of the initial interview.

Spradley (1980) advocates creating maps as part of field research and uses a descriptive question matrix (pp. 82-83) for researchers to gain deeper elaborations. I used the Five Senses Activity (see Appendix E) as the map. At the beginning of the second interview with each participant, I led the Five Senses Activity by drawing it, and then recording the writing during the activity (see Appendix F). During this activity, participants elaborated specific descriptions associated with the each of the five senses which were activated as during that particular experience. I used questions from Spradley's (1980) Descriptive Question Matrix (pp. 82-83) for probing. Together we brainstormed a writing session with speed and imperfection. My objective was to let the participants understand spelling or grammatical correctness were not the priority, but rather ideas. This elaboration of descriptive elements of the experience provided an opportunity for participants to review aspects of their story, prioritize meaningful experiences, and provide greater descriptive clarity. This also provided another layer of member checking, a type of investigator triangulation (Janesick, 1994).

After completing the Five Senses Activity, I asked participants to use it to write a haiku about this experience. Haiku is a form of Japanese poetry where writers elicit images through simplicity (Leavy, 2015). Authors are limited to three lines of words, and each line is limited by the number of syllables (beats) the string of words can have: five syllables on the first line, seven syllables on the second line, and five syllables on the final line. Because the participants were

students, I assured them, "This is not a grade and not a test. I am not going to count your syllables, so if that is off in some places, it is not important." I explained the point of the activity was to make word choices to capture the complex event discussed during the Five Senses Wheel activity. I demonstrated a pounding method on the table to aid in counting syllables. Some of the participants asked if it was permissible to underline or circle words from the sensory wheel to aid in their writing. I told them this was purely their choice, and they could write as many haiku as they wanted to write. I also told them they could choose other words not written down yet, as the objective of the Five Senses Activity was only to activate their sensory memory.
After this, I walked away from the table and away from participant view for 15-20 minutes. Occasionally, I checked with them to see if there were questions and to offer encouragement and appreciation.

At the end, we discussed the haiku (see Appendix F) and the Five Senses Activity by following the follow-up interview protocol. The meeting ended after I asked participants to share anything they felt they had missed and wanted to be sure was documented as part of their story. The investigator triangulation (Janesick, 1994) and ethical practices (Liamputtong, 2008) initiated at the end of the first interview continued throughout the second interview. During this follow-up interview and arts-based activity there was ongoing member checking (Janesick, 1994) and a better level of co-authorship became more apparent (Liamputtong, 2008).

Layers of Data Analysis

In this study the data came from transcriptions from two audio-taped interviews from each participant and the products of their arts-based activity; the Five Senses Activity and the haiku. To increase trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility (Creswell, 2014), I used multiple layers to analyze the collected data. This provided theory triangulation (Janesick, 1994). I used

Yin's (2011) five levels of analysis as a broad, overarching means to approach the data. Then I used two additional layers of analysis: analyzing while transcribing (Evers, 2011; Riessman, 1993), and Spradley's (1980) DRS to create a taxonomy to sort and re-build the data.

Five phases of data analysis. Yin (2011) discusses five phases to analyze data. The first phase involves compiling the data by organizing and sorting it in a general order. The second phase is disassembling the data by breaking this down into smaller parts and coding these smaller units. In the third phase, data is reassembled to create meaningful structures. Disassembling and reassembling is a circuitous process, as reassembling often reveals more ways to disassemble data. The fourth phase is interpreting the data by creating a new narrative derived from all of the narratives. In the final phase, concluding, final connections are made to fully bring the narratives together as one study. Yin's (2011) is not a linear process, but rather continually interactive between the levels. Revisiting phases of the model for better examination and new perspectives of the data is part of the process.

Analyzing while transcribing. I analyzed while transcribing using gisted transcription (Evers, 2011; Riessman, 1993). This allowed me to listen for key words and phrases which appeared repetitively, and to listen to tones (Riessman, 1993). After each of the first interviews, I ran through a first pass of listening to the entire interview within 24 hours of completing the interview. There were three reasons for this. First, there was going to be a follow up interview which included the arts-based activity. Completing a first pass of transcription provided me options for discussing potential additional critical events for the participant to use to write the haiku. Second, this allowed me to prepare to provide the participant the opportunity to clarify discussions that may have been re-directed, left incomplete, or needed change/clarification. Third, this allowed me to start listing key words and phrases from the initial interview (see

Appendix G) while it was still fresh in experience (Evers, 2011). This part of analyzing while

transcribing aligned well with Yin's (2011) compiling and disassembling stages. Several passes

through each of the audio interviews were needed for a fuller transcription and disassembling

(Yin, 2011) the data. I listened for points where tension was evident (Clandinin & Connelly,

2000) as this signaled potential times of plot turns, use of strategies, and where character

development took place (Riessman, 1993). It was also important to note tone, sighs, and other

verbal and physical gestures which accompanied the narrative (Merriam, 2009; Riessman, 1993).

Further data analysis. As the next layer of analysis, I used steps four through eight of

Spradley's (1980) DRS. Step four directs researchers to make grand tour observations by

viewing data broadly; step five provides ways to make a domain analysis by looking for

semantic connections within the data; step six tells researchers make focused observations by

eliminating unnecessary data; step seven show ways to make a taxonomic analysis by tying

together the domains; and step eight involves making selected observations by examining

contrasts in the data.

Step four of Spradley's DRS (1980) asks researchers to make grand tour observations, so

I took the time to step back. I reviewed the lists of key terms and phrases I had created during

gisted transcription, and I added to this list after reading the transcripts. Yin (2011) views the

five steps of analysis as an iterative process, not in a singular direction but as an ongoing

movement between the steps. Spradley's (1980) grand tour observation during step four helped

me adhere to an iterative process. I re-examined the terms and made corrections and additions,

while also looking for patterns since, "analysis is a search for patterns" (p. 85). This became a

list of included terms, which are words, phrases, and concepts which fit together when a cover

term connects them.

Spradley (1980) defines cover terms as words within cultural domains which have semantic relationships with other terms (p.89). Step five of the DRS directs researchers regarding how to find these patterns using semantic processes. I created cover terms by using semantic processes which connected included terms as "kinds of…is a way to…is a reason for" (p. 93) and other semantic connections which showed patterns. Then, I created flashcards with the cover terms and used them to find semantic relationships within and between all four interviews as per the design of this study (Linde, 1993)

I created flashcards of these semantic connections as a way to categorize (Yin, 2011). This way of sorting tied data together within and between participants' stories to find shared elements. It also put similar cover terms together and connected shared relationships leading to a domain analysis (Spradley, 1980). This way of implementing step five from Spradley's DRS (1980) also aligned with Yin's (2011) steps of categorizing and disassembling the data (Yin, 2011), by organizing it, breaking it into parts and coding it (Yin, 2011).

Step six of the DRS, making focused observations, is a way to delineate the data needed to fit within the scope and focus of the intended study (Spradley, 1980). Not all of the data collected was needed to answer the research questions, so this was a time to focus and eliminate unnecessary data, while also maintaining a larger perspective. Spradley (1980) provides five criteria for selecting a focus. These include: personal interest, suggestions by informants, theoretical interest, strategic ethnography, and organizing domains (pp. 105-107). I chose to use suggestions by informants, theoretical interest, and organizing domains for this study. The Five Senses Activity and haiku created by the participants during the second interview provided suggestions by informants which had specific words and phrases I used to make adjustments within and to the categories. The Five Senses Activity and haiku pertained to

singular events, so to only use these was insufficient. I also used the transcripts from the follow-up interviews to make focused observations. The follow-up interviews provided an opportunity for the participants to member check the initial interviews, thus giving them a chance to provide focus.

The next focus method I used was following a theoretical interest. This study was guided by Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) bioecological systems theory, a psychological theory of human development. Keeping in mind this theoretical framework, along with research questions which looked at experiences and how these shaped the student identity development of the participants, helped me concentrate on words, terms, and relationship associated with psychological processes.

The final focus method I used was organizing domains. This meant looking at the domains, determining which were too broad, and finding semantic ways to bring them together. It is also a time to place domains in some type of order. One way to do this, Spradley (1980) suggests, is to look at sequences of events and ensuring there was sufficient breakdown within a category. As the data were collected following a storytelling format, this worked well in this study. I lined up the domains as sequential events over time.

Spradley's (1980) seventh step of the DRS is making a taxonomic analysis, which involves organizing the domains together which share definable elements. This aligns with Yin's (2011) third phase of analysis, reassembling the data to create meaningful structures. The most obvious shared definable element was passage of time. The first taxonomy represented the participants' distant memories before DACA was even a possibility; the second taxonomy represented recent events in the participants' lives when DACA became a possibility; and the third taxonomy was characterized by future plans in light of their status of having DACA.

My original intent was to only use steps four through seven of Spradley's (1980) DRS for data analysis, however I found the something within the domains was problematic. Within the domains the cover terms came together, but had a range of meanings per participant which was dichotomous when viewing the domain as a whole. For example, regarding the cover term of sharing stories, some of the participants, prior to getting DACA status, went to extreme measures to hide their undocumented status out of fear; others were very open about their undocumented status and felt no fear regarding this. This is when Creswell's (2014) recommendation to use peer debriefing became useful.

      Peer debriefing. Throughout the time I was in the analysis stage of the process, I was meeting regularly with a fellow doctoral candidate. The additional critical eyes from this peer not only aided in a more sound construction of the final taxonomies, it also increased confirmability that the results were sound (Creswell, 2014; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). We were both using Spradley's (1980) DRS for our dissertations, but for very different types of research topics. We started exchanging papers for review. We also reviewed each other's DRS, and provided each other input regarding constructing the taxonomies. The peer I was meeting with has an English teaching background, and he has a strong experience in deconstructing writing. When I presented to this peer my concern regarding the dichotomies present in the domains, he noted this actually made sense when looking at these shared stories as one story. He argued to view and construct the domains as dichotomous clash points adhered well to plot development in storytelling. This in turn served the aspect of narrative inquiry design of re-telling a shared story. I decided to explore this further by applying contrast questions from step eight of the DRS (Spradley, 1980).

From step eight of the DRS (Spradley, 1980), I applied dyadic contrast questions and looked at dimensions of contrast (pp. 125-128) in the domains. When applying dyadic contrast questions, I asked what the differences were between and within the participants in how they viewed the various cover terms. This created dimensions of contrast, a range of differences yielded from these questions. As I applied the dyadic contrast questions, I found the range within each domain became highly polarized, leading to each domain best defined using "versus" between the extremes within the domain. This was another round of an iterative process of re-examining the data and re-organizing it, this time at the domain and taxonomy level. This re-organizing aligned with Yin's (2011) disassembling and reassembling stages of data analysis. The taxonomies moved in a chronological progression: from distant memories to current realities and then future plans. Within the distant memories taxonomy were the dichotomous domains of Mexico schooling versus U.S. schooling, then openings versus barriers. In the second taxonomy of recent events were the domains of breaker the law versus follower the law and obscured versus visible. In the third taxonomy of future plans were detours versus gateways and dreams versus realities. This final taxonomical structure, following steps four through eight of Spradley's (1980) DRS, provided a framework for a singular interpretation (Yin, 2011) of the combined data from multiple life stories (see Appendix H).

Yin's (2011) final step is for a conclusion, a time when the study comes together fully. By utilizing plot development structures commonly used in narrative storytelling these multiple stories can be retold as a singular story (Linde, 1993; Welcker, 2014) where the strategies used by the participants which form their student identity development are illuminated. In Chapter Four I explain the domains in each taxonomy, and then use this taxonomic structure to follow a

shared story line which follows plot development (Welcker, 2014) to examine the strategies the participants used in their student identity development.

Presentation of Findings

   Elements of Literary Storytelling. The narrative design of this study called for literary structure with a plot line to a story. Stories have "a very large set of conventions: types of characters, plot rhythms, chapter structures, point-of-view limitations" (Foster, 2003, p. xiv). Seasoned readers and writers develop the ability to see the patterns of literature, where archetypes, universal types of characters, become apparent (Foster, 2003). To re-tell the shared story, I followed three guides. First, I followed overarching guidelines for telling stories of quests provided by Foster (2003). Second, I used structured approaches to writing from the Writing Commons website (Welcker, 2014). Finally, I used concepts of Jungian archetypes, typical characters, and metaphors developed by Vogler (2007) in *The Writer's Journey.*

   Criteria for a quest. Foster (2003) discusses multiple types of literature to categorize stories. One of these is the quest. In a quest, a central figure, the protagonist, either by choice or circumstance experiences an unexpected journey with consequences. According to Foster (2004) five things need to be present in a story to make it a quest: (1) The protagonist, or quester; (2) A place to go; (3) A stated reason to go there; (4) Obstacles along the way; (5) The real reason the quester went there. According to Foster (2003) the stated reason to go there is never the true reason for the quest, for a quest is always a journey to learn about one's self. This is why quests are usually for the young as they need to learn their identity and life purpose. "The real reason for a quest is self-knowledge" (Foster, 2003, p.3). It is this quest story which creates the self-knowledge these students attain as part of their student identity development.

Principles of storytelling. University professors send students to the Writing Commons website, as a guide for analyzing and writing stories. Welcker (2014) describes four principles to follow when writing stories. The first principle is point of view. This asks writers to decide if a piece will be narrated using first person, from the main character's point of view using the pronoun I; second person, from a narrator telling a specific person the story and using the pronoun you; or, third person, from a narrator telling about the story and using the pronouns, her or she. The second principle is characterization. This describes how the people in the story develop physically, psychologically, and socially. The third principle is plot. Plot is driven by experiences, and needs to begin at an interesting place. As the story unfolds, the experiences follow a rising series of actions leading to a climax, a high point of conflict. After the climax, the slope of experiences descends toward a resolution. The fourth principle is conflict. Conflict is represented in the internal and external processes which disturb and compel the characters(s) through the story.

When re-telling the shared story for this study, I used third person as the point of view, and the characterization is primarily psychological and social, with some physical elements of acknowledged. I chose to use third person because I was not part of the story but, rather, someone passing the stories on to readers. I chose psychological, social and physical characterizations because these aligned with the Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2007) sociocultural development theory. I used the formula provided on the Writing Commons (Welcker, 2014) to follow the plot development after asking college/university English professors for guidance in literary writing. The plot followed the domain analysis clash points starting with Mexico schooling versus U.S. schooling, then rising to openings versus barriers, then breaking the law versus following the law. The point where the characters seek and obtain DACA status is the

climax, during the obscured versus visible domain. The plot descends with detours versus gateways and leads to resolution in dreams versus realities. These domains are points of conflict in the stories which drive the characters forward (see Appendix I).

One distinction narrative inquiry design has from other forms of qualitative research is its use of metaphor. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) share a series of metaphoric titles one dissertation writer uses for re-telling the combined stories from a narrative study. They argue this series of metaphorical titles used for the re-telling enrich the data and the study, because metaphors challenge reader and writers to think. Metaphors add to the process of representation and evaluations, two important aspects of narrative inquiry design (Riessman, 1993). Using literary concepts described by Foster (2003) and Vogler (2007), I incorporated the use of metaphors in this story by re-telling it with metaphors associated with a quest, or journey; and, with a protagonist as the hero who encounters fellow archetypal characters during their journey.

Archetypes and metaphors. In *The Writer's Journey*, Vogler (2007) tells writers to use metaphors with concepts of archetypes, universal personality types, developed by psychologist Carl Jung. Vogler (2007) acknowledges this was originally explored in Joseph Campbell's (1949) book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Stories following a quest or journey have an archetypal character, the protagonist, labeled as a hero. This hero encounters a variety of other archetypal characters on their quest; including, mentors who provide guidance; threshold guardians who create obstacles; heralds who voice a need for change; shapeshifters who are fickle; shadows who show characters their inner fears; allies who can be trusted; and, tricksters who provide mischief (Vogler, 2007). In the re-telling of this story, the students, represented as central characters, encounter people along their journey who fit these archetypes which I describe metaphorically when re-telling the shared story.

Vogler (2007) acknowledges two criticisms I need to address regarding his theory of writing. The first criticism is that formulaic writing interferes with originality. This study presents Janesick's (1994) rationale stating knowledge acquirement is a primary objective of qualitative research. This aligns with Vogler's (2007) argument that there are elements of general form in storytelling which allow readability and still allows significant ways for learning to take place. The second criticism of Vogler's (2007) is labeling the protagonist as a hero. This can have Western cultural and gender implications not shared universally. Some cultures can be herophobic, for heroes have traditionally been people who were built up only to lead to disappointment. The rise of Hitler during 1930s Nazi Germany is an example of this concern. Another concern about heroes is the term may imply a use of physical force to overpower those less powerful. A final concern is that heroes have traditionally been male, without respect for feminine characteristics which can be deemed worthy of a hero story (pp. xvi-xxii). I acknowledge these concerns and define terms in a manner to avoid these concerns. This study defines the word hero as a term to denote the protagonist. This is a story with characters who start as the unwilling hero archetype, central protagonists on quest or journey, and not seeking fame or to overpower others. These are reluctant heroes/protagonists thrust into a quest, yet who do not resist the obstacles a typical quest entails.

I incorporated the metaphors of Foster (2003) and Vogler (2007) when re-telling the shared story. This is reflected through an interchangeableness of terms. In the re-telling of the shared story terms from Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2006) bioecological systems theory, key terms from the foci of inquiry, terms used in literary storytelling, and metaphorical terms become interchangeable. For example, person and individual are like terms from bioecological systems theory, which is interchangeable with student from the focus of inquiry terms, character from

literary terms. Metaphorically, this is the hero of the story. Process/strategies and proximal

processes/tactics are similarly interchangeable. Context and setting drive a plot over time.

Vogler (2007) sees storytelling as series of three acts. In re-telling the shared story I used the

DRS analysis (Spradley, 1980) from chapter three to provide structure. The three acts are

interchanged with the three taxonomies of distant memories, recent events, and future plans. The

domains from the DRS analysis (see Appendices H and I) are interchangeable as points of

conflict, which propel the plot. The six domains are followed chronologically is in this retelling.

These six domains are: (1) Mexico schooling versus U.S. schooling; (2) Openings versus

barriers; (3) Break the law versus follow the law; (4) Obscured versus visible; (5) Detours versus

gateways; (6) Dreams versus realities.

Chapter Summary

This chapter explained the methodology used for this study. After reviewing the

theoretical framework and focus of inquiry of the study, this chapter provided a detailed account

of the research paradigm, research design decisions, researcher perspective, site and participant

selection, data collection methods, and layers of analysis used for this study.

This was a qualitative research study using a narrative inquiry design focusing on the

factors of context, character development, and plot development generated from shared life

stories (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Linde, 1993; Riessman, 1993). My perspective was

revealed to provide better transparency. The methods section discussed ways this study

increased trustworthiness, authenticity, and credibility (Creswell, 2014). This included four

types of triangulation methods (Janesick, 1994) member checking, rich and thick descriptions

(Holliday, 2007), and peer debriefing (Creswell, 2014). The site was located in South Texas,

where four participants were interviewed twice per participant. The primary sources of data

came from interviews and an arts based research activity (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Leavy, 2015; Riessman, 1993).

Multiple layers of analysis were used and discussed. The overarching analysis was Yin's (2011) five phases used to analyze data: compiling; disassembling; reassembling; interpreting; and, concluding. The next layers used for analysis were analyzing while transcribing (Evers, 2011; Riessman, 1993) and steps four through eight of Spradley's (1980) DRS. This organized data into a series of domains within a taxonomy which provides structure for re-telling a shared story. The method used to re-tell this story was explained. The shared story used elements of literature writers employ in stories telling of quests, or journeys. These elements of literature included criteria for a quest, principles of storytelling, and the use of archetypes and metaphors.

Chapter Four: Findings

The purpose of this study was to describe the educational experiences of students of Mexican descent with DACA status and the impact of those experiences on the student identity development of these students. The foci of this inquiry were:

1. What strategies do students of Mexican descent with DACA status use to negotiate their student experiences?

2. How do these strategies influence the development of their student identity?

For the theoretical framework of this study, I followed Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2006) bioecological systems theory, a sociocultural theory of psychological development. I used a narrative inquiry design which incorporated literary elements in order to tell a story in a coherent sequence (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Linde, 1993). A detailed description of the theoretical framework, design, and methods can be found in chapter three.

In this chapter, I reveal the finding by re-telling a shared story based on the gathered life stories of the four participants who are college students with DACA status. This shared story follows a sequential plot, a series of themes, discussed from each participant's perspective. This story has a beginning, middle, and end using character and plot development (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Reismann, 1993). The method to share these findings incorporate elements of literature commonly practiced by authors when writing stories. First, I summarize each participants' story. Then, I follow the elements of literature to re-tell a shared story using accepted literary practices. The practices include following character development of the central figures across time through a series of clash points which foster plot development. Throughout the story, plot development points show six sequential strategies these students employed in their

lives because of their immigration status. These strategies have impacted their student identity development.

Defining the terms strategies and student identity development shows how the findings address the research questions. The term strategies refers to large planning approaches these students apply to situations which allow them to negotiate student experiences. The overall strategic approach is comprised of a set of tactics, distinct proximal processes, these students used from elementary school through college because they are of Mexican descent and went from undocumented to DACA status. Simply stated, these students thought, planned, and acted in certain ways because of the imposed immigration statuses. Student identity development incorporates all aspects of PPCT per the Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2006) theoretical model. The person, or student, is moving across time, and engaging a series of processes within the context of living in South Texas while having these immigration concerns. This application of PPCT facilitates their student identity development.

Data collection methods included conducting life history interviews and completing arts-based activities with four students who have DACA status. The arts-based activities provided thick, rich descriptions (Holliday, 2007) and allowed collaboration and member checking (Janesick, 1994) by the participants. They had the agency of voice in their stories and were free to "correct" them. The three levels of analysis provided connections between and within the stories and a structure for re-telling a combined story (Linde, 1993). Upon completing of analysis, I had six domains in chronological order I could follow to re-tell the story. These were: (1) Mexico schooling versus U.S. schooling, (2) Openings versus barriers, (3) Break the law versus follow the law, (4) Obscured versus visible, (5) Detours versus gateways, (6) Dreams versus realities. The domains were further divided into a three-part sequential taxonomy: distant

memories containing domains one and two; recent events containing domains three and four; and future plans containing domains five and six.

Elements of Literary Storytelling

Following a structured story using character and plot development were key components for the narrative design used for this study. I applied elements of literature from three sources to construct the shared story. First, I considered the type of story the data were presenting. This led to choosing a thematic structure of a journey, or quest. Foster (2004) lists five characteristics of a quest: (1) It needs protagonists, or questers, (2) The questers need a place to go, (3) The questers need a stated reason to go there, (4) Questers must face obstacles along the way, (5) The story ultimately reveals the real reason for the quest. Second, I applied the four principles for writing literature from Writing Commons (Welcker, 2014). These include point of view, characterization, plot, and conflict. Third, I used the archetype, typical, characters and metaphors from Jungian psychology as described in Vogler's (2007) *The Writer's Journey.*

Foster's (2004) first and second criteria calls for questers with a place to go. These students went on a physical journey when crossing into the United States from Mexico. For the students participating in the journey was not by choice, but according to Foster (2003), quests often commence in this manner. Per the third criteria, the participants shared a stated reason for their quest, to move to the United States. It is this fourth criteria where Foster's criteria aligns well with this study. Foster (2003) says the stated reason to go on the quest is never the true reason for the quest. According to Foster (2003), a quest is always a journey to learn about one's self. Because this study seeks to explore strategies which impact student identity development, Foster's criteria supports the research questions.

College students go to the Writing Commons website to guide them in analyzing and writing stories. Welcker (2014) describes four principles to follow when writing stories: (1) Point of view; (2) Characterization; (3) Plot; (4) Conflict. The point of view is how the story is told. I used third person in this re-telling because I was not part of the story, but rather portraying a story passed to me. For characterization, this story is primarily psychological and social, with some physical elements because the theoretical framework has sociocultural and developmental characteristics. The plot for this study follows the domains from the DRS, which act as plot points. These proceed in a rising motion which leads to a climax followed by descending motion (see Appendix I). Conflict is evident in the clashes of each plot point, where the oppositional forces of the domains force the students to employ strategies.

I integrated the use of metaphor by using literary concepts described by Foster (2003) and Vogler (2007) to re-tell this shared story. This story unfolds as a quest, or journey; and, with heroes (the protagonists) who encounter archetypal, universally representative, characters during the journey. According to Foster (2003) literature centered on a quest follows a central figure, a protagonist hero, through a series of trials to get to the ending. How the hero faces the obstacles and overcomes these helps the hero gain self-knowledge, the ultimate purpose of the quest. Vogler (2007) provides writers schemas of character metaphors through archetypal characters developed by psychologist Carl Jung. Vogler (2007) starts with the hero as a central protagonist who encounter these metaphoric characters during the journey. These archetypal characters include mentors who provide guidance, threshold guardians who create obstacles, heralds who voice a need for change, shapeshifters who are fickle, shadows who show characters their inner fears, allies who can be trusted, and tricksters who provide mischief (Vogler, 2007). In this story, the students are the protagonist heroes who encounter people along their journey who fit

these metaphorical archetypes characters. These students start as unwilling heroes, for they have no choice in commencing this journey. As their quest unfolds and they continue to overcome obstacles, they develop into more fully participant heroes.

This re-telling of the shared story interchanges terminology. Terms from elements of literature and the metaphors of Foster (2003) and Vogler (2007) were interchanged with terms from Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2006) bioecological systems theory, and terms from the focus of inquiry. Person and individual are interchangeable terms from bioecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), which can be substituted for student from the focus of inquiry terms, and character from literary terms. Metaphorically, this is the hero of the story (Foster, 2003; Vogler, 2007). Process/strategy and proximal processes/tactics are also interchangeable. Context and setting drive this plot over time in a three-act story as per Vogler's (2007) schematic map for storytelling. The taxonomies and domains from the DRSanalysis (Spradley, 1980) provide structure for this schematic map. The three taxonomies; distant memories, recent events, and future plans, are the three acts. The plot is driven by the chronological domains within the taxonomies from the DRS analysis, which are interchangeable as points of conflict for this story.

The Shared Story

Now is a time for a change in tone for sharing these findings, since I promised to re-tell this shared story using metaphorical literary elements. First, I introduce the characters, the heroes according to Vogler (2007), in a first person account. Each has an individual story to share which provides a window into their processes and the context of their individual lives. Then, I follow the domains in each taxonomy from the DRS (Spradley, 1980) to tell the shared story of their quest. For all of the protagonists in this shared story, this was not a quest by

choice, but a quest imposed on them where they learned to use strategies to navigate "perilous encounters".

The story unfolds following shared conflict points. At each of these points I describe strategies the protagonists use to negotiate their lives. These are: (1) Maintain memories of Mexico in native language and with knowledge there is no return; (2) Accept unique immigration circumstances fully and with clear cognizance; (3) Find creative ways to avoid detection; (4) Blend in until it is safe to expose undocumented status; (5) Cast aside confinements of undocumented status and enjoy new freedoms of having DACA, while accepting remaining struggles; (6) Limit the scope of future planning while staying aware of precarious situation. In this quest the hero characters (the students) learn about themselves in a way which ultimately shapes their student identity development.

Summary of Each Participant's Story

Mario. I started my interviews with Mario because he was the student who first introduced me to the world of those with undocumented or DACA status. Prior to the interview, I had general knowledge of his life story in relationship to his citizenship status and there was a high level of comfort in our relationship which allowed for self-revelation. By the time of the interview, we had known each other for a few years, and had actually worked on projects together. I had attended meetings of a DACA organization with him, and he introduced me to several other students with DACA.

We met in a coffee shop at a time when few people were around, providing a great level of privacy in a public space. Because I have known Mario for a few years, I have been witness to the changes he has experienced. He entered the university trying to stay hidden as undocumented and eventually evolved to being very open about his citizenship status and

leading a school organization aimed at assisting undocumented students. As we started the interview, he jokingly reminded me that he had been interviewed by more than a few members of the press, so sharing his story was no longer uncomfortable.

Mario's earliest memories are of life in Mexico City. He and his mother and sister lived with his father's family in a small house which was located on the family's larger compound. The large main house, where the father's family lived had a lot of land, and they stayed in a smaller type of guest house which did not have a restroom so they had to go to the main house. Mario's fathers' family liked to have a lot of parties, and he remembers these parties starting on Thursday and continuing non-stop into the weekend. There was a lot of alcohol use at the parties, and Mario's mother began to feel this was not a good environment for the children. The marriage between Mario's parents eventually became abusive, and Mario found himself trying to protect his mother from his father's physical violence. His mother was also taking the children to counseling, which involved long bus trips and was very expensive. Mario's mother no longer had family members in Mexico City. Her sister had married a U.S. citizen, had moved to the United States, and had U.S. citizenship. Her mother had moved to the United States with this same sister, and was going through the citizenship process.

Mario remembers going to the embassy in Mexico City with his mother, and remembers her leaving upset about something that had not gone well. Mario attended a private, Catholic school in Mexico City and one day when he was in the third grade, his mother came to pick up him and his sister with suitcases and backpacks. She told the children they were going to leave. They went to the airport, flew to Monterrey, and then got on a bus to a town along the Texas border. That was the first time he had ever been on an airplane. He would not get on a plane again until 15 years later, after he got DACA.

At the border town, on the Mexican side, he remembers meeting up with his grandmother and aunt. They were given suitcases with important documents and information, for they were free to cross back and forth based on their U.S. citizenship status. Mario remembers there were attempts to get IDs as part of a plan to cross into the United States by going across the bridge as tourists. But for reasons he does not know, that plan was scratched. He remembers being at a house for a few days with other children, waiting.

On a Saturday morning a man came to get his mother, sister and him. They packed clothes in plastic bags and then went to a spot along the Rio Grande River where there was a field of dry grass on the both the Mexican and American sides of the river. He could see a soccer field on the American side and cars were parked on the American side for the soccer games.

The bags of clothes were thrown over to the American side. The plan was for them to cross, change into the dry clothes walk along the soccer field parking lot as if looking for their car, then go to a convenience store down the road and call for a pre-arranged waiting car. Getting across the river involved holding on to a black inner tube, with a man pulling it across the river. Mario commented, "Which makes me think, people here in Texas sometimes ask me to go to tubing which I always think, 'Yeah, whatever.' When I think of a tube I don't think about floating down the river and drinking and partying….."
"A tube has a whole other meaning for you," I replied. "Exactly," said Mario.

When they got to the other side, they changed into the dry clothes quickly. Mario is convinced there was a distant encounter with a Border Patrol agent. "There was a border patrol, I saw his hat, I saw the top lining of his hat and I was like, oh! At that moment, I think I understood what was happening, but I just changed and I'm pretty sure he saw us but he looked

the other way. Everything could have changed. He could've stopped us and we would've gone down, and I would not be here giving this interview. I have not told my mom or my sister to this day that that happened."

When Mario's family made it to the convenience store, his most distinct memory was the taste of the Blue Gatorade his mother bought for him. To this day, Blue Gatorade is his favorite drink. The phone call was made, the car came and the family drove to Central Texas. He and his sister hid on the floorboard of the backseat of the car, and he distinctly remember his mother's fear of being stopped by the Border patrol on the car ride. He said she credits the Virgin Mary with protecting them and he feels she was praying to the Virgin Mary throughout the trip. His Aunt and Grandmother had stayed on the Mexico side of the border in case something went wrong. Once the family reached a Central Texas city, his aunt and grandmother were called, and they crossed back into the United States and reunited with Mario's family.

Mario entered third grade in a Texas elementary school and was placed in the Bilingual education program. He stayed in the program through elementary school, learned English, and now speaks with no accent. He remembered the first day of school every year, when all forms are filled out by students in the classroom, as presenting the problem of not have a Social Security number. He would usually lie and say he had forgotten the number. He also remembers having a conversation with his mother where she "vowed him to secrecy" regarding his undocumented status. He was not to share this information with anyone; no teachers, counselors, administrators, friends.

It was during his junior year of high school that he "came out" (his words) to a female friend. He actually laughed about this for he did this out of a desire to be helpful. She was revealing family problems regarding her father and then,

the only way I thought of cheering her up was to say 'let me tell you about my shady situation!' and it kinda worked, though I don't think she understood what it meant (to be undocumented). As a result of that, we became really good friends.

Driving was another concern in high school. Mario attended a school in an upper middle class neighborhood, and most of his friends started driving during sophomore year. Without a social security card, he could not get a valid Texas driver's license. His mother opposed his driving, for getting pulled over could lead to deportation. She had only started driving a few years prior and had been pulled over once by a police officer. It was on Mother's Day, and Mario is convinced that the day and his mother's cute appearance were the reasons his mother was released quickly by the officer. He eventually did start driving, but did not register the car with the school and get the required parking sticker, because he would have to show a driver's license for that. The occasional times he did take the car to school, he would park in a visitor's slot to avoid detection.

He resented one friend because of this driving issue. The friend had been driving and had a car wreck, and because of it, was scared to drive. He even let his driver's license lapse. He would often ask Mario to drive him places, even after learning of Mario's undocumented status. "I was like, 'you can get a driver's license and I can't! If we get pulled over right now I'm burned." An irony he noted is that this friend, five years later, still does not have a driver's license, whereas Mario now has a legal driver's license due to his DACA status.

During senior year of high school, he revealed his undocumented status to his AVID teacher. Part of the class requirements for AVID students is completing college applications, so he felt he had to tell the teacher after he had spent time pretending to complete applications. Initially, he did not think he would be allowed to go to college at all. The AVID teacher did not have experience with undocumented students, but found colleagues who did. He learned he

could go to college and had a strong enough class rank and SAT/ACT scores to consider many

college opportunities, but he did not feel he could leave the state of Texas because of his

citizenship status. Traveling would be dangerous. It was also during his Senior year of high

school that the DREAM Act failed to pass through the U.S. Congress.

He entered the local 4-year public institution the next year as an undocumented student

and did get some financial assistance through Texas Application for State Financial Aid. It was

while in college that he became politically active and started working for organizations that

supported undocumented students. He decided he wanted to "come out" publicly. His mother

was very fearful, for she was concerned of the effect his "coming out" would have on his sister.

He decided that his best protection was to live in the open, and was featured at a televised press

conference as a "DREAMer."

When DACA was announced, the organization Mario was working for trained him to

help undocumented students complete the paperwork. With this training, he was able to apply

for DACA himself and complete the paperwork for his younger sister. He said,

> I was very eager to work as soon as I got this going (DACA), to apply for any and
> every job and try to work as much as possible, because I had seen how my mom
> had busted her ass all the years prior constantly working two jobs….I still feel
> like I have work to do my best because my mom would kill for that opportunity to
> be able to work in an office, where she is sitting down and typing. She is busting
> her ass cleaning (offices) every single day and she is tired of it.

He felt getting DACA was a privilege that can be taken away at any time, and he does not

think his sister shares his sense of appreciation. "She feels that DACA and the privilege that

comes with having a car, a job and things has put her in a different place; and she does not

sympathize or understand where my mom is coming from…."

At the time of the interview, Mario was a month away from graduating from college. He

had accepted a teaching position in another city and had just gotten back from a trip to New York

City. It was the first time he had flown in an airplane since the flight from Mexico City to Monterrey. While he acknowledges the great changes he has experienced, he is constantly watching the political climate as he feels his status is not fully secure. He sees each election as having a potential to result in the dismantling of DACA. He admits to some factors contributing to a level of cynicism. Mario has seen a lot of students benefit from DACA who do not feel compelled to offer help to others. He sees a lot of splintering within the immigration reform movement and feels each group acts out of self-interest, without supported those with different immigration concerns. He has lost trust in the government regarding immigration reform.

In his follow up interview, Mario chose four events that evoked a strong sensory response which he could possibly write the haiku about: crossing the Rio Grande River in the inner tube; filling out paperwork the first day of school; the press conference where he "came out"; or driving without a license. Mario chose the day he crossed the border in the inner tube as the event which was most powerful for him (see Appendix F). He felt it was without that, "there's no me here; without that there's no filling out paperwork; there's no press conference; there's no driving without a license… so, that's the passageway… that's why I chose it."

Katrina. Katrina asked to be interviewed. She felt very compelled to tell her life story and the role being undocumented played in her life. I met her at a restaurant near her home, and we were able to sit away from other customers, alone, in the meeting room area. She grew up in a small town in Mexico close to the United States border and she remembers a childhood in Mexico where it was safe to play in the streets. She went to school in Mexico through second grade, and she remembers wearing uniforms to school and that the school was not very clean, and had white walls. One distinct experience that stood out to her was the morning flag

ceremony. The entire school would start the day with an assembly where about five students marched while bearing a flag. One morning, she was a flag bearer.

She remembered crossing into the United States regularly to go shopping. Her mother was very attached to their life in the small Mexican town and had no desire to move to Texas. Her father went back and forth to the United States for work. Then her younger sister started to have pains in her leg and was taken from doctor to doctor, without solution. There was a point where doctors thought her sister was faking this pain. An aunt of Katrina lived on the U.S. side of the border and guided Katrina's mother on how to get take the sister to a doctor in the United States. The U.S. doctor diagnosed the sister with a malignant tumor and she was taken by helicopter that day to a Central Texas hospital. In Katrina's mind this was a turning point for the family. She said her mother never really lived in Mexico again after the sister went to the Texas hospital. Her mother crossed back and forth between the United States and Mexico, but in Katrina's eyes her mother had become a visitor to Mexico. Katrina and her brothers were sent back to Mexico to stay with their grandmother, and she changed schools as a result. Katrina never returned to their earlier home, and she stayed with her grandmother for 6 months.

She then remembered going to live on the U.S. side of the border, where she entered third grade in an elementary school bilingual program. She stayed in U.S. schools in the Rio Grande Valley region for a few years. Meanwhile, her sister went through a series of procedures over the next few years, and her mother went back and forth between the Valley and Central Texas. When she was entering 6th grade, her parents decided to move the entire family to Central Texas. While she was angry at first that her sister's illness caused the move from her home town, she now has a belief it was for the best her family left the small Mexican town from her childhood. In recent years, she has heard of violence in her hometown that has made her realize

the move kept them safe. Her sister has recovered, "and you would never know" she had a

cancer diagnosis.

One event in Katrina's life that greatly affects her happened as part of a border crossing.

During the time of her sister's medical treatment, crossing back and forth was a regular

occurrence. Katrina had starting going to school in the United States, even though her family

was still traveling back and forth on tourist visas. Her family was in a van, entering the United

States and, as they waited to cross, a border patrol agent was going up to cars and asking

questions. He asked Katrina, "What is the name of your teacher?" and Katrina quickly

responded, "Mrs. Blanco." He came around to get closer to her and asked her to repeat the

name. She knew at that moment she had made a huge mistake, for a teacher in Mexico would be

referred to as "Maestra." She said, "Mrs. Blanco" again, but this time added that this was her

English teacher, hoping to rectify the situation. It was too late, and the family was taken into the

crossing station, where they were placed in separate rooms. Katrina remembers being

fingerprinted and questioned and she was certain her family was now in some type of trouble.

Urgency was added to this situation, for Katrina's sister had to get to a doctor

appointment in Central Texas the next day. Now, because her mother did not think she and the

younger sister would be able to cross legally, her family went in search of someone to get them

across. "A coyote?" I asked, but she said an unfamiliar word in Spanish and said it literally

translated to "chicken man". Her mother went across with a group, which walked across the Rio

Grande River with a boat flipped over their heads. Her mother told her that when they got to the

U.S. side of the river, there were shouts of, "Run, run!" to send them to waiting vans. There

were many loose children, and her mother grabbed one and took the child with her. Katrina's

younger sister did not cross with her mother that night. Katrina and the rest of the family, her

father, younger sister and two younger brothers, crossed in a different way, which Katrina did not want to discuss.

While going through schools in Texas, Katrina remembers that her mother was not fearful when working with school officials. "She was pretty brave," however Katrina received regular reminders that she could not afford to get into trouble. She was a good student, and found that schools in the United States were relatively easy. She noted that her Mathematics instruction in Mexico was superior to that of the Texas schools.

When she was in 10th grade, DACA was enacted and her mother took her to a lawyer. She had to remember many dates, and the family was fortunate that the numerous doctor appointments for her sister provided necessary verification. Two years later, when she was a high school senior, her mother made her find and go to lawyers on her own. She went to a local university law school. She learned her original attorney had not correctly spelled her middle name, which led to many complications in the renewal process. Obtaining DACA is granted for two years at a time, so recipients must renew every two years. This means completing another round of paperwork to send to the U.S. government and usually requires the assistance of an immigration attorney.

Having DACA has been helpful to her for she can work and have a driver's license. However, she found her lack of citizenship disqualified her for many scholarships, and she quit looking. She cannot receive financial aid through the federal government; however, she does get financial aid through the Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA). In Texas, state financial aid is available for students with DACA or undocumented status by completing the TASFA. These funds are much more limited than federal aid. She was accepted to a local private university, but could not attend for financial reasons.

One other circumstance she discussed was how not being a citizen impacts her personally. Her boyfriend wants to travel to Mexico, and she cannot go with him. She recently had a friend who was undocumented who got married to get an opportunity to pursue citizenship. Others were chastising the friend for getting married too young, but when Katrina spoke with this friend alone, the friend confided that she was getting married to get citizenship. Katrina also finds her citizenship status affects her ability to trust. She had a boyfriend several years ago who, after a breakup, threatened to call ICE about the undocumented members of her family. She saw the greatest impact regarding her future related to her lack of citizenship is her inability to travel freely outside of the United States. She thought companies may be reluctant to hire her for this reason. She spoke also of how DACA has provided her freedom, and that she felt free because she has this status.

At our follow-up interview, Katrina wanted to clarify a few things she had thought about. First, she said that free was not the exact word that described her feelings about DACA. She said a more appropriate word is secure. She is not completely free, but she feels safer with DACA. She also said that when looking back on her life, she now realizes her level of innocence. The events she thought about choosing from to do the sensory wheel and haiku activity were: the flag ceremony in school in Mexico; crossing the border and accidently saying the teacher's name wrong; discussing marriage with her friend who was marrying for citizenship; and going alone to the attorney to reapply for DACA.

For the arts-based activities, she chose the border crossing event (see Appendix F). For many years she felt guilty for her slip which resulted in the family getting caught. Now she believes adults took advantage of her innocence. The re-examination resulting from this interview helped her frame things in a different way. She said,

That was the hardest for me to accept because things that led us here, my sisters medical issue, there's nothing I could have done to control that. This is the only thing I did that contributed, that led my family to this place. After that that was the last time that we ever went back to Mexico…with DACA I couldn't have left the United…we probably would've kept going back but that marks the day, the event that is the last time we were in Mexico. The next day my sister had that surgery so my mom had proof for doing the DACA paperwork because she had the surgery appointment.

Roxana. Prior to interviewing Roxana, I knew her through volunteer work I had done in the immigrant community. She had been a leader in a college organization dedicated to helping youth with undocumented status, and had a quiet, almost shy, leadership quality in that capacity. In the interviews, she was not shy, and actually quite vivacious. She seemed to enjoy thinking about her memories. We met in small coffee bars for the both of the interviews.

Roxana had such a joy in talking about her life in Mexico, prior to coming to the United States. Her stories of going to school in Mexico showed an emotional connection to a school which was not just a place for academics, but also a place of community. There were daily school wide flag ceremonies and overnight stays at school. Everyone in the small town she lived in knew each other. She also surprised me when talking about her life on a ranch. As a child, she collected eggs and could kill chicken for dinner. "I would put a stick on their head and pull off their necks."

Her father had been working in the United States. Eventually, her parents decided they did not like the separations and decided it was time to move to the United States. This was prior to the terror attacks of 9/11. Her parents were able to get tourist visas for three family members; Roxana, her father, and her younger brother. They could not get visas for mother and two baby sisters. Her mother entered the United States in a perilous manner, by getting a coyote smuggler to help her cross through the desert. Roxana remembered the family had no contact with her mother for a few weeks, it was scary, and then her mother arrived and "she was in really bad

shape." To get her baby sisters across the border, the family employed a creative tactic. Roxana had an aunt with a baby, a cousin, between her sisters' ages who had a visa. So, one month the aunt brought the first sister using the cousin's visa, then brought the next sister a month later using the same cousin's tourist visa again.

Like all of the participants, Roxana entered a bilingual program when she started school in Texas. After hearing her happy description of school in Mexico, it was interesting to hear her describe schools in the United States as "institutionalized" and "less personal." Roxana surprised me a second time when she discussed life as a student with undocumented status in her neighborhood in South Texas. "I always get shocked when people say to me that they just found out they were undocumented…when it was time to get their driver's license… even since I first got here I knew I was undocumented." To Roxana having undocumented status was not perceived as a problem with the potential for stigma because in her neighborhood, "there are a bunch of Hispanics there… immigrants…these topics are really open…no one was ashamed of it." She also did not fear getting deported because, "I've had family who have been deported but they would just come back a few weeks later." She did not even see it as a barrier to getting a license or working, since her parents drove and worked without having citizenship status.

Roxana attended a public high school with a significant number of students who had undocumented status. She did not see the teachers, counselors and staff as threatening, and did get some assistance with college transitions from staff members. She also had exposure to a unique role model as part of her high school experience. A valedictorian of her high school had become part of local legend when, after receiving a full scholarship and graduating from a local university was detained by police, had her immigration status unveiled, and was threatened with

deportation. A local judge intervened on her behalf to prevent deportation and this became a

newsworthy story used to garner support for DREAMERers.

She graduated in the top 10% of her graduating class and was admitted to the University

of Texas at Austin College of Business. After attending there for a year, she did not receive

enough money from the TASFA (Texas state financial aid) to continue her schooling in Austin.

She moved back to her home town and attended a more affordable community college. She

started getting involved in immigration issues and got a job with a national immigrant's rights

organization, which paid her as a contract employee as a way to avoid legal roadblocks. She did

not apply for DACA immediately when it became available, but rather weighed whether it would

make a difference or not. Her experience seeing family members with undocumented status not

need citizenship status to stay employed meant she didn't think she needed DACA to find work,

but she ultimately decided it would help her get and keep better paying jobs.

Roxana's current job with a legal organization which assists the immigrant community

shapes her strong cultural and political views. She moved from helping young people get DACA

status to working with Central American immigrants who are being held in detention centers.

Her feelings regarding President Obama are not gratitude for enacting DACA, but rather anger

for what is happening to these Central American detainees. She notes that more deportations

have taken place during his presidency that any other. When discussing the Central American

immigrants, she encountered detainees who were suicidal as a result of the detentions. She had

thoughts regarding the stratification that appears to exist regarding immigrant populations and

the way DREAMers can see themselves as more deserving than other immigrants. She said, "I

posted something on Facebook the other day about a family getting deported and someone

commented, 'I'm okay with DREAMers being here but the others, they need to quit crossing illegally,' and I was like, "Really?"

For Roxana, the three events she had the greatest sensory reaction to were the flag ceremony in the Mexican elementary school, a visit to see her grandparents in Mexico after permanently settling in the United States, and her work experiences working with Central American refugees being held in South Texas detention centers. In her follow-up interview Roxana was the only participant who did not choose crossing the border as the event she wanted to use for the arts-based activities. She chose a day from the last time she went to Mexico (see Appendix F). This was a return Christmas visit to Mexico to see her grandparents, a few years after her family had permanently settled in South Texas. Her descriptions of her childhood growing up in the countryside and going to a small community elementary school had been so vivid and positive. This return visit changed these views of an idyllic Mexico. She learned, "my Spanish was not that good" for there were times when she and her grandparents did not understand each other. Still, she felt most comfortable writing haiku in Spanish, and said, "Having it in Spanish really mattered." She had vivid descriptions of her grandparents' home, but left the visit feeling disconnected from Mexico. She had no romantic views of life there anymore and said, "I think unless you have gone back and experienced it you probably can have that mentality, 'oh my gosh, I want to go back, it's my country blah blah,' but people who have gone there say it's whatever." She felt proud of her heritage, but living or long terms visits to Mexico had no great appeal to her.

Aaron. Aaron was the interviewee I was the least familiar with before interviewing. I knew a few of his family members, so I was not sure when we initially met if there would be the level of openness based on trust needed for an in-depth interview. Soon into our discussion, I

found he had no fears in telling his story and his reasons for sharing provided an enriching perspective. This perspective was more cognitive than affective. He wanted to tell his story not only for emotional reasons but also for intellectual reasons. It appeared he wanted to provide some order to his memories for he would often point to the spots on the table to show sequence of events. He also was starting to see his situation as unique and wanted to make sense of this in order to proceed into his future.

I met Aaron at coffee bars for both interviews after his workday. He is currently studying Mechanical Engineering at a public university, and also has a busy job working for a home health agency. Aaron was in school in Mexico for only one year, Kindergarten, but he shares the memories of other participants of school in Mexico as a joyous and colorful experience. He remembered wearing a uniform, and a courtyard in his school where recess and playtime were positive memories. One unique memory he shared was how the children there brushed their teeth every day after lunch. He remembered spitting out the toothpaste after brushing into a shared sink with the other children.

His parents attended college in Mexico and had professional occupations, however these did not translate to large incomes. Their degrees also did not have value later when his parents moved to the United States. Of all of the participants, Aaron's crossing into the United States was the least turbulent. His parents' obtained travel visas for all family members, so no one had to experience the dangers of using a smuggler. He had strong memories of the night his family left Mexico. It was midnight on his birthday, when he turned six years old, and his mother's parents drove him, his little sister, and his parents to the bus station on the Mexican side of the border. When they got to the bus station and waited by the bus, he remembered his grandfather giving him a Spanish/English dictionary. It was heavy, and looking back that was

foreshadowing that learning a new language would be a struggle. He did not know at the time there were no plans to return to Mexico, and he thinks his parents told him and his sister they were going on a vacation to prevent any potential slips with immigration officials.

An aunt who lived in the United States provided them a place to live until his parents moved out. His father worked in the roofing business for several years, which was lucrative, then his parents started a cleaning business. They both do cleaning, and his mother uses her university education to do the accounting. His parents have been homeowners for over a dozen years. He was placed in bilingual education classes when he entered schools in Texas and with his mother's assistance learned English. He shared the difficulty of learning a new language. "I remember trying to learn English was the hardest part because one time I said 'crap' in second grade. I didn't know what it meant. It was like "crap!'" Now, he speaks English with no accent; however, he still speaks Spanish fluently since his family speaks Spanish at home.

Going through the Texas school system, Aaron did not have fears of deportation or being discovered. He graduated in the top 10% of his class, but did not find enough financial support to leave his home town. He was bothered when he saw friends who had citizenship and plenty of financial aid flunk out of college. He was still undocumented and felt uncomfortable traveling too far from home. Getting DACA became an option soon after his graduation, but he did not seek it immediately as his mother was not sure it was safe. After a few months of watching other youth seek DACA, his parents paid an attorney to help him and his younger sister get DACA. He also shared a story of a high school girlfriend and how they discussed marriage as an option as a way for him to get citizenship. Being married at that age ultimately did not seem appealing.

The politics of immigration was something else he wanted to examine. Without animosity, he mentioned something he saw as a racial aspect of immigration policy in light of

how increasing border security was painted as a way to protect the United States from terrorist attacks. He saw politicians "talking in circles to strengthen our border security. There's places where people can walk across! I think a lot of it is racism towards Mexicans. Doesn't seem like they're strengthening Canada's border."

In the follow up interview, Aaron discussed some of the insights he seemed to be seeking. Since the first interview, he'd had time to think about some of the issues related to he and his family's immigration status while out on runs or in the shower. He discussed scholarships and internships he did not qualify for due to his citizenship status. He really wanted to emphasize the fact that his parents were taxpayers. They not only paid sales tax and homeowner taxes, but they had also religiously filed taxes with the IRS for their business for years via an ITIN. He also realized how often he avoided travel due to his immigration status and how this was interfering with his true love of geology. He wanted to see the geological wonders of the United States and the world, and felt limited in access because he still felt apprehension when going through border patrol checkpoints. The political climate of the time was another thing he had pondered since our first meeting. When discussing the U.S. presidential campaign that was in place at the time of the interview, he thought candidates "did not have a real solution." He found talk about building a wall between Mexico and the United States unrealistic and said, "They can get over the wall." Deporting those with undocumented status seemed equally unrealistic because, "There's too many people here. You can't really report them all." He also thought the low cost of living in Texas and the overall strength of the Texas economy was a sign the presence of those with undocumented status was a positive, not a negative. He went on to say "We do contribute to the economy significantly."

For the arts-based activities, there were six events we identified which generated the greatest sensory memories. These were the fear of going to Big Bend because of the border checkpoints, his inability get some internships or TASFA money, seeing friends with citizenship drop out of college, his parents as taxpayers, brushing his teeth at school in Mexico, and his last night in Mexico at the bus station. He chose the night at the bus station because it was it provided a sensory experience tied to his love of geology (see Appendix F). He remembered from that night there was a scent resembling petrichor, a scent emoted when rain lands on dirt. This was a favorite geological term he felt summed up his sensory experience and he wanted the word to be in the haiku. It tied his intellectual interests to his emotional experience.

Findings: The Shared Story

I previously introduced the characters, the heroes, in this this narrative account to show a diverse set of personalities who shared a common set of educational experiences. This was not just an education in school classrooms, but rather a life education. Mario and Katrina had more turbulent experiences associated with their crossing into the United States and tended to have more fears regarding getting exposed while undocumented. Roxana and Aaron were more relaxed regarding potential dangers associated with their immigration status. Mario and Roxana are older, and experienced entering college as students with undocumented status who had to seek DACA on their own. Katrina and Aaron entered college with DACA, since they were taken by their parents to attorneys while they were in high school to get DACA. These are the characters who are the protagonists, or heroes, in the upcoming shared story.

There is a shared story, a combination of the participants' experiences and views following a series of sequential themes, which I re-tell as part of this study (see Appendix J). It is told using characteristics of this type of narrative inquiry design for it has a beginning, middle,

and end; and, uses plot development along with the use of metaphor (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). First, I accomplish this by following the three DRS (Spradley, 1980) taxonomies: distant memories, recent events, and future plans. Each taxonomy represents an act in a three act story (Vogler, 2007). Within each act are two domains from the DRS (Spradley, 1980) which are clash points of tension and provide a series of plot points (see Appendices I and J). The domains also provide rising action in the story which leads to a climax, followed by descending action which ends with resolution (Welcker, 2014). Second, I incorporate the use of metaphor using concepts of archtypes and myth writing from Vogler's (2007) guide, *The Writer's Journey.* In telling this story, I follow the educational experiences of four students from Kindergarten through their college years. I find and discuss six strategies, with tactics associated with each strategy, these students used to navigate their lives. The distinction these students share is they once were youths with undocumented immigration status who then received DACA status. Through the interaction between their experiences and strategies their student identity development unfolds across time.

Taxonomy One: Distant Memories

Every story has a beginning and this one begins in Mexico. These are distant memories for the questers. The metaphor and archetype of an unwilling hero, one of innocence, were evident in their reflections of that time. All questers spoke of schools in Mexico full of joy and play, where the entire community seemed to care, and the world was small. The first taxonomy reflected a time prior to living in the United States up until the time they were fully living in the United States. This is the time when participants lived and went to school in Mexico, experienced leaving their birth country behind completely and entered school in the United States.

Domain One: Mexico schooling versus U.S. schooling. This domain is divided into three cover terms: structure, community, and academics (see Appendix H). The quest commences for the heroes during this time (see Act One, Scene One: Innocents Preparing for a Quest in Appendix J). It starts with what appears to be an idyllic life in Mexico. For three of the questers the story began in small Mexican towns, with the last questor's story beginning in a suburb of Mexico City. They attended elementary schools as they looked back on this seemingly magical part of their lives. The archetype characters of mentors (Vogler, 2007) existed in their benevolent community circle of teachers, parents, grandparents, teachers, and other family members.

Strategy One: Maintain memories of Mexico in native language and with knowledge there is no return. During this part of the story tactics used by the heroes did not happen at the time the events took place, but rather in how these protagonists approached their memories. These tactics include remembering their lives in Spanish while translating it to English, and remembering a time of innocent childhood in Mexico as a colorful and loving place. Mexico was a distant memory, for they have not returned to Mexico since 2007 or longer. Now that they have DACA, they can only return to Mexico if approved by the U.S government. This approval was something none were comfortable seeking.

Domain Two: Openings versus barriers. This domain is divided into the cover terms of physical boundaries and cultural boundaries (see Appendix H). It is during this domain when the journey truly begins for the heroes experienced crossing into the United States (see Act One, Scene Two: The Journey Begins in Appendix J). For some the crossing was perilous either for themselves or close family members; for others the crossing was seemingly not so perilous. However, when sharing their stories all the protagonists realized the danger of being caught was

a defining moment in their life stories. It is during this domain, the heroes encounter threshold guardians (Vogler, 2007) who create obstacles, in the form of border patrol agents. The heroes and their families must find ways to outwit these threshold guardians. Three of the heroes encounter shapeshifters (Vogler, 2007), fickle people you may or may not be able to trust. These shapeshifters are called coyotes, or "chicken people" by one participant, and are paid to get you or your family members across the border by breaking laws in the United States. All of the heroes encounter allies (Vogler, 2007), as part of the crossing in the form of family members on the US side of the border.

Strategy Two: Accept unique immigration circumstances fully and with clear cognizance. Initially, these characters are still in a reflective mode in their storytelling. Their maturity is evident in how they apply the tactic of viewing their unusual childhood experiences with adult perspectives. They showed acceptance as they used the tactic of picking up and leaving their homes with little notice and with no ability to return. Their acceptance was also evident in their lack of blame toward their parents. Their cognizance is evident as they share the tactics of remembering very minute details, often when capturing moments while crossing into the United States. These detailed memories motivated their choices during the arts-based activity.

Taxonomy Two: Recent Events

In this second act of their story, conflicts continue and escalate. The period during the second taxonomy reflects recent times when participants were fully living in the United States. These protagonists must commit to physical and cultural changes to become part of the United States, a country where they do not have the benefits of citizenship. Choices these heroes made determined their life paths. They gradually moved from being unwilling, innocent heroes forced

into a quest, or journey, to characters who gained power in how they acted upon their circumstances. Their first set of choices is the domain point of conflict of being a law breaker versus a law follower. The second domain point of conflict in this section is the climax of the shared story. This involves choices these characters made regarding being obscured versus visible.

Domain Three: Break the law versus follow the law. This domain is divided into four cover terms: documents, transportation, behavior, work and taxes (see Appendix H). "Papers" are a key metaphor during this time for it represents documents for school, driving, access to jobs, and paying taxes. This was a time when the characters truly diverge into a large range of attitudes regarding the importance of laws (see Act Two, Scene One: Reluctant Heroes Survive in Appendix J). Some of the heroes feared getting caught and went to extremes to meticulously follow laws. Others were fearless and saw law enforcement as a minor nuisance. Ultimately, all law enforcement officials, including the local and school police, and state or federal officials, add a new type of threshold guardians who create daily, small obstacles. All heroes use the autonomy they are building to find ways to circumvent laws to access and pursue goals. During this time, the archetype shadow (Vogler, 2007) emerges for some of the characters from unexpected places. The shadow shows the protagonist their inner fears, and for some of these heroes, the seeds of fear are planted and nurtured by their mothers.

Strategy Three: Find creative ways to avoid detection. The tactics the heroes develop to avoid detection are dichotomous within the constructs. They play dumb while simultaneously finding creative and intelligent ways to navigate around the rules. They meticulously follow laws (such as when driving or paying taxes) and are often more compliant than those with

citizenship, while also operating in a constant state of breaking federal laws with their presence. They also share the tactic of having a sense of humor about their unusual situations.

        Domain Four: Obscured versus visible. This domain is divided into the cover terms of sharing stories and appearing normal (see Appendix H). More shapeshifters (Vogler, 2007) appear in the form of friends and educators the protagonists doubt regarding their trustworthiness. Knowing who to trust and not to trust is weighed by all the characters, with a wide range of experiences (see Act Two, Scene Two: Reluctant Heroes Emerge in Appendix J). Some of the characters find great allies outside of their families during this time, while others find the opposite. One archetype shadow (Vogler 2007) figure emerges in the form of a boyfriend who shatters trust. Heralds (Vogler, 2007) voice the need for immigration reform and the hope surrounding the DREAM Act's march through the US Congress is shattered when it does not pass.

        It is during this plot point where the climax of the story happens (see Appendix I). President Barack Obama announces the Executive Order which created DACA. Is the president a herald (Vogler, 2007) who's announcing a need for change, or will he be another governmental shapeshifter (Vogler, 2007)? Choosing to seek DACA is when the protagonists leave behind a life of hiding, a required obscurity for legal reasons, to visibility chosen from a sense of hope and belief. Their individual agency was developing during their times of obscurity, for during that time they used intelligent, covert ways to navigate the system. Now with DACA, their agency and steps toward self-determination become more publicly evident. Their need to protect family members still with undocumented status and the limits of DACA prevent full freedom. This climax involves an encounter for all the heroes with a great archetypal shadow and shapeshifter (Vogler, 2007), the United States federal government. For seeking DACA requires a level of

self-examination the shadow demands, and putting one's trust in the hands of a shapeshifter who seems to change directions with the wind. When following the steps of processing their DACA applications, they confront the omnipresent threshold guardian (Vogler, 2007), ICE, and have now achieved a new way to outwit (Vogler, 2007) the guardian.

Strategy Four: Blend in until it is safe to expose undocumented status. To remain obscured, the heroes employed tactics to blend in when in the United States. Some used physical measures immediately after crossing the border. At school, all learned English. Some lost their verbal accents. Some used measures to keep their immigration status during their time as undocumented a great secret by avoiding discipline problems at school and sharing their status with very few people; others had very few concerns regarding revealing their undocumented status. All avoided travel, and lived in a type of geographic jail imposed by state lines and border patrol check stations. The types of tactics employed tended to correspond to levels of trust. All questors knew their loyalty to family superseded all loyalties. Prior to seeking DACA, all lived in a type of jail sentence related to traveling when undocumented. Once these heroes received DACA, their tactics showed them embracing new freedoms associated DACA, including public and private "coming out," and seeking and considering new opportunities.

Taxonomy Three: Future Plans

In this final act of the shared story, the heroes move toward a resolution which signals the end of a story. In stories, particularly satisfying stories, endings provide readers with a sense of learning and growing with characters. At the end of satisfying stories, readers are left with an ending where they still want to know what happens to the characters after the story (Vogler, 2007). Authors provide enough information to allow readers to imagine where the lives of heroes they have grown to care about go on to after the last chapter ends (Vogler, 2007). For

these heroes, one can imagine and actually feel quite certain that their resolution is never complete. Having DACA is not a route to citizenship and requires a reapplication every two years, leading to limits in planning most young people in their 20s do not experience. As DACA is an executive order, it is not a law enacted by the U.S. Congress, so the protagonists need to stay aware of political landscapes in the United States. While most of their peers can vote in U.S. elections, they cannot. Yet the outcome of the election could have serious consequences regarding their status.

The third taxonomy reflects planning for a future life and the activities allowing this planning. The protagonists feel fully invested in life in the United States, and college has opened their eyes to many possible futures; yet their DACA status affects how or whether they can pursue these things. This last taxonomy is divided into the domains of detours versus gateways and dreams versus realities. These protagonists moved from innocent, reluctant heroes during act one, to emergent heroes who find empowerment when navigating a life of unique challenges, then seeking and obtaining DACA in act two. In act three, the heroes are no longer innocent, and have hopes and dreams balanced by perspectives seated in the realities of the "traps" of the circumstances.

Domain Five: Detours versus gateways. This domain is divided into four cover terms: financial aid, scholarships, role models, and employment (see Appendix H). After the climax of the heroes' receiving DACA status the plot points move in the descending motion writers follow after the climax (Welcker, 2014) (see Appendix I). Threshold guardians (Vogler, 2007) emerge as part of the college admissions and financial aid process (see Act Three, Scene One: Heroes Unbound in Appendix J). Simultaneously, mentors appear who aid the protagonists in circumnavigating these threshold guardians (Vogler, 2007). Their parents, unfamiliar with the

college going process cannot act as mentors but, their hard work in low-paying jobs makes them emotional mentors who inspire the heroes.

Strategy Five: Cast aside confinements of undocumented status and enjoy new freedoms, while accepting remaining struggles. The tactics the heroes employed at this point often center on how they approach this new freedom to work, move about more freely and the college application and financial aid process. The freedom was not complete. Unlike their peers, they must fill out different types of paperwork for access. And because their paperwork is different from what is usual, many of the experts, such as school counselors, admissions officers and financial aid officers, do not have the requisite knowledge or skill to support these students (heroes) in its correct completion. So the heroes' expertise surpasses that of the "experts", who sometimes call on them for help. Unlike their non DACA peers, they have to go in person to admissions and financial aid offices since their process is unusual. They must always check about citizenship status requirements for scholarships. Some join grassroots organizations specifically focusing on students with DACA. Finally, they shared a tactic in accepting that their parents as not capable of helping them, and they will have to assume adult responsibilities sooner than most of their peers.

Domain Six: Dreams versus realities. This domain is divided into citizenship, marriage, economic opportunity, activism, future outlook (see Appendix H). This final plot point is where the story ends and should have resolution (see Appendix I). However, the heroes in this quest do not have all their dreams and desires achieved (see Act Three, Scene Two: Heroes Fully Awake in Appendix J). A path to citizenship was not created by DACA, so resolution in this regard is limited and lacking certainty. They may legally drive a car and work, yet they are always subject to political changes. These are the things they contemplate, and the

final strategy reflects a focused way to view their world. They reflect on their quest, and by doing this the real reason for the quest becomes apparent. While finding a road to citizenship and all the freedoms that would entail was the stated reason for their quest, like all quests, "the real reason for a quest is always self-knowledge" (Foster, 2003, p.3). This self-knowledge acquired from the journey is accompanied with some cynicism.

For Vogler (2007) story endings actually signal the beginning of the next story. The way these heroes conduct their lives through awareness, activism and giving back allows readers to see there is a next story, a sequel, in the lives of these protagonists. The heroes have now become heralds and mentors (Vogler, 2007). All heroes provide some level of voice to the concerns of students with undocumented or DACA status. Some provide assistance to fellow students with DACA, and some work with refugees in dire circumstances. They question President Obama, politicians, fellow immigrants and activists by describing what they see as shapeshifter (Vogler, 2007) actions. During this final act, they also confront their own shadows in light of their uncertain futures.

Strategy Six: Limit the scope of future planning while staying aware of precarious situation. As time passes with DACA and the stagnation of their status becomes evident, these protagonists learned to limit the scope of their planning. When faced with obstacles regarding their citizenship status, they remember the plight of others less fortunate, such as their parents or Central American refugees and try to give back. They constantly monitor larger political processes which could ultimately change their daily lives. They seek knowledge regarding U.S. political events and policies, while knowing they cannot vote. These protagonists learn to never have expectations beyond two years in the future. They think in terms of how they may have to creatively navigate new citizenship options if the landscape changes, including contemplating

convenience marriages. And possibly, because they are no longer the reluctant, innocent heroes who started this quest in their childhoods but now fully awake as adults with an unusual immigration situation, their way of viewing the world carried some cynicism regarding DACA, its supporters, and fellow DREAMers.

Chapter Summary

This chapter shared the findings from this study. The way findings from this study were provided was introduced. Using elements of literature from the academic field of English literature was deemed the appropriate means to provide these findings. This study followed a narrative inquiry design asking for a re-telling of a shared story following the literary elements of character development, plot development (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Riessman, 1993) and the use of metaphors (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).   After sharing the individual stories of the four characters the shared story was told. In this study, the shared story followed a sequential plot, a series of themes, discussed from each participant's perspective.

The re-telling of the shared story used plot development for revealing the findings following a series of clash points from the DRS analysis. These clash points followed a rising motion, which led to a climax, and ended in resolution (Welcker, 2014). The plot development was also broken into three acts, present in the DRS, as part of re-telling the story (Vogler, 2007). Metaphors were used for revealing the findings incorporating Foster's (2003) guidelines for telling stories of quests with heroes as a central character, and Vogler's (2007) guidelines regarding the use of archetypical characters from the book, *The Writer's Journey*. Throughout the re-telling of the shared story, the six strategies the students used during the educational experiences of their lives were examined. These six sequential strategies were: (1) Maintain memories of Mexico in native language and with knowledge there is no return; (2) Accept unique immigration circumstances

fully and with clear cognizance; (3) Find creative ways to avoid detection; (4) Blend in until it is safe to expose undocumented status; (5) Cast aside confinements of undocumented status and enjoy new freedoms of having DACA, while accepting remaining struggles; (6) Limit the scope of future planning while staying aware of precarious situation. These strategies were accompanied by tactics to accomplish their goals. These six strategies demonstrated ways having DACA status impacted the formation of the student identity development of the participants.

Chapter Five: Summary, Recommendations, and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to describe the educational experiences of students of Mexican descent with DACA status and the impact of those experiences on the student identity development of these college students. The foci of this inquiry were:

1. What strategies do students of Mexican descent with DACA status use to negotiate their student experiences?

2. How do these strategies influence the development of their student identity?

This chapter begins with a summary of the research study. Then, I review psychological theories relevant to this study including bioecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner &Morris, 2007), Bandura's social-cognitive learning (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015), Erickson's psychosocial stages of development (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015), student identity development theory (Chickering & Reisser, 1993) and Jungian psychological theory as applied to literature (Vogler, 2007). After reviewing these theories, I address the research questions and findings relative to these theories. Next, I make recommendations for educators and non-profit organizations working with students with DACA immigration status. After the recommendations, I discuss future studies which could add to the research regarding students with DACA. I close this chapter with a summary and conclusions regarding this study.

Summary

I used bioecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner &Morris, 2007) as the theoretical framework for this study. This theory posits human identity development is formed within layers of socio-cultural influences. The theory is presented as a series of layered circles with the individual in a center circle and concentric circles representing the environmental influences (see Appendix C). Surrounding the individual is the microsystem, comprised of parents, peers and

teachers. Surrounding the microsystem is the mesosystem which represents interactions between

members of the microsystem. The next layer is the exosystem, two or more interactive social

processes, such as parents to work. The out layer is the macrosystem, broad cultural forces such

as socio-economic conditions or media representations. Previous versions of this theory made

the individual subject to the environmental forces. In this updated version of bioecological

systems theory, interactions between the individual and the environment are more interactive.

The individual has the power to act upon and change the environment. Bronfenbrenner and

Morris' (2007) more recent version of this theory stresses PPCT. Process refers to proximal

processes, ongoing interactions between the person (individual) and other parts of the system.

These processes occur within the layered environment, or context, and this takes place over time.

The passage of time and environmental characteristics mean this theory is both socio-cultural

and development.

This qualitative study followed narrative inquiry design. I chose narrative inquiry

because it aligns with the theoretical model. Both narrative inquiry design and the theoretical

model have chronological and environmental characteristics (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2011;

Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Reismann, 1993). I used the type of narrative inquiry design which

follows character and plot development. The intent was to use character and plot development to

re-tell a coherent story of meaningful experiences shared by all participants. These experiences

were deemed meaningful per participant selections and by me if it impacted student identity

development (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Linde, 1993; Reismann, 1993). Four participants

were interviewed twice. Data collection methods included conducting interviews and arts-based

research activities. In the first interview, participants were guided by an interview protocol

asking them to tell their life story. (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Linde, 1993; Reismann, 1993).

During the second interview participants engaged in arts-based activities. I collaborated with each participant to choose a significant life event from the first interview with significant sensory impact. These arts based activities enhanced data collection by providing thick, rich descriptions (Holliday, 2007) and a way to member check data gathered from the first interview (Leavy, 2015).

I used three layers to analyze data. The overarching analysis was Yin's (2011) five phases to analyze data which are: (1) Compiling the data by organizing; (2) Disassembling the data by breaking this down into smaller parts; (3) Reassembling data to create meaningful structures; (4). Interpreting the data by creating a new narrative derived from all of the narratives; (5). Concluding by finding final connections to fully bring the narratives together as one study. The next layers used for analysis were analyzing while transcribing (Evers, 2011; Riessman, 1993) and steps four through eight of Spradley's (1980) DRS. During analyzing while transcribing I listened to several passes of the recorded interviews while attending to potential themes and points of participant emotional responses to their life events (Evers, 2011; Riessman, 1993). I used the DRS to find semantic relationships which showed connections between and within the participant's stories. The final analysis revealed domains seen (Spradley, 1980) in the following sequence: (1) Mexico schooling versus U.S. schooling, (2) Openings versus barriers, (3) Law breaker versus law follower, (4) Obscured versus visible, (5) Detours versus gateways, (6) Dreams versus realities. The domains were further divided into a three-part sequential taxonomy: distant memories comprised of domains one and two; recent events comprised of domains three and four; and, future plans comprised of domains five and six.

I shared the findings by re-telling a shared story using character and plot development. I incorporated Jungian archetypes, universal characters in myths and legends, and metaphors used

by literature writers (Vogler, 2007). The four main characters, Mario, Katrina, Roxana, and Aaron were portrayed as heroes on a quest. I followed the six domains from the analysis as plot points to tell a shared story. Findings responded to each domain, or plot point. These six chronological strategies were: (1) Maintain memories of Mexico in native language and with knowledge there is no return; (2) Accept unique immigration circumstances fully and with clear cognizance; (3) Find creative ways to avoid detection; (4) Blend in until it is safe to expose undocumented status; (5) Cast aside confinements of undocumented status and enjoy new freedoms of having DACA, while accepting remaining struggles; (6) Limit the scope of future planning while staying aware of precarious situation. Throughout the shared story the strategies these students employed to negotiate their student experiences which impacted their student identity development were discussed.

Psychological Theories and Findings

In this section I describe psychological theories relevant to this study and compare these theories to the findings. I start by describing the one used for the theoretical framework of the study, Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2007) multi-layered bioecological systems theory. I also discuss Bandura's (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015) social learning theory, in particular modeling and vicarious learning. I use these two theories to formulate, define and discuss a term I developed from this study, *student academic agency*. Next, I review Erickson's eight stages of psychosocial development and compare stages from it to the six stages found in the domain analysis (Spradley, 1980) of this study. Then, I discuss how the finding from the students in this study compared to Chickering and Reisser's (1993) seven vectors college students move through when forming their identity. Finally, I connect the storytelling methods used to reveal the

findings to Jungian psychology's use of archetypes and symbolism as part of understanding

collective, universal concepts of the human experience (Vogler, 2007).

Bioecological systems theory and social learning theory. Bronfenbrenner's (1979)

original ecological systems theory placed an individual in a central circle surrounded by four

surrounding layered rings which influence the individual's identity development (see Appendix

C). In this early model, the individual was subject to and responding to the outer layers when

developing identity. Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2007) more recent theory, bioecological

systems theory, shows how the theory has evolved. In this evolution of the theory, the

concentric circles remained around the individual, but the layers became more interactive. They

also introduced the concept of PPCT. According to PPCT, proximal processes, ongoing

interactions between persons in this system, continually take place within a context over time.

The context is represented in the environmental layers, and the passage of time allows identity

development to evolve. The role of the individual, or person, changes dramatically in this newer

version of the theory. No longer is the individual solely acted upon by the environment, but

rather the individual could act upon the environment. The individual has agency, the power act

upon the environment, and self-determination.

Bandura's (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015) social learning theory, also called observational

learning theory, sees individuals learning by watching those around them. Key concepts of this

learning theory are modeling and vicarious learning. Modeling means children pay attention to

people around them and start to copy their behaviors. They are likely to imitate those around

them they perceive as most similar to them. Vicarious learning means individuals do not always

need to directly experience an event to learn from it and adjust their own actions. A person can

witness punishment and rewards given to those around them and understand these consequences

vicariously, by watching. An individual can watch someone else go through an experience and make choices based on the perceived consequences. For example, young children may see an older sibling receive a spanking for a not holding a parent's hand when crossing the street, and decide to always hold that parent's hand when crossing the street.

Student academic agency. Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2007) bioecological systems theory and Bandura's (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015) social learning theory provide ways to discuss findings from this study beyond the re-told story. The processes used by a person with agency within the context of their life setting over time outlined in PPCT per bioecological systems theory (Bronfembrenner & Morris, 2007), combined with the concepts of modeling and vicarious learning from Bandura (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015) address the research questions. When addressing the foci of inquiry for this study, the strategies these students used to negotiate their student experiences based on their immigration status demonstrated a resilience which impacted their student identity.

I created and defined a term describing this resilience: student academic agency. My definition of this term is informed by PPCT (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2007) and the concepts of modeling and vicarious learning from Bandura (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015), and the findings from the study. The definition of student academic agency includes the following components: (1) Employed/considered by students during their K-12 and post-secondary educational experiences; (2) Encompasses both academic and non-academic learning; (3) Involves using or considering (by watching role models) strategies at the macro-level (long-term) and tactics at the micro-level (daily) to achieve goals in spite of obstacles; (4) May or may not involve breaking laws/rules if those laws/rules are rationalized as unjust.

Examples of this were seen throughout this study. During domain two, openings versus barriers, the participants were part of the family's permanent move to the United States. All of these conditions pertaining to student academic agency were present: (1) During the time of their K-12 educational experiences; (2) As part of a non-academic learning experience; (3) They observed role models apply tactics and strategies to achieve goals; (4) While breaking laws perceived to be unjust.

For example, Mario's mother was trying to leave an abusive marriage in Mexico and join her family in the United States. She tried to follow the rules by going to the embassy in Mexico and applied for a visa. She was denied the visa to enter the United States, and she eventually created a complex plan, full of tactics, to illegally take herself and her children into the United States. She employed a coyote to help them cross the Rio Grande on inner tubes. He and his sister quietly complied with all plans and did everything needed to not expose the family to getting caught. As a 10-year old Mario learned by watching a role model to use these tactics to break perceived unjust laws. He also learned life strategies. Mario learned to accept unique immigration circumstances fully and with clear cognizance (strategy two from the findings); and, find creative ways to avoid detection (strategy three from the findings). These laws were rationalized as unjust because his mother was trying to get away from an abusive marriage. Katrina learned this same way during domain two, openings versus barriers. She watched her family employ similar tactics to move to the United States. They crossed into the United States with no intent to return to Mexico, with her mother ultimately using a coyote. For her family, the laws were viewed as unjust in light of her sister's cancer diagnosis and need for medical care in the United States. During their elementary school years, Roxana and Aaron's viciously learned by watching their parents' tactics of creatively use visas to enter and stay in the United

States. They shared a perception the laws were unjust because their parents were denied economic opportunities. Just like Mario, the other three participants learned

As the participants grew older, they used the four components of student academic agency not just vicariously but through their own employment and/or consideration. For example, during high school (criteria one), Roxana learned in her academic setting (criteria two) that attending high school was possible in spite of her undocumented status. She learned tactics and strategies (criteria three) to apply for college and financial aid as her own advocate. She did not need to break unjust laws (criteria four) in this situation, for the state legislature had made modifications to federal laws to avert a need to break a law. After getting DACA, she did not need to break laws at all for this. If the legislature had not created this modification, she would have likely found a way to break unjust laws to finance college. This is evidenced by her actions after losing state financial aid. She broke perceived unjust laws (criteria four) to pay for college by working "under the table" in private contracting jobs. In this situation, Roxana employed a large strategy to cast aside confinements of undocumented status and enjoy new freedoms of having DACA, while accepting remaining struggles (Strategy five). Like Roxana, Aaron and Katrina found ways to use their student academic agency, and the fifth strategy, but in a very different way. Aaron and Katrina contemplated marriage for citizenship. This shows student academic agency as the components included (1) It was during their post-secondary educational time period; (2) It encompassed non-academic learning; (3) It would involve using tactics to achieve the goal of citizenship; and (4) It would mean breaking laws they view as unjust.

Psychosocial stages of development. Erikson (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015) theorized humans move through eight stages of psychosocial development in their lifetime. These stages include: (1) Trust versus Mistrust (ages birth to 1); (2) Autonomy versus Shame (ages 1 to 3); (3)

Initiative versus Guilt (ages 4 to 5); (4) Industry versus Inferiority (ages 5 to 12); (5) Identity

versus Role Confusion (ages 13 to 19); (6) Intimacy versus Isolation (ages 20 to 29); (7)

Generativity versus Stagnation; (8) Integrity versus Ego (p. 12). Each stage represents an

intersection of oppositional forces, crisis points, where individuals move toward a direction

which shapes identity. These oppositional forces represent a range between oppositional forces

present during psychological development. The first named force is the most positive outcome

and the second the most negative outcome. Individuals position along a continuum between the

forces as part of resolving the developmental crisis. Stages three through six include age ranges

relevant to this study. During stage three, initiative versus guilt, children strive to determine

purpose. They try to assume more responsibilities but can feel guilty if not given responsibility.

During stage four, industry versus inferiority, children attempt to become academically and

socially competent with the negative outcome being incompetence. Stage five, identity versus

role confusion, is a time when adolescents choose between being true to self-established values

and an inability to know who they are what they believe. Stage six, intimacy versus isolation, is

a time to share identity and commit to affiliations and partnerships. According to Erikson

(Broderick & Blewitt, 2015), one must know oneself before being capable of committing to

others. The negative outcome of this stage is a fear of intimacy and distancing from others.

   Comparison to domains. During analysis, I used Spradley's (1980) DRS to organize the

data. This involved making connections between and within the data collected from the

interviews and arts-based activities. This created an organizational structure comprised of six

sequential domains divided into three taxonomies (see Appendix H). Each of these domains

represents oppositional crisis points shared by the participants where each participant landed

along a continuum between the crisis points. These six crisis points bear a resemblance to

Erickson's theory which warrants examination (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015). Comparing the similarities between Erikson's psychosocial stages of development and the domains from this study addresses the strategies employed by these students leading to their student identity development as per the foci of inquiry.

Domains one and two (Mexico schooling versus U.S. schooling and Openings versus barriers) chronologically coincide with stages four and five (initiative versus guilt and industry versus inferiority) of Erikson's stages (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015). The first two strategies per the findings which correspond to these stages and domains are: (1) Maintain memories of Mexico in native language and with knowledge there is no return; (2) Accept unique immigration circumstances fully and with clear cognizance. The more firmly the students employed these strategies the closer they came to the more positive of Erikson's outcomes of initiative and industry. All of the participants entered school in Mexico, where they first encountered the responsibility (per Erikson's initiative versus guilt stage) of being a student. They shared positive memories of their Mexico school experience. This placed them on the initiative side of the range. When crossing into the United States, all of the participants were charged with the responsibility (from initiative versus guilt) of not revealing to officials the family's intent of entering and staying in the United States unlawfully. Only Katrina mistakenly revealed the family's intentions, by accidentally using the title "Mrs." for her teacher when asked about this by a Border Patrol agent. This revealed she was already attending U.S. schools and therefore participating in unlawful activity. This revelation, leading to her mother's difficult crossing using a coyote, caused huge guilt for Katrina for many years which she was still resolving. All of the participants remembered the academic struggles of learning English when entering U.S. schools challenging their competence (industry versus inferiority). They used the strategy of

accepting unique immigration circumstances fully and with clear cognizance to be successful in learning English. All eventually became extremely competent in school without experiencing the negative outcome of lack of competence from this stage from the Erikson model.

Domains three and four from this study (break the law versus follow the law and obscured versus visible) align with stages five and six from Erikson's (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015) model (identity versus role confusion and intimacy versus isolation). The strategies from the findings which correspond to this are the third and fourth ones: finding creative ways to avoid detection and blending in until it is safe to expose undocumented status. One choice the participants' shared regarding identity versus role confusion was whether to identify themselves as members of the U.S. culture or to identify as members of Mexican culture. Their physical proximity to Mexico while living in South Texas in a Latino dominant population city allowed them to blend in and avoid detection and to blend in until it was safe. This proximity also allowed them to maintain aspects of their Mexican culture while fully participating in a life in the United States. The strategies could be used and they could be closer to the identity and intimacy ends of those respective stages. For example, all of the participants continued to speak Spanish fluently and regularly while also becoming completely fluent in English. They identified with both cultures and moved along the continuum based on the context of placement. At home, they spoke Spanish with their families, at school they spoke English with their friends. For Erikson, making choices about values is part of the identity versus role confusion stage and a positive outcome is achieved with fidelity to one's self-determined values. These participants made the choices associated with values when contemplating breaking the law versus following the law. Their self-determined values involved fidelity to their family, so choices made to break the law was done due as part of this fidelity.

Erikson's (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015) sixth stage, intimacy versus isolation, was evidenced in the obscured versus visible domain when the participants shared their identity with others. Again, the strategies from the findings which correspond to this are the third and fourth ones: finding creative ways to avoid detection and blending in until it is safe to expose undocumented status. Mario feared the intimacy of sharing his status with friends, school teachers and counselors. He discussed how early in his life he learned to disconnect and play dumb when the need to write his social security number on paperwork surfaced at the beginning of school each year. Katrina was betrayed when she revealed her status to an ex-boyfriend, who later threatened to turn her in to law enforcement. Erikson posits lack of a positive resolution in a stage can result in revisiting this stage later in life to achieve favorable resolution. Possibly Mario and Katrina had unresolved concerns from stage one of Erikson's model, trust versus mistrust, which were revisited during the sharing of identity aspect of intimacy versus isolation. Roxana had few fears of the intimacy of sharing her status and also showed full commitment to the causes of social justice for all immigrant populations.

The fifth and six domains from the analysis, detours versus gateways and dreams versus realities do not chronologically (by age) correlate to Erikson's (Broderick & Blewitt, 2015) seventh and eighth stages, generativity versus stagnation and integrity versus ego, but these do correlate in terms of significant events and outcomes characteristic of the stages. It also corresponds to the strategies associate with these domains. These were the fifth and sixth strategies of cast aside confinements of undocumented status and enjoy new freedoms of having DACA, while accepting remaining struggles; and, limit the scope of future planning while staying aware of precarious situation. Significant events during generativity versus stagnation include contributing to future generations, mentoring, and creating lasting value. The positive

outcome for this stage is to become a caring person; the negative outcome is to become self-absorbed. During the detours versus gateways domain, all of the participants discussed the important ways their parents served as role model for them. Their parents showed them the value of hard work and placing hope in their children. During the dreams versus realities domain, Mario and Roxana shared their views on giving back to the next generation. Both continued to believe in helping those behind them, with Roxana actively involved in helping Central American refugees held in U.S. detainment camps. Seeing their parents' struggles and contributing to the community turned the participants into caring people, and not self-absorbed youth evidenced in a negative outcome. Significant events for the ego integrity versus despair stage include coming to terms with successes and failures and realizing the dignity of one's own life. A positive outcome of this stage is achieving wisdom regarding life. The negative outcome is a sense of regret. The participants in this study discussed coming to terms with the success of getting DACA, while also realizing DACA may turn into a failure if it is revoked. And even if it is not revoked, time provided all of the participants the wisdom to see that the temporary, 2-year at a time conditions to DACA, kept them in a continual state of flux. The participants did not share regrets, but some shared cynicism. Aaron's shared his belief in racism against those from Mexico, since there was no talk of building a wall between the United States and Canada. Mario had grown to believe immigration reform was getting support in Congress not because of a desire for social justice, but as a way to provide recruits for the U.S. military.

Student identity development. Chickering and Reisser (1993) provide seven vectors for student identity development. These include developing competence, managing emotions, moving through autonomy through managing independence, developing mature interpersonal relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose, and developing integrity. By comparing

Chickering and Reisser's (1993) theory with findings from this study, I intend to further explore student identity development as per the foci of inquiry for this study.

During the first vector students develop intellectual, physical and interpersonal competence. All of the participants developed intellectually and physically, with DACA having little negative impact on these aspects of their competence. It was through interpersonal competence where some of the participants struggled. Mario and Katrina discussed trusting peers and educators as concerns. While seemingly trusting, Aaron mentioned his fear of going through Border Patrol checkpoints multiple times. The fourth strategy was to blend in until it is safe to expose undocumented status. During this vector, finding safety was a challenging part of developing this strategy for these students.

Chickering and Reisser's (1993) second vector for student identity development is managing emotions. One emotion the participants' discussed managing was various levels of fear. This showed challenges associated with the fourth strategy of blending in until it is safe to expose undocumented status. Mario and Katrina managed fear by staying silent when asked by teachers for documentation. Some of this fear was managed with a sense of humor. Mario laughed when comparing his unlawful inner tube trip across the Rio Grande to enter the United States to his peer's beer-drinking inner tube trips down local rivers to party. Roxana and Aaron had little fear about driving without a license and found it laughable to worry about this.

Moving through autonomy by managing interdependence, vector three, was thrust on these participants early in their move to the United States (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). To accomplish this the participants accessed the second strategy: accept unique immigration circumstances fully and with clear cognizance. Entering U.S. schools meant learning English would be necessary for their future autonomy. They needed to expand connections outside their

families, particularly to teachers, to acquire these language skills. Later, their parents could not assist them with the college admissions and financial aid process. They expanded outside their families and become interdependent with people who could assist them. Mario depended on his AVID teacher. Katrina depended on financial aid officials at the local junior college. When these experts could not assist them, they developed more autonomy by learning the process on their own.

Chickering and Reisser's (1993) fourth vector is developing mature interpersonal relationships. This includes appreciating cross-cultural differences and developing long term intimate relationships. Participants demonstrated this by applying the second strategy: accept unique immigration circumstances fully and with clear cognizance. Roxana not only appreciated cross-cultural differences with immigrants from different and more difficult circumstances, she had become their advocate. Contrary to others, Katrina maintained no negative judgment for a friend who was entering a marriage to gain citizenship. Regarding long-term relationships, Aaron had a girlfriend for over five years who was still a friend whom he might marry someday, either for love, citizenship or both.

The fifth vector of Chickering and Reisser's (1993) theory of student identity development is establishing identity. Part of this is feeling comfortable with all aspects of oneself. The participants accomplished this with the fifth strategy: Cast aside confinements of undocumented status and enjoy new freedoms of having DACA, while accepting remaining struggles. After feeling uncomfortable with his undocumented status, Mario's coming out as undocumented at a press conference on television reversed this completely. He saw this as a point of revealing his identity and never going back to hiding. Roxana indicated she always felt

comfortable with herself as undocumented and attributed this to living in an accepting neighborhood in a Latino dominant population city.

Chickering and Reisser's (1993) sixth vector is developing purpose. This involves committing to a future and finding a vocational goals from this future. Again, the participants demonstrate the fifth strategy when they cast aside confinements of undocumented status and enjoy new freedoms of having DACA, while accepting remaining struggles. They also use the sixth strategy: Limit the scope of future planning while staying aware of precarious situation. Katrina felt a deep commitment to the study of psychology, and was looking for internships related to this field of study. Her religious faith included a belief in paranormal psychology, so this intertwined with her spiritual beliefs in the afterlife. Mario was preparing to finish college and was considering teaching positions. His work in schools inspired this choice. Aaron's love of geology inspired his haiku poetry. While he was majoring in mechanical engineering, he considered ways to incorporate geology in future work options. Roxana's work with Central American refugees held in detention centers was a true vocation for her. Her passionate advocacy resonated in her interviews.

The final vector of Chickering and Reisser's (1993) theory, developing integrity, involves humanizing values, personalizing values and bringing congruence between actions and beliefs. Values are humanized when they are inclusive of others and not just self. The fifth strategy from the findings shows the students accepted the remaining struggles of their status. This created a level of empathy. This empathy was seen in Mario's desire to help those following behind him. Personalizing values means taking the humanizing values and holding those as core, personal beliefs. Roxana demonstrated this in her work with refugees. She also showed congruence through her actions as an activist with her belief that all immigrants deserve human compassion.

Jungian psychology. Exploring identity development by applying universally shared characters from myths and the use of metaphor are part of the Jungian (Vogler, 2007) school of psychology. Jung applied psychological concepts while examining myths and created a series of archetypes, typical characters, seen across cultures. According to Jung (Vogler, 2007) these mythical archetypes reflect real people in action. Examining archetypes along with other types of metaphors allow human self-exploration of identity from a comfortable viewing platform. By applying metaphors to one's life and actions, one can understand self.

In this study I drew from Vogler's (2007) application of Jungian psychology to mythical storytelling. Archetypal character present in this story started with the protagonist hero. As the story evolved the protagonist heroes evolved through five types of heroes: innocent heroes; reluctant heroes; emergent heroes; heroes unbound; and, awakened heroes. The metaphor for their journey was the mythical quest, where one ultimately learns about self (Foster, 2003). On their quest the archetype characters the heroes encounter included: mentors who provided guidance; threshold guardians who created obstacles; heralds who voiced a need for change; shapeshifters who were fickle; shadows who showed characters their inner fears; allies who were trusted; and, tricksters who provided mischief (Vogler, 2007). The evolution of the hero archetype by the participants and their encounters with archetype characters also demonstrated their use of the six strategies to negotiate their student experiences and form their student identity.

Starting with their first phase in their evolution as heroes, the innocence was present in their descriptions of school and life in the Mexico of their childhood. Strategy one, maintain memories of Mexico in native language and with knowledge there is no return; and, strategy two, accept unique immigration circumstances fully and with clear cognizance were present.

Katrina's innocent memories revealed none of violence in her border town. Roxana talked of sleepovers in the school courtyard and living in a town where everyone knew each other. Aaron thought the playgrounds at school were "state-of-the-art." Crossing into the United States turned these innocent heroes into reluctant heroes. The move into the United States was not their choice, but they accepted change and persevered. Some experienced fearful moments as part of their border crossing. Katrina and Roxana were separated from their mothers who had to use a coyote to get to the United States. In the end though, they entered schools in a new country and learned a new language. Mario learned to love blue Gatorade.

As emergent heroes, the participants grew into awareness of their undocumented status. Strategy three, find creative ways to avoid detection and strategy four, blend in until it is safe to expose undocumented status were present during this time: As they were in a continual law-breaking state, the participants learned how to work around laws to not get caught. They also made decisions regarding which laws they determined unjust. Mario parked his car at school in visitor spot to avoid having to produce a license to get a student parking permit. Roxana and Aaron deemed getting a driver's license a law not worthy of compliance in the first place. All regarded compliance with the IRS by paying taxes a smart law to follow to avoid trouble.

Getting DACA was the point where the participants became heroes unbound. Strategy five, cast aside confinements of undocumented status and enjoy new freedoms of having DACA while accepting remaining struggles; and, strategy six, limit the scope of future planning while staying aware of precarious situation were demonstrated. The participants were no longer bound to stay obscured once they revealed themselves. With this walk into visibility came benefits they had never experienced. Mario flew on an airplane for the first time. Aaron started contemplating travel. Roxana no longer needed to work "under the table" and could seek legal employment.

During their final role as awakened heroes, they showed awareness of the realities of their

situations. Having DACA provided them a driver's license and a work permit, but only two

years at a time. Their presence was recognized by the U.S. government, but they could not vote

and they did not have a path to citizenship. Aaron thought building a wall between the United

States and Mexico was racist. Roxana thought DREAMers who did not support newly arriving

Central American immigrants lacked empathy.

The archetypical characters (Vogler, 2007) the heroes encountered also revealed the

strategies they used to negotiate their student experiences while informing their student identity.

Their foremost mentors and allies were their parents. Roxana also found a mentor in a former

valedictorian from her high school, who showed a student with undocumented status could go on

to college (first part of strategy five: cast aside confinements of undocumented status…). All

experienced threshold guardians in the form of Border Patrol agents and police officers. Katrina

was tricked by one of these Border Patrol agents in a way which revealed her family and left her

with guilt (strategy four: blend in until it is safe to expose undocumented status). Mario and

Roxana were involved in immigrant rights organizations, heralds who voiced a need for change.

For Roxana, President Obama was a fickle shapeshifter who gave her peers DACA, yet deported

more immigrants than previous U.S. presidents (strategy five: cast aside confinements of

undocumented status and enjoy new freedoms of having DACA, while accepting remaining

struggles). The shadows who showed the participants their inner fears included Mario's mother,

who scared him constantly about revealing his undocumented status (strategy four: blend in until

it is safe to expose undocumented status). Roxana was her own mischievous trickster, for she

not only showed careless disregard for the importance of having a driver's license while

undocumented, she still drove without a driver's license after getting DACA (the first part of strategy five: cast aside confinements of undocumented status…).

Recommendations

For educators and non-profit organizations working with students with DACA or undocumented status I make the following recommendations which I discuss more fully in this section. These recommendations are: (1) Support their student academic agency by learning their strategies to navigate educational experiences and find ways to foster this agency; (2) Learn the steps involved in their path to college/career access; and, (3) Stay informed of current public policies which affect them on a personal level.

Recommendation one: Support their student academic agency. My first recommendation is to support their student academic agency by learning their strategies to navigate educational experiences and find ways to foster this agency. The findings from this study indicate there were six strategies used by these participants to negotiate their educational experiences. These include: (1) Maintain memories of Mexico in native language and with knowledge there is no return; (2) Accept unique immigration circumstances fully and with clear cognizance; (3) Find creative ways to avoid detection; (4) Blend in until it is safe to expose undocumented status; (5) Cast aside confinements of undocumented status and enjoy new freedoms of having DACA, while accepting remaining struggles; (6) Limit the scope of future planning while staying aware of precarious situation. These strategies are a broad representation of tactics used by these students, a type of "what" was done. Student academic agency is an even broader notion, a type of "why" and "how" cognitive processes rationalized the strategies.

I define the term student academic agency as containing the following components: (1) Employed/considered by students during their K-12 and post-secondary educational experiences;

(2) Encompasses both academic and non-academic learning; (3) Involves using or considering (by watching role models) strategies at the macro-level (long-term) and tactics at the micro-level (daily) to achieve goals in spite of obstacles; (4) May or may not involve breaking laws/rules if those laws/rules are rationalized as unjust. While the first three components may be relatively easy to support, facilitating the fourth component may provide a moment for educators and non-profit organizations to pause and deliberate. Here are some considerations which may assist in addressing the component of breaking laws/rules if those laws/rules are rationalized as unjust. By assisting these students, one actually complies with legal standards. For those working in a K-12 education setting, the US Supreme Court ruling *Plyler v. Doe* (1982) supports this compliance. Part of the reasoning the court used to rule students in K-12 public education settings cannot be denied access to free schooling based on immigration status was due to their interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution. The Fourteenth Amendment says in part, "No State shall … deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." (This provision is commonly known as the "Equal Protection Clause") (Olivas, 2012; Perez, 2012). These students are within the school jurisdiction so they are protected. For those working at any level of education or for a non-profit organization, Title IX may be used to guide choices. Title IX (1964) prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin for organizations which receive federal funds (Olivas, 2012; Perez, 2012). To not assist students with DACA or undocumented status could be defined as discrimination based on national origin.

The previous paragraph addresses their presence in the United States as "breaking the law." However, what about the other ways of breaking the law, such as driving without a license, or getting married to get citizenship? This is when a personal reflection of ethical beliefs versus law compliance prior to working with these students can prepare one to stay ethically

sound. When educators and those working in non-profit agencies know their limits regarding

what they think they will need to report, they can provide these limits at the initiation of contact.

This practice of informed consent crosses many professions, including educators, business

managers, and other professionals (Rowan & Zinaich, 2003). For example, counselors disclose

the limits of confidentiality to clients prior to in-depth sessions. This includes types of law

infractions counselors would be ethically bound to report to police. Counselors also provide lists

of referrals to agencies, especially when they find a client may need assistance in an area they

lack expertise or professional comfort (American Counseling Association, 2014). This is an

option to consider when facing these considerations.

Facilitating student academic agency can be accomplished by connecting students with

DACA or undocumented status to post-secondary mentors and support organizations which

foster this agency. Simply providing these connections could greatly impact their ability to take

charge of their situation. These students are not only part of the first generation in their families

to go to college in the United States, they have circumstances tied to their immigration status

which presents barriers (Gonzales et al, 2016; Suarez Orozco et al., 2011). Yet, as the

participants from this study revealed, they have witnessed their parents overcome huge barriers

and are inspired by their parents' struggles (Jauregui & Slade, 2009; Perez et al., 2010). They

have seen how to take charge of a situation and can take charge of their own if productively

directed (Lad & Briganza, 2013; Nienhusser, 2013).

Recommendation two: Learn the steps involved in their path to college/career

access. This includes learning terminology and the specific processes related to these terms and

unique situations arising from having DACA status. This begins with having ways to quickly

access the qualifications for getting DACA and the benefits of obtaining DACA (Immigration

and Customs Enforcement, 2014; Kosnac et al., 2015; Salas et al., 2016). Many use the term DACA interchangeably with DREAMers, which is understandable considering these draw from the same student populations. However, this interchangeableness of terms has led some to the mistaken belief that the DREAM Act passed. Or, some think that DACA is a path to citizenship, since the DREAM Act provided a path to citizenship (Salas et al., 2016).

Another term educators and non-profit organizations need to know and understand is In-State Residential Tuition (ISRT). Whether or not a student with DACA or undocumented status can get tuition rates at the same rate as their citizen peers is a state by state decision (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2015; Nienhusser, 2013; Vazquez & Barragan, 2016). At this time, the federal government does not determine the parameters for tuition and admissions at state colleges and universities. Establishing residency varies state-by-state as does the state college/university admissions process (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). In Texas, the home of these participants, establishing residency involves submitting a notarized affidavit of residency form confirming three years of prior residency in the state. They also need to submit high school transcripts showing attendance in state high schools for grades 10-12 (College for All Texans, 2017). For students with DACA, having a social security number facilitates the ability of colleges to find their application. Then, the students can move on to more documents to complete for registration and college advising. For students with undocumented status, this is a point where they can get lost in the system since there is not a social security number tied to their application (Salas et al., 2016).

Students with DACA or undocumented status do not get to access federal student financial aid via the FAFSA application. Sometimes though, students with DACA do not understand this because they have been issued a social security number (Salas et al, 2016).

Current high school students with DACA status may not know they have DACA because their

parents took them to attorneys and instigated the process to get DACA. The students only know

they have a social security number and mistakenly believe they can access FAFSA funds.

Sometimes, this lack of knowledge leads them to complete admissions applications incorrectly

(Nienhusser, 2013; Salas et al., 2016). They can get incorrectly placed in the international

student applicant pool, and universities charge them international tuition rates. These rates are

often double the amount of instate tuition rates (Nienhusser, 2013). Sometimes students with

DACA do not reveal to educators assisting them they have DACA because they do not know

they have it, or are uncomfortable sharing this information.

While federal financial aid is not available for students with DACA or undocumented

status, several states do offer financial aid for college with state funds. This leads to processes

different from their citizen peers. For example, in Texas state financial aid funds are available

for those who can verify three years of state residency via a notarized affidavit and high school

transcripts. Students apply for these funds by completing the TASFA paper application (Flores &

Horn, 2009; College for All Texans, 2017). This paper application needs to be turned into every

college they might attend. The paper TASFA application needs to be accompanied by a

notarized affidavit of residency. In the findings of this study, Katina discussed the lack of

knowledge by those working in college/university financial aid offices which becomes a barrier

to obtaining financial aid. My experience has been that, unlike students who complete a FAFSA

online and can access information online, students who complete the TASFA need to go to the

school financial aid office and physically be present to verify the paper version TASFA and

affidavit are present in the office and being used for consideration. Often, my students have told

me they get to the office and are told the TASFA is there, but not the affidavit. This can throw

them out of the financial aid pool. I encourage my students to get multiple affidavits of residency signed and carry them at all times. Then, if a financial aid or admissions official says it is needed to complete the file they can produce it immediately.

Upon employment, the U.S. government requires employers to have future employees confirm their employment eligibility by completing an I-9 document. This is required per the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986. Students with DACA can verify their employment eligibility using their federal government issued Employment Authorization card. By law, employers cannot use this method of eligibility as a way to discriminate against those with DACA. However, DACA recipients may not know their employment rights and may need to access legal services for assistance (National Immigration Law Center, 2015).

Recommendation three: Stay informed of current public policies. Many current public policies affect students with DACA and undocumented status on a personal level. These include decisions in the court system, potential bills to go before the U.S. Congress and state legislatures, and executive orders issued by the U.S. president. Current events also affecting these students include deportation roundups and political protests covered on the news. As students with DACA or undocumented immigration status are part of the first generation in their family to live in the United States they are often unfamiliar with the system of government in the United States (Olivas, 2012; Suarez-Orozco et al., 2011). They may not know that Supreme Court decisions can be overturned as part of a multi-tiered process, Executive Orders can be issued swiftly, or that bills going through Congress must be approved by both the Senate and House of Representatives. They may also be unfamiliar with the functions of government at the state level. Many may not know that currently it is a state by state decision as to whether or not they can get ISRT and state financial aid funds, unless the federal government chooses to

change this (Nienhusser, 2013; Soria et al., 2014). Without taking a political side, advocates can

assist students understand these processes.

Advocates can also alleviate fears. Events portrayed in the popular press can be alarming

and the press may not always follow up on a reported event. For example, depictions of raids by

ICE on households have been portrayed on television without follow up stories. Sometimes,

none of the household members entered deportation proceedings (Salazar, 2016). Media

coverage showing demonstrators holding up signs with hurtful comments about immigrants can

increase student fears. For those working in educational settings or non-profit agencies

discussing appropriate ways to address denigrating remarks can be helpful. Some of these

chances to apply voice have been seen in recent campus petitions and letters to college

administrators (D. Doyle, personal communication, December 6, 2016; UTSA faculty, staff &

alumni, personal communication, November 18, 2016). Showing students ways to voice their

concerns can empower them, and add to their student academic agency.

Future Studies

Some of the concerns the participants addressed in this study provide possibilities for

future studies. This includes studies regarding high school to college transitions and workforce

transitions for students with DACA or undocumented status. The concept of *student academic*

agency, applied to multiple types of student situations, is another promising topic for future

studies. Finally, the methods used in this study also provide possibilities for future studies across

a variety of academic disciplines.

High school to college transitions. All of the participants received varying degrees of

support from those working in admissions and financial aid offices at the college and university

level. More studies where data is gathered from those who work in admissions and financial aid

offices regarding their knowledge of the processes for students with DACA and undocumented status could address the perceived need revealed by Katrina's experiences from this study. When working with one financial aid representative at a local junior college Katrina found the expert was not helpful. As she said, "We'd go round and round. Then she says, 'oh your TASFA you can't do this (meaning the FAFSA)' and I was like, 'really?'"

Apply student academic agency. Because this study was seeking to discover strategies employed by these students to negotiate their educational experiences, findings showed how they acted upon their environment. This initiative or, agency, became a critical way to view the participants' actions. While these participants demonstrated student academic agency within the confines of having DACA status, other students may have other confines which cause theme to demonstrate the criteria of this term. The term student academic agency has four general criteria which are: (1) Employed/considered by students during their K-12 and post-secondary educational experiences; (2) Encompasses both academic and non-academic learning; (3) Involves using or considering (by watching role models) strategies at the macro-level (long-term) and tactics at the micro-level (daily) to achieve goals in spite of obstacles; (4) May or may not involve breaking laws/rules if those laws/rules are rationalized as unjust. I recommend future studies applying the four criteria of student academic agency to students sharing other types of confines. These confines could include students from the first generation in their family to attend college; students entering college with homeless status; students with criminal records; and, students entering college who were teen parents. There are many possibilities.

Utilizing these methods. The design and the data collection methods, including the arts-based research activities (Leavy, 2015), used for this study elicited thick, rich data (Holliday, 2007) shared in relatable storytelling fashion. An important consideration of research is seeking

and sharing knowledge (Janesick, 1994). For centuries humanity depended on stories as a means to pass knowledge from person to person and from one generation to the next (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). I recommend researchers consider this when making design and data collection methods decisions for studies, particularly those seeking to understand human experiences. Future studies in any academic field incorporating storytelling and arts-based research activities could enrich our approach to how we ascertain knowledge (Leavy, 2015; Janesick, 1994).

Conclusion

In this conclusion, I address what can be learned from this study in relation to the italicized phrases from the purpose statement and the foci of inquiry, along with closing remarks. The purpose of this study was to describe the educational experiences of students of Mexican descent with DACA status and the impact of those experiences on the student identity development of these college students. The foci of this inquiry were:

1. What strategies do students of Mexican descent with DACA status use to negotiate their student experiences?

2. How do these strategies influence the development of their student identity?

I found four conclusions tied to the purpose statement and foci of inquiry which can be learned from these students' stories: (1) Their educational experiences were unique due to their immigration status and the time and context; (2) Their student identity was impacted, not formed; (3) The strategies were general, yet some tactics were unique; (4) The impact on student identity was demonstrated in the strategies, an interactive process of acting upon the environment with agency; an iterative process which influenced their development.

Their unique educational experiences. When I originally conceived this study I thought I was looking for unique strategies, but I learned I was wrong. The stories these students

shared showed me the real inception of uniqueness came from their immigration status and the historical time and context their lives were situated in. For example, and in regards to their immigration status: How many students in the United States have detailed memories of an unauthorized crossing into the United States? How many U.S. students have a parent who had to employ a coyote to get into this country? How many students in the United States have to go through the TASFA process when seeking financial aid for college? Regarding the historical timing: How many students in the United States fit into the qualifications for DACA in the window of time of President Obama's time in office? And, regarding the context: How many U.S. students live in an area formerly part of Mexico and with a majority Latino population, yet do not have full ascription to either country? This would be the liminality, the between-ness, described by Gonzales et al. (2016) and Suarez-Orozco et al. (2011).

The impact on student identity. The stories from these students showed their immigration status impacted their student identity, but it did not fully form this identity. All of these participants had lives integrated with multiple ways their identity was impacted. Immigration status was one of many impacts. This convergence of influences, or intersectionality (Nunez, 2014), meant gender, socio-economic status, family, ethnicity, language, educational attainment and other forces were part of their sociocultural psychological development process. For example, Aaron's family owned their own home and family business, a socio-economic factor impacting his parents' ability to pay for his college. He identified himself as a member of a financially sound family. Another example is apparent in language. All of the students were fluent in Spanish, yet Roxana admitted she had lost some of her language skills and it was apparent when she met with her grandparents in Mexico. This affected her identification with her country of origin. The degree of the impact of their

immigration status on their student identity varied across time and in relation to circumstances. This can best be seen in the next section, where I discuss strategies and tactics the students used (and to what degree) when needed to negotiate their educational experiences.

General strategies were comprised of unique tactics. While the students' overall strategies for negotiating their student experiences may not have been completely unique, some of the tactics they employed or witnessed role models use were very unique. For example, the first and second strategies; maintain memories of Mexico in native language and with knowledge there is no return, and, accept unique immigration circumstances fully and with clear cognizance could generally apply to others who have left Mexico. Many maintain memories from a home country in the language of that country. And, some cannot return because family or business ties have been severed, or due to legal concerns such as avoiding lawsuits. So, immigration status does not keep people in these cases away from Mexico. Many also are fully aware of their immigration status, and accept it plays a role in decisions. While these strategies can apply to many who have left Mexico, some of the tactics these students employ or have witnessed are unique. For example, how many students had a childhood clearly knowing if they left the United States they would not be able to re-enter through a legal border crossing? How many students have an invisible fence which keeps them in the United States for fear of not being able to return? How many have detailed memories of an unauthorized crossing on an inner tube across the Rio Grande (Mario), or one where the family was detained by border patrol agents because of accidentally calling a teacher Mrs. instead of maestra (Katrina)?

Student identity and agency. I chose to view these participants from an asset, not deficit, model of identity development. Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2007) description of PPCT, a theory where a person is not just subject to their environment but also interacting through

processes with this forming their identity shows agency on the part of the individual. This agency was demonstrated in their strategies. These strategies were part of an ongoing, iterative process where strategy influences student identity development, which in turn creates a more developed self-identity, which can generate new strategies and tactics. For example, Mario's need to remain maintain an obscured identity during his years in K-12 education were part of strategy four: Blend in until it is safe to expose undocumented status. His tactics involved a lot of dishonesty and maneuvering which led to self-examination on his part. The ongoing impact of his immigration status on his identity development and the need to stay hidden eventually led him to reject that identity very firmly. When he revealed his undocumented status on television he rejected the former hidden identity for a new one of visibility. This did not stop the development of his identity, but rather impacted it, as he continued to grow. A new set of processes and tactics began leading him to eventually seek DACA. The new tactics were reflected in strategy five: Cast aside confinements of undocumented status and enjoy new freedoms of having DACA, while accepting remaining struggles. This continuation of identity growth continued for Mario, for in the PPCT aspect of bioecological systems theory the process of identity development is ongoing through an individual's lifetime (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006).

   Closing remarks. In closing, I would like to address how my experience using stories in my work as a professional school counselor influenced my approach to this study. Finding the coherence and seeking the connections Linde (1993) calls for as part of narrative inquiry are also integral parts of counseling practice. I also use metaphors in counseling to provide coherence and depth to the human experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). As I prepared to share the data for the findings, I received a suggestion to use concepts of mythical storytelling to enhance

the aspects of character and plot development per the narrative design. Rather than reject this as lacking scientific credibility, I embraced the creativity and saw the connection to my professional practice. I continually returned to Janesick's (1994) argument that the goal of research is seeking and attaining knowledge. Seeking and attaining knowledge can be accomplished in a creative, literary manner.

Good stories provide symbolism and use reference frames regarding universally shared concepts. The concept of evil is understood across cultures with images of the devil, Darth Vader from *Star Wars*, and the evil eye. In the story from this study, I used the Jungian archetypes provided by Vogler (2007) to explore universal characters present in mythic stories. Through relatable metaphors, readers could more fully embody the humanity of the participants. Classic stories have episodic qualities which make readers want to continue to follow the characters and the plot beyond the last page. These episodic classics include *The Odyssey*, *The Lord of the Rings* Trilogy, Japanese anime series, and the Harry Potter books. Good stories beg for a sequel. Following and learning where the storied lives of these students, or students like them continues, could provide a sequel which perpetuates the reader's learning and academic breadth of knowledge.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Qualifications for Legislation/Executive Orders Affecting Undocumented Youth

DREAM Act (2010)	DACA (2012)	Expanded DACA (2014)
Entered the U.S. before age 16	Arrived in the U.S. prior to the age of 16	All DACA (2012) conditions with these additions:
Between ages of 12 and 35	At least 15 years old when applying and under age 31 since June 15, 2012	Those born before June 16th, 1981
		Continual presence in U.S. since January 1st, 2010
In school, graduated high school, obtained GED, accepted into institution of higher education, or completed 2 years of college or military service	In school, graduated high school, obtained GED, an honorable military discharge	
Good moral character	No criminal record, and not be a threat to national security	
Continual U.S. resident 5 consecutive years prior to enactment of bill	Continual U.S. presence since June 15th, 2007	
	Present in the United States on June 15, 2012 and at time of application	

(Source: Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2014; https://dreamact.info/students; 2010; http://www.uscis.gov/immigrationaction; 2015)

Appendix B

Benefits/Provisions of Legislation/Executive Orders Affecting Undocumented Youth

DREAM Act (2010)	DACA (2012)	Expanded DACA (2014)
After 5 ½ years as Conditional Residents can apply for Legal Permanent Residency (a path to citizenship)	Not a path to citizenship but prevents deportation from United States	All DACA (2012) benefits but provides 3-year work permits instead of two
	Provides Social Security number	
Become Conditional Residents (able to work, drive, and travel within the U.S.)	Given 2-year work permits, allowed to travel outside of United States only for extreme family emergencies or approved international study and driving permits determined by each state	
Able to apply for Federal Work Study/Loans; may not receive Pell Grants	Cannot receive any type of federal student financial aid	
	Cannot enlist in U.S. military	

(Source: Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2014; DREAM Act Portal, 2010; http://www.uscis.gov/immigrationaction, 2015)

Appendix C

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979)

Macrosystem
(Broad cultural processes)

Exosystem
(Two or more external interactions,
i.e… parents to work, etc…)

Mesosystem
(Interactions between
microsystem members)

Microsystem
(family, peers,
etc…)

Individual
(sex, age,
etc.)
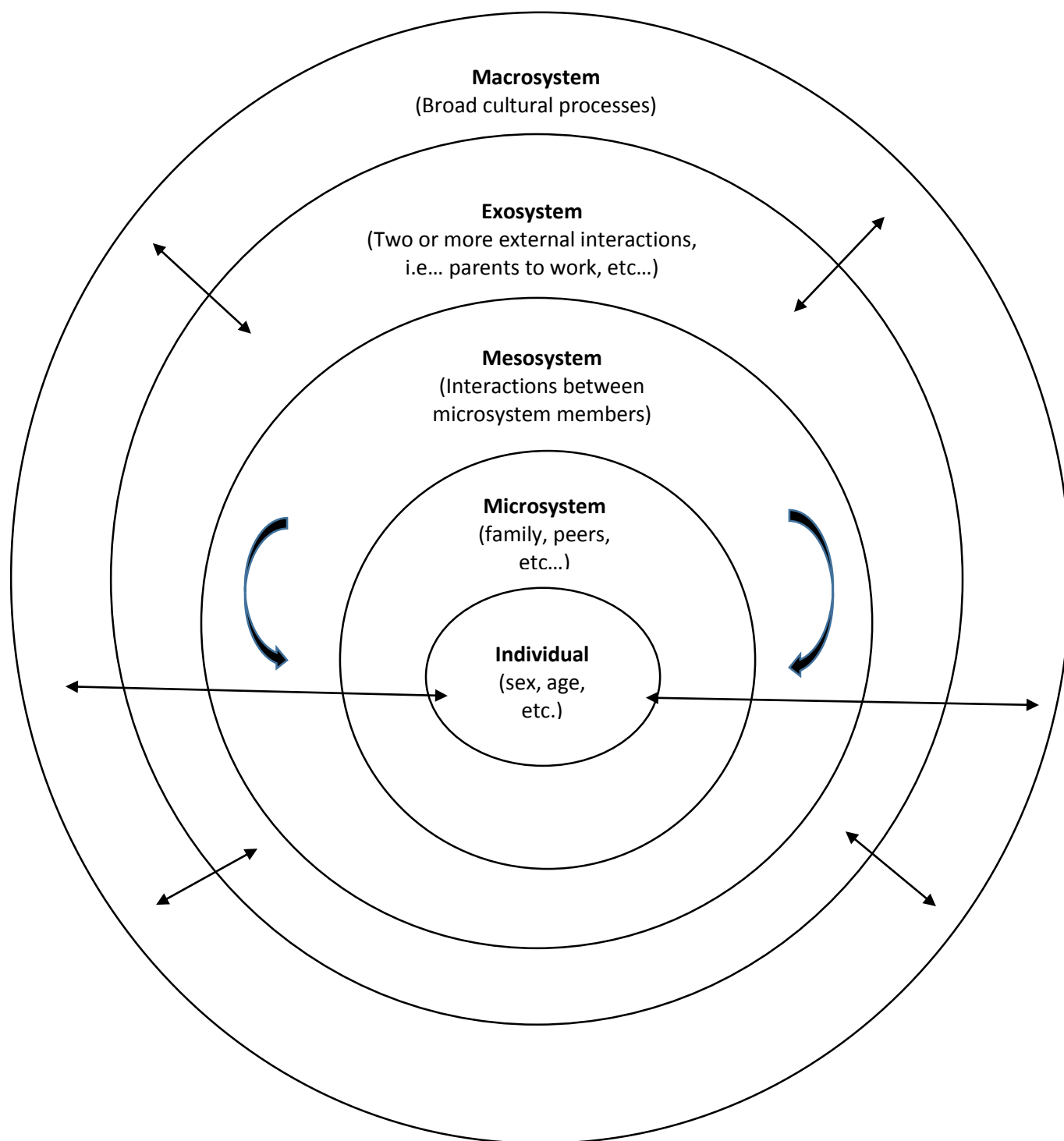
Appendix D

Comparison of Demographic Information of Participants

Name*	Age	College Type	Major	Interview 1 Length	Interview 2 Length	U.S. Grade Placement	Family Size/ Number w/DACA	Relocation Reason
Mario	23	4	Bilingual Bicultural Studies	65 minutes	30 minutes	3rd	3/2	Leaving Domestic Abuse
Katrina	19	2	Psychology	95 minutes	50 minutes	3rd	6/2	Medical (Sister with Long Term Illness)
Roxana	24	2	Business	80 minutes	35 minutes	3rd	6/2	Economic Opportunities
Aaron	20	4	Engineering	70 minutes	60 minutes	1st	4/2	Economic Opportunities

Appendix E

IRB Approval of Procedures

UIW Application for IRB Approval
Part I: Application Form

This application is to be used for initial application for IRB review only. Sufficient time must be allowed for review. Incomplete applications will be returned without review. For a list of application components, see the IRB Manual.

Submit this completed form as part of the application to the Office of Research Development electronically for IRB review. **Do not submit applications directly to the IRB representative**, as this form will be electronically routed to them for review after it has been checked for completion and logged into the IRB database. Signatures will be applied electronically once the application is approved.

Principal Investigator			
A Principal Investigator (PI) must be designated for any human subjects research. The PI is responsible for ensuring university and federal regulatory compliance for all research activities and research personnel associated with this protocol. For the responsibilities of the PI, refer to the UIW IRB Manual.			
Name: Elizabeth Holbrook	Phone #: 210-872-8034	E-mail: eholbroo@student.uiwtx.edu	Mailing Address: 10707 Lands Run, SA, TX 78230
College/School or Department: Dreeben School of Education		CITI Training Date: 07/07/2015	PIDM (UIW ID): 826364
Is the PI a student? ☐ NO ☒ If, YES, a faculty supervisor must be designated for this research protocol. Include a signed copy of the **Faculty Supervisor Agreement** with this application.			

Faculty Supervisor			
Name: Dr. Audra Skukauskaite	Phone #: 210-283-6324	E-mail: skukausk@uiwtx.edu	CPO: 293
College/School or Department: Dr Elizabeth Holbrook Dreeben School of Education		CITI Training Date: Click here to enter text. 7/22/15	PIDM (UIW ID): 918696

Other Project Personnel				
List all other project personnel, including co-investigators, research associates, and student researchers who will be recruiting, consenting, collecting data, or working with data collected from human subjects. Use "enter"/"return" key to list personnel on separate lines.				
Name: N/A	Role in Research: N/A	CITI Training Date: N/A	Email: N/A	PIDM (if student): N/A

Research Information		
Title of Study: Understanding the Educational Experiences of Students of Mexican Descent with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Status		
Research Category: ☐ Exempt ☒ Expedited ☐ Full Board		
This research will be conducted: ☐ On the UIW campus or UIW facilities ☒ Off campus (list all locations where research will be conducted):		
Number of Subjects: 3-10	Number of Controls: N/A	Total Duration of Study Activities: 16-20 weeks
This research will involve the following (check all that apply): ☐ Inmates of penal institutions ☐ Institutionalized intellectually handicapped ☐ Institutionalized mentally disabled ☐ Committed patients ☐ Intellectually handicapped outpatient ☐ Mentally disabled outpatient		

☐ Pregnant women
☐ Fetus in utero
☐ Viable fetus
☐ Nonviable fetus
☐ Dead fetus
☐ In Vitro fertilization
☐ Minors (under 18)

Funding Disclosures
Funding source(s): ☐Internal ☐External ☐Pending ☒None
List all funding sources (pending and awarded):
N/A
The funding provides for (select all that apply):
☐ Investigator release time or compensation
☐ Research materials
☐ Graduate assistants, student workers, or other project employees
☐ Travel
☐ Other:
N/A

Financial Conflict of Interest
Does any member of the project team hold financial interest in the funding organization or any similar organization (stocks, board membership, etc)?
☒ NO
☐ If YES, describe below:
N/A

This Section for Office of Research Development Use Only
Signatures will be applied electronically upon approval

Investigator Signature(s) & Assurances
I certify that the information above is accurate and complete. I will request prior IRB approval for any changes to the approved protocol and/or informed consent forms, and will not implement those changes until I receive IRB approval. I will report any adverse effects to the IRB immediately. I agree to comply fully with the ethical principles and regulations regarding the protection of human subjects in research.

Principal Investigator:

Name: Elizabeth Holbrook	Signature: Elizabeth Holbrook	Date: 2-24-2016

Faculty Supervisor (if Principal Investigator is a student):

Name: Dr. Audra Skukauskaite	Signature: Dr. Audra Skukauskaite	Date: 2/25/16

Approval Signature(s)

IRB Representative/Reviewer:

Name: Theresa Alexander	Signature: DocuSigned by: Theresa Alexander 78BE8DF2B87A45A...	Date: 3/11/2016

IRB Chair (or Chair's Designee):

Name: Helen E. Smith	Signature: DocuSigned by: Helen E. Smith 63ED9DCAFEA840B...	Date: 3/12/2016

UIW Application for IRB Approval
Faculty Supervisor Agreement

Please read this information and complete the requested fields. **Print, sign, and scan** to submit electronically or **submit in hard copy to CPO 1216. A signed copy of the Student Researcher Agreement is required for any research protocol with a student PI.** Incomplete applications will be returned without review.

Application Information			
Title of Study: Understanding the Educational Experiences of Students of Mexican Descent with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Status			
Student PI Information			
Name: Elizabeth Holbrook	Phone #: 210-872-8034	E-mail: eholbroo@student.uiwtx.edu	PIDM (UIW ID): 826364
College/School or Department: Dreeben School of Education		Program of Study: Ph.D.	
Faculty Supervisor Information			
Name: Dr. Audra Skukauskaite	Phone #: 210-283-6324	E-mail: skukausk@uiwtx.edu	CPO: 293
College/School or Department: Dreeben School of Education			

I certify that the student named above is knowledgeable of the regulations and policies governing research with human subjects and has sufficient training and experience to conduct this study as described in the proposed protocol.

I furthermore certify the following:

- I have reviewed this application;

- I will maintain knowledge of the direction and completion of the project;

- I will assure the student investigator remains in compliance with UIW and federal human subjects protection policies;

- I assure the student investigator will promptly file for revision, amendment, annual continuing review, or completion of the supervised protocol and will provide assistance to them as needed;

- I assure both the student investigator and I will promptly report any significant or untoward adverse effects to the UIW IRB;

- If this protocol is to be conducted as part of a course, I will ensure the student investigator is informed of the requirement to file appropriate documents at the end of the course; and

- If at any time I am unable to proceed as Faculty Supervisor (e.g., end of the course during which research was planned, sabbatical leave, or exit from the University), I will assist the student in designating an alternate Faculty Supervisor for the remainder of the study.

Student Investigator and Faculty Supervisor Signatures		
Student Principal Investigator:		
Name: Elizabeth Holbrook	Signature: *Elizabeth Holbrook*	Date: *2-24-2016* 2-24-2016
Faculty Supervisor:		
Name: Dr. Audra Skukauskaite	Signature: —DocuSigned by: *[signature]* B9BCB8A82A094E0...	Date: 3/11/2016

Understanding the Educational Experiences of Students of Mexican Descent with Deferred Action for
Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Status
University of the Incarnate Word

I am Elizabeth Holbrook, a doctoral candidate at the University of the Incarnate Word.

You are being asked to participate in a research study regarding the experiences of college students with
Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status. I want to learn more about the educational and
life experiences of students with DACA status and share the findings of this study with fellow educators.
You are being asked to participate in this study because you have DACA classification and have
expressed an interest in sharing your stories.

If you agree to take part in this study, you will participate in two meetings with me using the following
procedures:

1. One, about one-hour tape-recorded conversation with me regarding your life story.
2. Another, about a one-hour-long tape-recorded meeting with me involving an arts-based
activity.

I also invite you to share books, photos, or any other memorabilia associated with your life story. This is
at your discretion. If you choose to share these materials, I will take measures listed below to protect
your confidentiality.

The tape recordings will be transcribed to be used as data for a narrative study regarding the lives of
DACA students. After transcription the tape recordings will be destroyed. The arts-based activity will
also be used as data for analysis. Transcribed data and the arts-based activity will be retained for future
professional publications and presentations. As part of the research study, I will do everything possible
to prevent discomfort or inconvenience for you.

The possible benefit of this research include the following:

1. As a participant, you will be able to provide information about your experiences and the
community that has historically not been heard. It may also provide you more personal
insight.
2. Educators may have greater knowledge of the needs and concerns of students with DACA
and then be able to better serve the community.

As a means to protect your identity I will use the following measures:

1. Conduct interviews in private settings.
2. Use pseudonyms for participants, schools, towns, border crossings and any other
identifiable data while transcribing.
3. Protect the data. Audio files will be transcribed on to a password protected computer. I will
be the only person who transcribes. Protection of raw data will include no use of internet
accessible storage sites (i.e. cloud storage).
4. After I transcribe the audio files, I will destroy the audio files.

5. Photographs and/or reproduction of memorabilia you share will not include any identifiable aspects. As the participant you will have full control of how these are represented and/or if you want these removed.

Participation is voluntary and you may choose to not take part in the study or to stop taking part at any time without penalty of any kind. You have the right, at the end of the study, to be informed of the findings of this study.

It is also important for me to share that I am a professional school counselor. This has provided me with experience and training with confidential and sensitive things people have experienced. My ethical obligation is to protect you. I am also ethically bound to share with you the limits of confidentiality. If you reveal information that indicates you may harm yourself or someone else, I must share this with those who can best ensure a safe outcome.

If you have questions, please ask them at any time. If you have additional questions later or you wish to report a problem that may be related to this study, contact:

Elizabeth Holbrook   Dr. Audra Skukauskaite
(210) 872-8034   (210) 283-6324
eholbroo@student.uiwtx.edu   skukausk@uiwtx.edu

To contact the University of the Incarnate Word committee that reviews and approves research with human subjects, the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and ask any questions about your rights as a research participant, call: UIW IRB, Office of Research Development (210) 805-3036.

If you completely understand the expectations and rights of participants in this study, all of your questions have been answered to your satisfaction, and you are willing to participate in this study please sign and date this consent form in the space provided. To sign this consent form, you must be 18-years-old or older by today's date. You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

_____
Participant Name

_____   _____
Participant Signature   Date Signed

Elizabeth Holbrook_____
Researcher Name

_____   _____
Researcher Signature   Date Signed

Initial Interview Guide

Topic I. Educational experiences as an undocumented student

Potential inquiries

1. Tell me about your memories of Mexico.

2. Tell me about your first memories of entering the U.S.

3. Tell me about the first time you entered a US school.

4. As you moved from elementary to middle and then high school, tell me of experiences citizenship played in your life.

Topic II. Citizenship and transition to college

Potential inquiries

1. Tell me about the role DACA/citizenship played in your college choices.

2. Tell me about the role DACA/citizenship has played in the admissions/financial aid process.

3. Tell me about the role of DACA/citizenship as part of your current experiences as a college/university student related to school, work, family, and friendships.

Topic III. Experiences of seeking and receiving DACA

Potential inquiries

1. Tell me about your experiences applying for DACA

2. Tell me how DACA/citizenship may have impacted your cultural/economic/political worldview.

3. Tell me how DACA/citizenship affect your future goals.

Follow-up Interview Guide

(With Arts-Based Research Activity)

1. Participant chooses one event from the initial interview which had the greatest emotional

impact on him/her as an individual.

2. Participant will be guided through the Five Senses Activity as follows:

    A. I show the Five Senses Activity to the participant and write the event in the

        center circle.

    B. I say, "When (the event) took place, tell me some of the things you would

        see?"

    C. I list these things under "See" and use prompts to help participant provide

        more elaborate descriptions.

    D. This activity is continued for the remaining senses.

Five Senses Activity
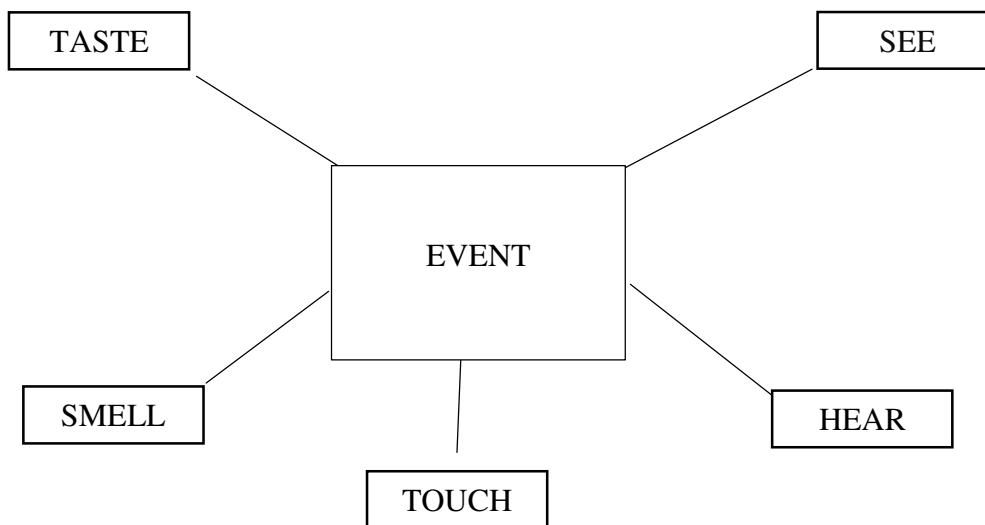
After using the wheel to create elaborate descriptions about the event

Appendix F

Participants' Five Senses Activities and Haiku

Participant 1 Five Senses Wheel and Drawing

Participant 1 Drawing

Participant 1 Haiku

Murky water flow   5?
Wet to Dry feeling of clothes   7?
Warm U.S. weather   5?

Bottomless depth
Black tube, Brown man —
Pladdling to hope

Blue American taste
Dying grass, lying down —
Drive ~~XXX~~ I-35 ~~XXXXX~~
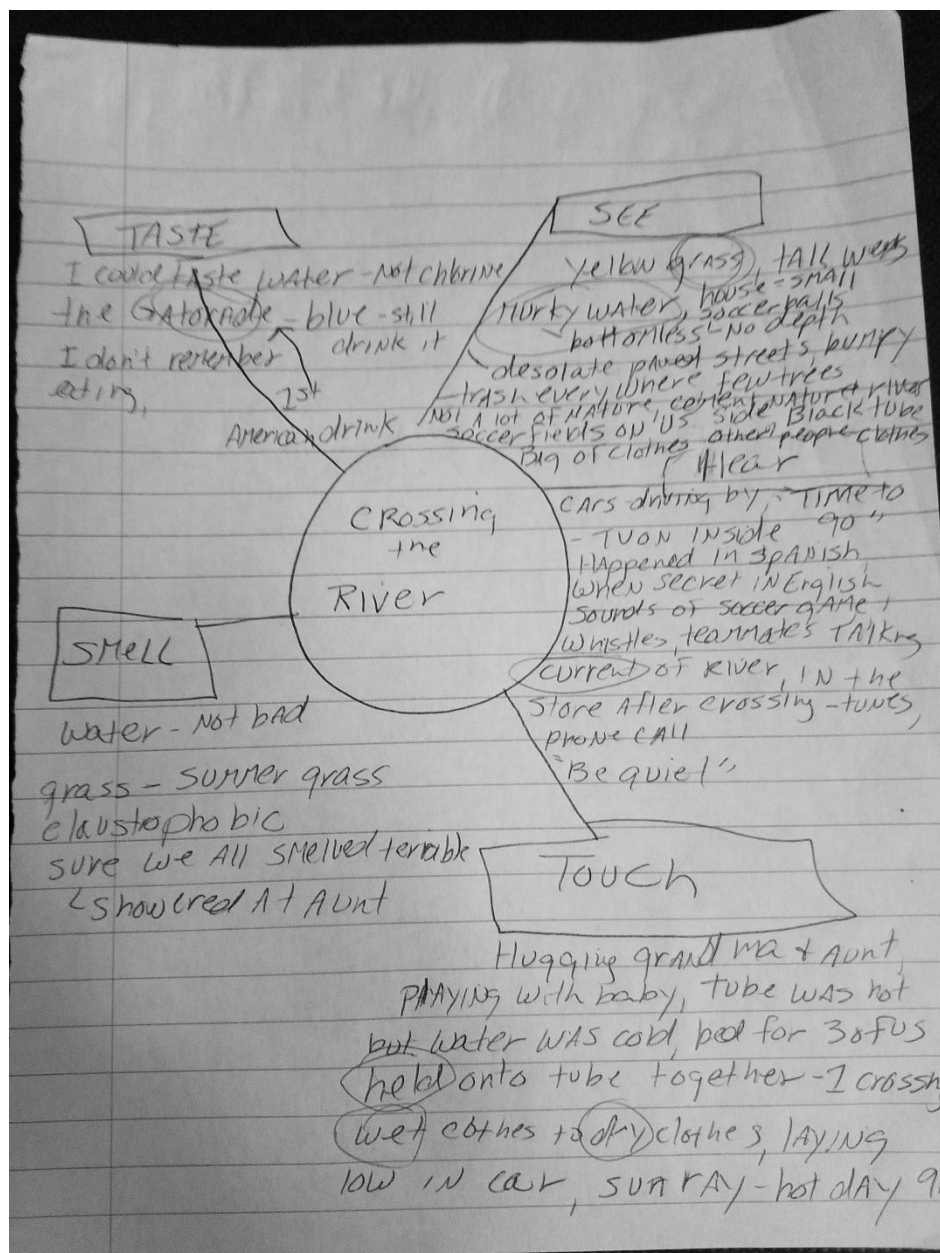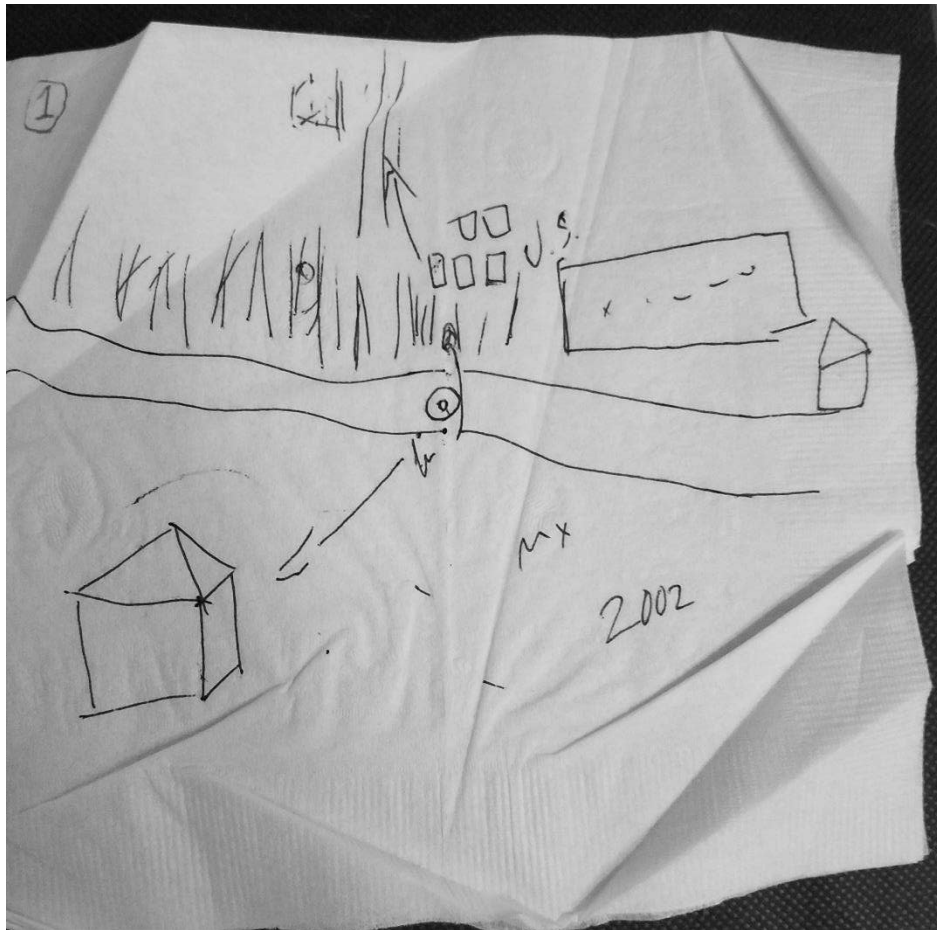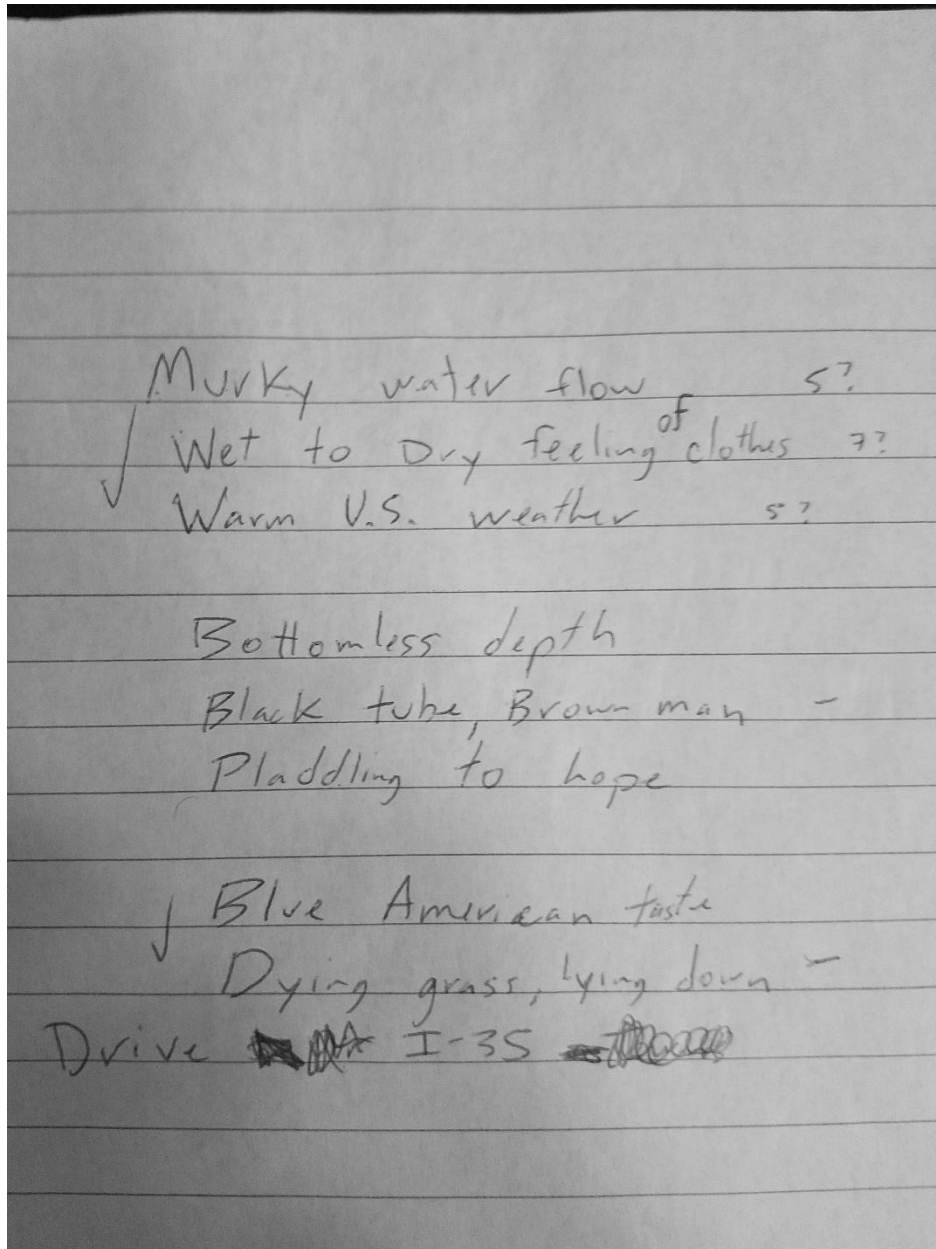
Participant 2 Five Senses Activity

felt like
A Few
Hours

fingerprinting -Ng

SEE
line of cars - A lot
VAN - see Approach to
Booth - SMAII white w
windows
15+
Officer - Blonde 30 isL
sister brother babies in A car
seat
uniform
A Few more officer
Nextbuildg

TASTE
No taste
No drink
crying - tears

I knew what
I had done

CROSSING
Border
When we got
Caught

HEAR
"Don't SAY ANYthr
OFFice sound
talking to secretar
Chatter - Officer
Asking Mom
"what's your teacher
NAME?"
Mrs. Blanca
what's
the
NAMe

SMELL
OLD Book smell - ugly
BAD
OLD OLD

Touch
I Humid
Office -
holding hands

It clicked   Separated
When he went Around
truck - And Asked AgAin
I did realize it.

Participant 2 Haiku

5   I know what ~~I~~ I've done

7

5

Crossing, the Border

~~He caught my thm.~~

He had caught the lie

Now with tears I realize

          pack

Now we ~~too~~ can't go home

~~To the van te~~ He approached the van

Participant 3 Five Senses Activity

Handwritten five senses mind map:

Candy bags for Levantada — Nacimiento
③ Built-in   G-MA G-PA -old 70's
Shower   skirts   Dark pants bottons
room   No WATER - tubs, vases, Adobe house
SMELL   SAints, piladores   FAMILY pictures
            stuff —   SEE   on tables
Coffee   for   - FAMILY After 8 Years -   My pic
bird poop smell curandero G-MA 2 bed house - kitchen
light   oil   - 3 people - kitchen table old
Curandera herbs Colorful   SAt Around wooden
Buenelo smell   red blue   homemade barely
smell of hard   purple   cupboards standing
candies,   Dirt floors
orange   Hear
        Event   catch up Mexico
      Going Back   family - learned
      to Mexico - Christmas NAmes All
      @ 8th Grade -   IN SPANISH -
      Before DACA   did not understd
      After Living Here All Spanish team
      + settled   language struggles
              - doves chirp
Touch   - chickens -
No A/C   - dogs
Set up of NAtivity   - gross radio
scene   humming songs, Neh
cold - sweaters   background
sitting on wooden   Maybe   TASTE
chairs   coffee - boiled water + Mix
touching the wall was sugar, Milk
weird - dirt
Dirt floors - Wet to
        clean

Participant 3 Haku

A Grandma sitting
Curandera herbs
colorful skirt

Talking to family
in a forgotten tongue
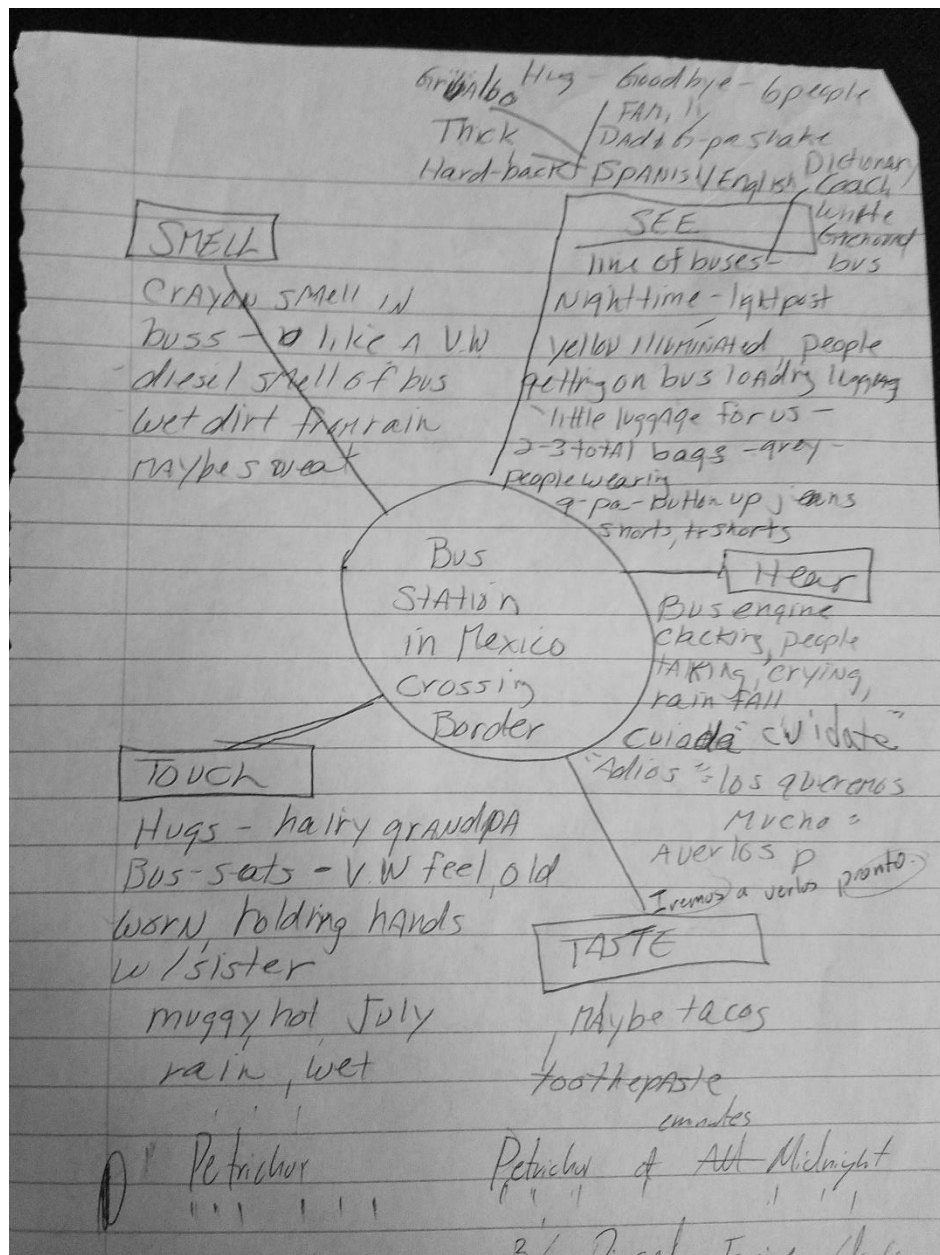trying to keep up

Tomando Cafe
en la mesa de abuela
como estrañõs

Es la navidad
Tiempo para el niño
y su cunita

Participant 4 Five Senses Activity

Participant 4 Haiku

5 - 7 - 5

Leaving Mexico
Petrichor At Midnight
Estamos bien

Fleeing Mexico
As Petrichor eminates
will see you soon

Fleeing Mexico
As petrichor eminates
Te quiero mucho
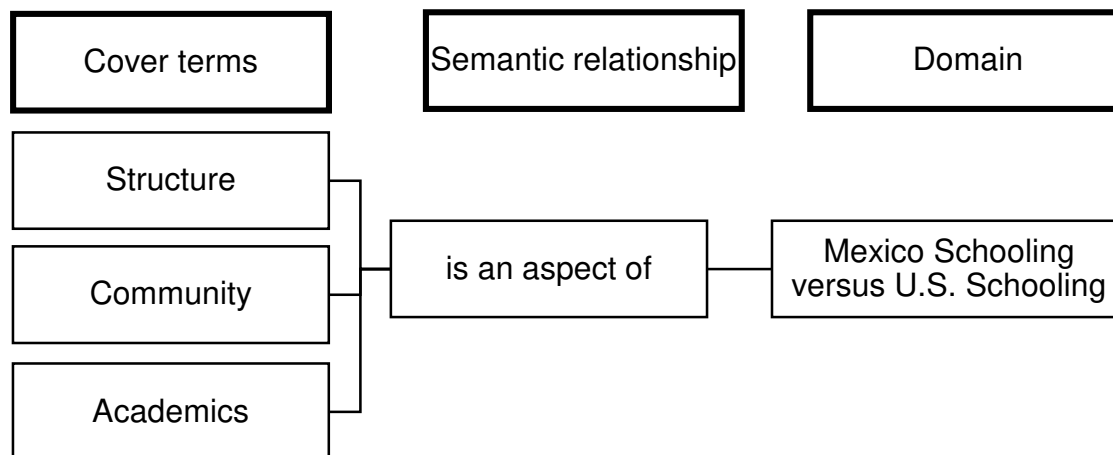
Appendix G

Key Words and Phrases from Interviews

Work

Money

Secret eye contact

Go on television

Learning immigration status

Coming out

Junior college

TASFA

Deportation

DACA

The border

Crossing

ICE

Border patrol

Separation

Discovery

Go Center

Scholarships

Citizenship status

Grants

Raft

Van

Going back and forth

Escape

Facilitators

FAFSA

Technology

Activism

Admissions

Degree

DREAMERS

Targets

Memories

Fantasies

Returning to Mexico

Crossing spot

Death trap

Magical school

Tricking

Giving back

Protection

Barrier

Legal

Role models

Community

Hospitalization

Valedictorians

Current DACA students

Hierarchy

More deserving immigrants

Counselors

Interrogation

Temporary family separation

Play dumb

Lose accent

Hiding

Papers

Driver's license

Work under table

Car insurance

Rules

Laws

Obama

Bilingual classes

Spanish/English dictionary

Bus

Spanish

Immigration

RAICES

Detour

Wearing uniforms

Morning flag ceremony

Recess/play

Educational activities

Manipulatives

Lacking money

Financial aid

Detention centers

Construction work

Teachers

Restaurants

Speaking English

Small town

Town celebration

Immigrant stratification

Family

Mother

Pledge

Checkpoints

Appendix H

Developmental Research Sequence (DRS)

Taxonomy: Distant Memories

Domain 1

Cover terms	Semantic relationship	Domain

Structure		
Community	is an aspect of	Mexico Schooling versus U.S. Schooling
Academics		

Domain 2

Cover terms	Semantic relationship	Domain

| Physical Boundaries | | |
| Cultural Boundaries | are types of | Openings versus Barriers |
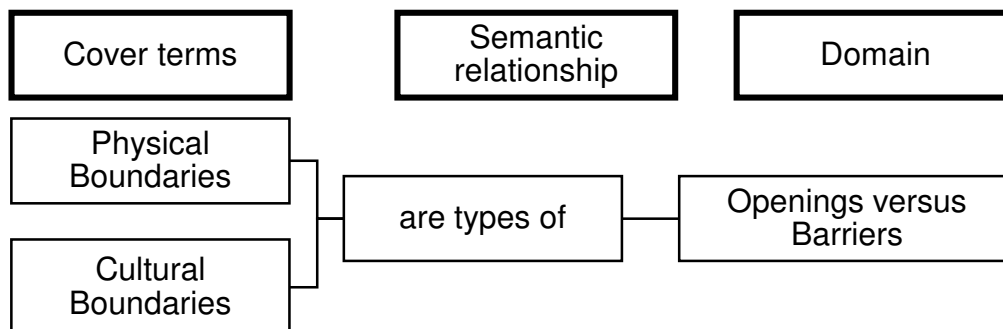
Taxonomy: Recent Events

Domain 3

Cover terms	Semantic relationship	Domain
Documents		
Transportation	are ways to	Break the Law versus Follow the Law
Behavior		
Work and taxes		

Domain 4

Cover terms	Semantic relationship	Domain
Sharing Stories	are ways to be	Obscured versus Visible
Appearing Normal		
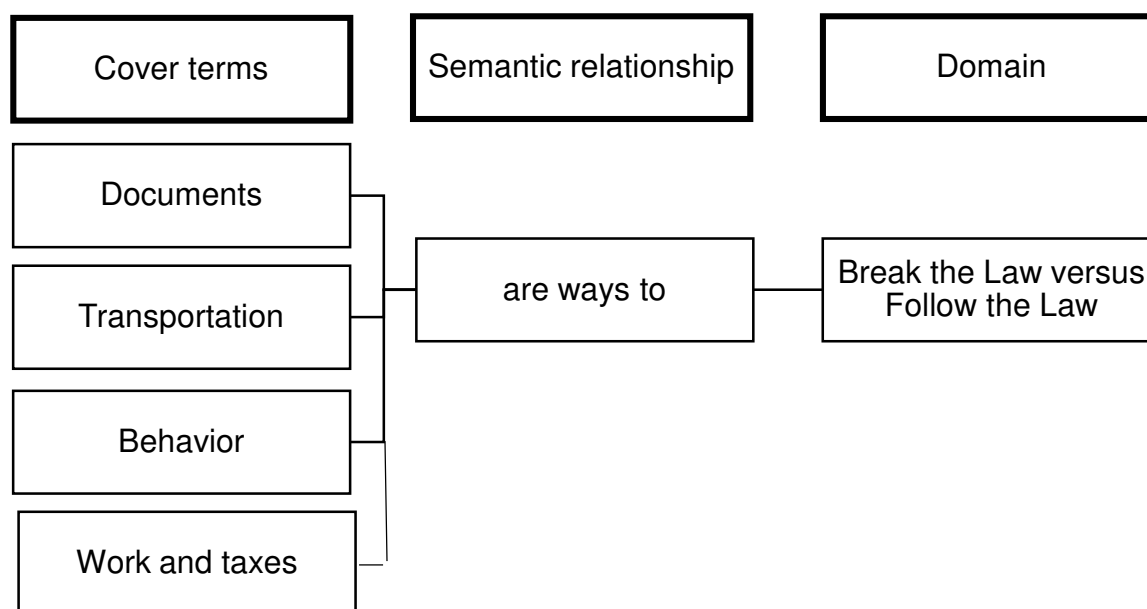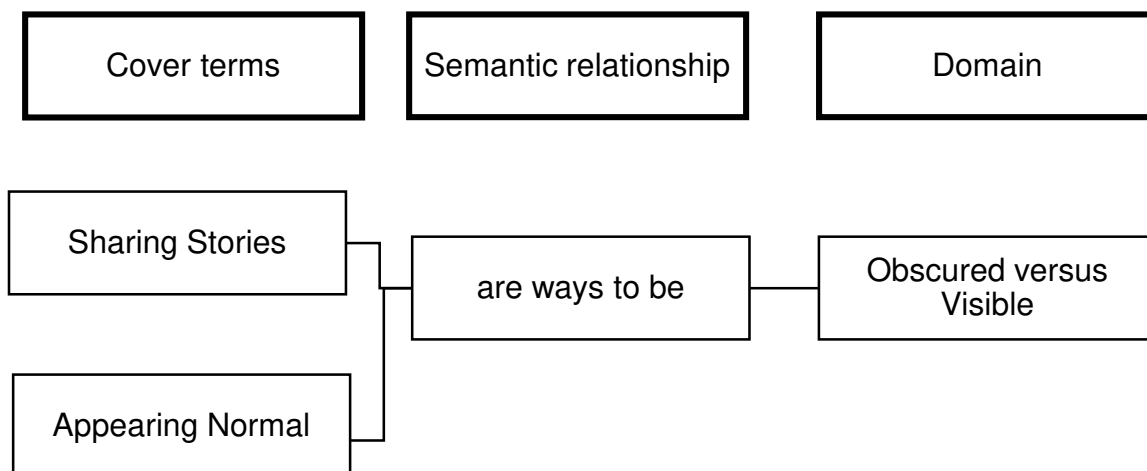
Taxonomy: Future Plans

Domain 5

Cover terms	Semantic relationship	Domain
Financial Aid		
Scholarships	are kinds of	Detours versus Gateways
Role Models		
Employment		

Domain 6

Cover terms	Semantic relationship	Domain
Citizenship		
Marriage	are a means to	Dreams versus Realities
Economic Opportunities		
Activism		
Future Outlook		
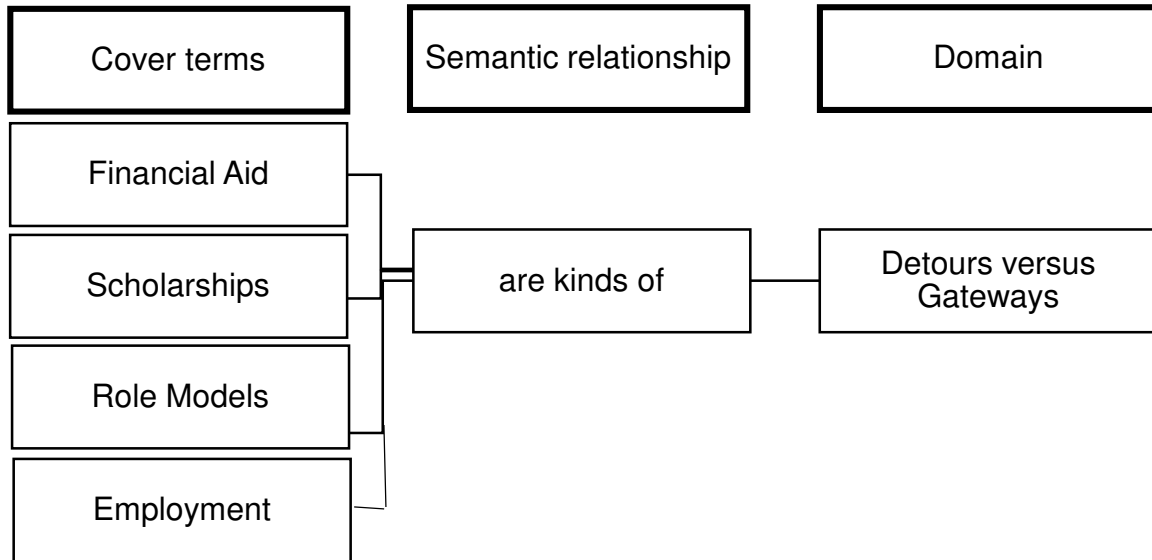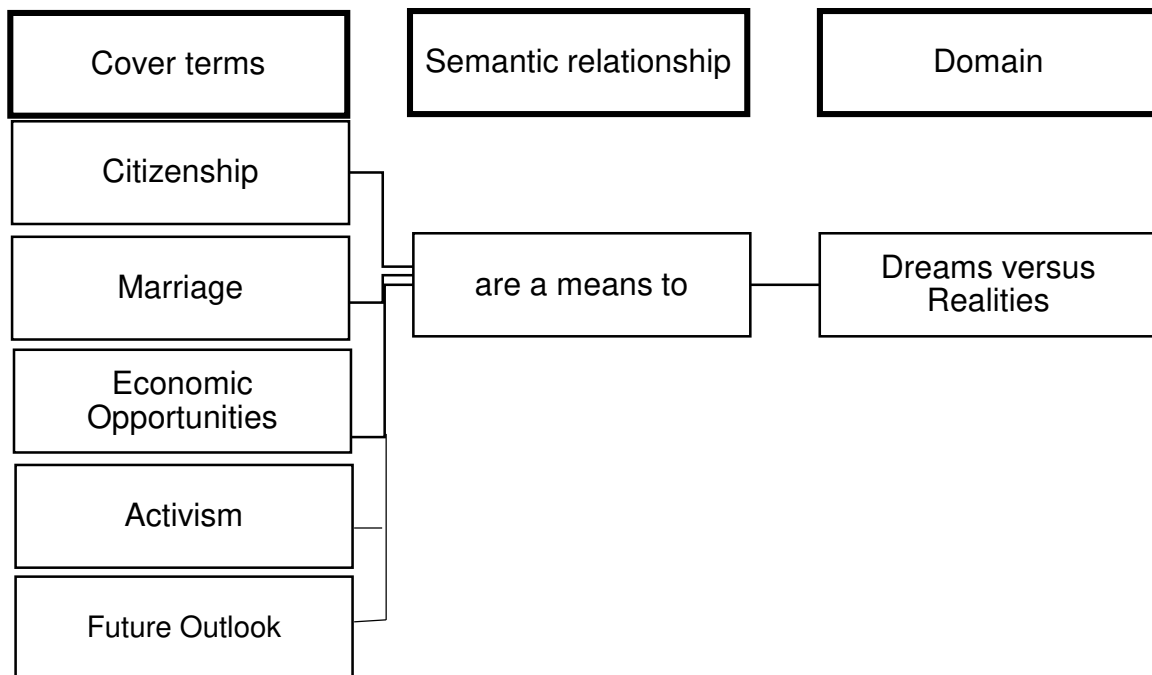
Appendix I

Shared Story Framework

CLIMAX: Receiving DACA
immigration status

Obscured versus Visible

PLOT: CONFLICT
POINT

Break the Law versus
Follow the Law

PLOT: CONFLICT
POINT

Detours versus Gateways

PLOT: CONFLICT
POINT

Openings versus Barriers

DESCENDING
ACTION

RESOLUTION

Dreams versus Realities

PLOT: CONFLICT
POINT

Mexico versus U.S.
Schooling

RISING ACTION

POINT OF VIEW: 3rd person narration

CHARACTERIZATION: Psychological

ARCHETYPE CHARACTER/SITUATION: Innocent Youth as Hero/Journey

(SOURCES: Foster, 2003; Vogler, 2007; Welcker; 2014)

Appendix J

The Shared Story

Act One, Scene One: Innocents Preparing for a Quest

The setting is Mexico. The questors, Mario, Katrina, Roxana, and Aaron, come from different parts of Mexico, and different circumstances; yet, all will eventually move in the same direction. More than a decade removed, the memories of childhood in Mexico remained intense for the protagonists, the heroes of this story.

Mario lived in a southern district of Mexico City. His family, comprised of him, his mother, father, and sister, lived in a small house on his father's parents' property. He described this as a type of compound with multiple structures for various family members. They had to go to an outside building to use the restroom and shower. He also remembered going out into the city.

> I have some really vivid memories of different places…Mexico City is such a metropolis that I remember different buildings which is close to the national Park…there is a really big park we would go to I remember that a lot. I remember a market we went to. I remember a church we would go to where my grandmother would spend a lot of time. So, I remember a lot of it.

He remembered going to Catholic school in one of the districts of Mexico City and when asked if he wore a uniform he replied, "Yes, and my hair had to be combed every day."

Katrina lived in a small border town in a house with her parents, two brothers, and sister. She felt safe in her childhood, and believed the instruction provided by teachers in the Mexican public school she attended was superior to U.S. counterparts.

> So now I heard about the corruption and stuff, but back then it was it didn't feel like what they describe now. Now I hear there are soldiers in the streets, but I remember playing in the streets. I don't remember it dangerous or anything like that. We lived in the hood, in a low class neighborhood in a small town... I had clean socks and skirts…they were really respectful with the flag…they would have assemblies like a pep rally…I think in Mexico they were more advanced in

education. When I came here not only was I weirded out by some of the techniques, but I was like I got this I got this…I already know this.

Roxana grew up on a ranch in the Mexican interior. She lived with her parents and three sisters. She remembered ranch life involved collecting eggs and having goats, pigs, and chickens. As a child, she could freely move around the small town, and she said, "People would know my grandma. Everyone knew her, and they would say 'you, are you her granddaughter.' I had family everywhere." She felt a great sense of community when going to school in Mexico in a small town. She lit up when sharing her memories of childhood in Mexico and laughed often.

> I went to Kindergarten. That was my favorite childhood experience. It was so much fun! I went up to third grade in Mexico…it was so much fun because we had sleepovers at the school, we would camp over in the middle the patio. I think that is one of my favorite things…campfires and all that stuff barbecues. I just remember recess, because when we got here they shorten recess here. I remember being in parades running around. I have a lot of pictures at a park holding a baton…the flag with the pledge it was really fun for me also…I just remember it goofy and fun and open setting. I remember everyone being so friendly…I remember it being more interactive…everyone had a little desk…and you would come back to the same desk every day and we had all of her materials inside the desk so you would open it and that's where we had our things…one of the things I remember the parents would cook and try to sell stuff in the schools because there was no lunch hour you had to take your lunch or buy a lunch. Families would take turns cleaning the school.

Aaron's first memory of Mexico was "My sister being born. I remember I was three. I was at the hospital. We were walking up steps." He lived with his parents and sister in a house passed down from his grandfather in a city near the Texas border. He only attended Kindergarten in Mexico, yet he still had vivid memories.

> I think the playgrounds were cooler. They had fountains, and recess was a lot freer than it was here. I came here, you got a half an hour after lunch on a rundown playground. Playgrounds over there were mostly state-of-the-art. They were bigger and you got to run around a lot more. They made us brush our teeth after lunch every day. I don't think they did that when I came here.

As each told their stories, they often took moments to translate in their heads, for the memories were in Spanish. Teachers, family members and community members were mentioned as sources of support, role models. Only in Mario's case did anyone recall negative adult encounters. Those were with his father.

Act One, Scene Two: The Journey Begins

At seven or eight years old, Mario was able to understand that his mother was in an abusive marriage and wanted to take her children away. "My dad physically hit my mom and then I would try to get in between it to stop it. But, as a kid I could not stop it." His mother was planning to leave Mexico and he remembered, "going with her to the embassy and she tried to request a visa… it wasn't working out at some point the lady stamped it and my mom looks super sad." Mario, Roxana, and Katrina encountered coyotes as part of crossing into the United States, and these encounters added to creating adult moments during childhood. Even at a young age, they knew these coyotes were adults primarily interested in making money from their circumstances and would sell out their families if needed. Mario and his family had to pay coyotes to put them on inner tubes to cross the Rio Grande River. He could hear his mother planning with them as his family stayed in their house, and he knew she gave them a lot of money.

In spite of her young age, Roxana's family did not shield her from the reason why her mother could not cross into the United States with the rest of the family and the danger her mother faced during the separation. Roxana, her father and her siblings were able to get visas to enter the United States but her mother could not get a visa. "They (the Mexican consulate) denied her and she had no other choice, and she had to go through the desert and that was a week or two-week journey… it was scary because we didn't know where she was." When asked if the

family paid a coyote, she said, *"Yeah we had to pay someone,"* as if she viewed this as an adult responsibility she shared with the family. Regarding her mother's crossing, Katrina said, "she told me a lot of details" and the coyotes charged "thousands of dollars." She knew her mother had to walk across the river with a boat over her head. Once in the United States, the smugglers abandoned those who had crossed, including small children.

All of these characters left their homes with no ability to return and most of their belongings left behind. They moved on to a new country, cutting ties to their old country. Mario remembered his mother packing a suitcase with memorabilia and then asking his aunt, who had U.S. citizenship to take it across the border. This way the possessions would not be seized if his mother was caught during her crossing. For Roxana, leaving meant severing relationships with family on the Mexico side of the border. When reflecting on a return visit to Mexico, after her family had permanently settled in South Texas, she said, "it's not your country anymore, just because like I went to go see my grandma, and to see my aunts and uncles and it's like, I don't even have a relationship with them and anymore." Aaron showed a similar disconnect from family in Mexico and said, "I don't think I would recognize places, a lot of people like relatives. I think some passed away." He also remembered he did not get to take his toys when leaving. Katrina just knew that one day she left her childhood house and never returned. "I didn't go back to my house. I don't remember going back to our house. I think my mom..her grandma gave her the house. I miss the house." In spite of the interruption this move made in their lives, these heroes did not show anger or blame toward their parents. Katrina did feel some resentment toward her sister, the one with the medical diagnosis which required treatment in a hospital in the United States. "I blamed my sister," she said. But as the years passed, she saw the move out of Mexico as the best thing that could have happened. "I heard there was a shooting in the movie

theater," she said about recent events in her former home town in Mexico. "It's not safe anymore," she added.

These protagonists remembered very specific, minute, sensory stimulated details from moment of their crossing into the United States. They held on to detailed memories and the sensory memories emerged more fully when writing the haikus. Mario's memories were so specific he asked to draw the crossing spot. He distinctly remembered the height of the grass, the coldness of the waters of the Rio Grande, and seeing a threshold guardian, a border patrol agent, at the time of his crossing. One minute detail was associated with taste. His family entered a convenience store on the U.S. side immediately after crossing the Rio Grande on inner tubes, and, "my mom buys me a Gatorade." He saw this blue Gatorade as an introduction to the United States and it remains a favorite beverage.

For Aaron, two minute details really stood out as the family prepared to board the bus in the station in Mexico. First, he remembered being handed a Spanish/English dictionary from his grandfather, and the size of the book overwhelmed him. Second, his sensory memory associated with smell was activated, for he said, "It smelled like petrichor." This smell of rain on dirt was such an important memory he chose this moment to write the haiku in order to include the word *petrichor*. Roxana's sensory memory was visual, for she remembered they "walked across the bridge got our ticket got into a van," and she remembered looking out the window for the drive into the interior of the United States.

Katrina's sensory memory regarding crossing the border was associated with hearing and a border patrol agent who stopped her family. While in her family van when crossing the bridge into the United States, a border patrol agent asked her to name her teacher at school.

> And I said 'Miss Blanco 'and he looked at me like 'what?' He came around the
> car and open my door and he got closer to me and he was like 'Miss what?' And

> he said 'you call your teacher *miss*?' And I was like 'oh yeah she's the English teacher' and that's when I knew I messed up because over there you call them maestra or profesor or profesora Blanco

This border patrol agent took her family into the entry station next to the bridge and her family was placed in separate rooms for questioning. Their tourist visas were removed and the trips back and forth across the border were no longer a possibility. Getting caught forced Katrina's mother into undertaking the dangerous border crossing where she walked across the river with a boat flipped over her head.

Act Two, Scene One: Reluctant Heroes Survive

Using avoidance tactics to keep his immigration status secret were skills Mario developed after he entered school in the United States. When he was in Bilingual classes he dodged questions by pretending to not understand English. Later, he made excuses to teachers about memory problems regarding his Social Security number.

> I can always go back to the first week of school every year, where you have all these people and paperwork to fill out. And, there's always one form, may be a medical form? Where you have to put your Social Security number on it so whenever that one came around… like my mind would constantly be empty or blank.

Recalling filling out paperwork for school, Katrina said, "There were always little things like, like they would say "It's the last four of your social,' and I would think, 'I don't have a social.'" She did not have to willingly circumnavigate the social security number questions until high school. "It really, as a kid, it didn't really click to me until later on in high school."

Using papers provided a way for Roxana's family to appear to follow the law while they were breaking the law.

> My two little sisters they were like a year, and two years. So for them, they used my cousin's, I have a cousin who was about the same age. So they used her papers to cross to get both of them over…. they used my cousin's papers to cross

them over…my aunt is the one who had the 2-year-old…so one month my aunt brought Whitney (pseudonym) and then the next month my aunt brought Cara (pseudonym) and so she acted like they were her daughters, one at a time

As a teenager, Mario realized he could drive a car illegally and probably not get caught if he "always drove the speed limit." He learned he could not get a student parking permit at his high school without his license and proof of insurance. He thought up a creative way to circumnavigate the rules. "I did start driving my senior year. I drove it (to school) a few times and parked in the visitor slots (laughter). You have to really think of things. There's a lot of thinking and all of this." Aaron agreed and said, "Just don't speed," when he discussed driving without a license. While undocumented, Roxana had car insurance in the name of family members with U.S. citizenship. Because these students now have DACA, car insurance for undocumented family members' vehicles are now in their names.

Avoiding confrontation with the scariest gatekeeper of all was a priority for all of the hero's families. All of these heroes had parents with undocumented status who paid income taxes to the IRS. As Aaron states, "my parents had a business… so they did pay taxes and sometimes they don't get them in on time. Now they do." The motivation to file, and to file on time is fueled by the need to get financial aid for college. Students with undocumented or DACA status cannot receive federal financial aid, but Texas has state financial aid funds. These students must fill out the paper TASFA and submit it to college financial aid offices, along with a copy of their IRS tax transcript. Their parents file taxes with the IRS using an ITIN. "My mother was always certain to file…she did not want troubles with the IRS." said Mario. Katrina's mother also thought complying with tax laws kept the family safe from deportation. She reported, "My mom says to keep them happy." She has a job and files and said, "I can't believe there are people out there who don't report." When she had undocumented status,

Roxana found ways to work around employment laws by getting hired as a "contract worker" for a non-profit organizer which supports DREAMers. She filed taxes with the IRS, even though it might have been hard for the IRS to trace her.

Mario's sense of humor was most evident when he talked about his view on inner tubes. For his American friends, tubing means floating down a South Texas river on a hot day while drinking beer and relaxing. For him, tubing was an illegal way to cross the Rio Grande. He laughed when saying, "whenever people are like oh yeah let's go tubing…I think, I don't think about floating down the river and drinking, whatever, that's completely a far distance from what I'm thinking." Roxana and Aaron's sense of humor was evident when talking about having a driver's license. Unlike Mario, who was hyper-vigilant when driving without one, Roxana and Aaron did not care, "Who needs a driver's license!" Roxana laughed. "When I got to high school, the driver's license, everyone was getting them, and I was like, it's a driver's license! (laughter) My mom's been driving for 10 years without it…like whatever yeah." When I asked Aaron if he drove before getting his license he laughed and said, "Oh yeah, at least six months (laughter)."

Act Two, Scene Two: Reluctant Heroes Emerge

Immediately after crossing the Rio Grande into the United States on an inner tube, Mario and his family changed clothes, then walked through a soccer stadium parking lot acting as if they "were looking for their car." The act of pretending, of quietly blending in to stay obscured, was shared by all the protagonists of this story.

Learning English was a way for all to blend into the U.S. culture. All heroes started school in bilingual classrooms in Texas, but their time to hold onto a Spanish-only existence eventually came to an end. Regarding classroom instruction in school, Roxana said, "fifth grade,

it was time for all-English." Aaron saw learning English "the hardest part" of assimilating into the school system. Katrina said, "In fifth grade I went to regular English class and that's when it snapped…'I need to learn it' that year I learned." Mario was moved to a different elementary school in fourth grade "because they had a bilingual program." By middle school, 6th grade, he entered English-only classes.

Mario and Aaron lost their Spanish accents. Mario acknowledged this in describing an episode from middle school when he had a conversation in "English. I still had an accent, but my English was getting better." Regarding his lack of accent, Aaron said, "I think it's because I came here when I was six. It was the right time. I started young." Aaron and Roxana acknowledged they may have lost their ability to speak colloquial Spanish. "I think when I speak Spanish I don't speak like a Mexican… it's not really Spanglish but it's, it doesn't flow as well as a Mexican would talk. I can tell." When Roxana returned to visit her grandparents in Mexico after living in the United States, "I learned my Spanish is not that good because there are some words that I don't understand."

After crossing into the United States and prior to getting DACA, all of these protagonists had ways to present themselves while moving about in the community. Mario learned how to blend in by looking relaxed. Once his mother was pulled over by a police officer and, "I told my mom 'calm down' and she was calm. I think the cop liked her and he thought she was cute and didn't give her the ticket." Aaron and Roxana did not have to pretend to be relaxed, since they had no great fears. Aaron said, "Some people are hiding their status. I don't think I worry as much as my parents do, just because I don't think we have had any relatives actually gotten deported." Roxana had a hard time believing there were students out there who were hiding their undocumented status.

Because even since I first got here I knew I was undocumented. I always did
know. How could I not know! I've been shocked when I hear other people's
stories. I've been like, 'really?' I always knew. I was really shocked when I hear
the stories…I guess maybe because I grew up on (names location) and there are a
bunch of Hispanics there. There, immigrants, like these topics are really open. No
one was ashamed of it because we talk to our friends they knew who was
undocumented.

Family loyalty was an important part of staying obscured. Regarding discipline problems

at school, Katrina's mother, "Would always remind me don't do anything stupid…you know

we're at risk… if you mess it up for yourself you also mess it up for everybody." Mario felt a

weight of pressure to keep his undocumented status hidden. The message from his mother was

clear to him.

She told me and she vowed me to secrecy. So I felt like I take an oath to not tell a
word to anyone and I took that very much to heart and never really spoke about it.
If someone made a joke (about immigrants), I would just laugh along, I would
never challenge things, because she was like 'you can't tell the counselor, you
can't tell a teacher, you can't tell a police man, you cannot tell anyone. You
cannot tell your friends'

While undocumented, the hero's lived in a unique type of geographic jail, an invisible

fence, imposed by their status. Traveling outside of certain parameters could have unveiled their

obscurity and risked dangerous consequences. Prior to getting DACA status, the parameters of

the jail walls became evident when discussing out of state college options. Leaving the state

meant possibly encountering situations where citizenship documents would be needed. Mario

said, "I knew I was definitely not going to go out of state (due to lack of citizenship

documents)…. So, I got into Fordham in New York I really wanted to go there. I got into some

school in California and a school in Alabama, liberal arts colleges." Regarding attending an out

of state college Aaron was not as worried about the money as, "It was more about traveling. I

don't think I had an ID at that point. Traveling, you would have to go by car or bus so maybe

not." He also limited course he took in college due to travel concerns. "If I took a geology course… (with) a trip to Big Bend. I didn't participate in it, because…I didn't know…going through a (border) checkpoint."

While undocumented, the heroes maintained varying levels of obscurity. Mario kept his status a dark secret. Katrina was less secretive, but still weary of others. Aaron stated few concerns regarding having undocumented status, yet fear of border patrol checkpoints came up often in his conversation. Roxana was the least distressed, and often expressed thinking of the "undocumented secret" as incomprehensible. The heroes were getting older, and more independent. Prior to getting DACA from the government, these reluctant heroes emerged into the light by becoming visible to people in their inner circles. Sharing their status exposed their vulnerabilities, and were intertwined with issues of trust.

Mario shared, "I first came out, and it was to a really good girl friend of mine. She was really sad because her dad was …and the only way I thought of cheering her up was to say 'let me tell you about my shady situation!" Katrina said, "Telling people is hard. I have a friend, she told her best friend in third grade and then they got into an argument and the friend said 'I'm going to tell the police.' …I know my ex-boyfriend did that to me…He threatened to call the police."

Now is the point of the story where every one of the heroes became visible to the United States federal government by applying for DACA. All of these protagonists deliberated within their families and within their minds regarding seeking DACA. For Mario, getting DACA was not nearly as dramatic as is "coming out" as undocumented at a television press conference. He had decided extreme visibility was the safest thing to do. It involved defying his mother, which was difficult.

I came out at a press conference, as undocumented... my mom did not want me to do it but I had a sense like I had to do it. My mom did not want me to come out because my sister was still in high school, so she was like if someone recognizes you and then puts one and two together…and she's undocumented. I understood…what she was saying but 'I'm done trying to hide… this is the best way you can protect yourself was by coming out publicly because…then I would have the support of the people. I was organizing and being active… My mom was not happy. She got over it. No one told my sister. No one saw that newscast (laughter)

Mario's family made their choice to seek DACA after the 2012 Presidential election. He said, "We were discussing whether or not we should apply, my sister and I. What if Romney had won? I told my mom 'let's wait until after the election. If Obama wins we'll do.'" Katrina was not a legal adult when DACA became available. The first round of applying for DACA was more of her mother's decision than hers. When it was time for renewal, she had to take initiative.

I think it was the 10th grade… she would tell me 'can you remember this date and that date?'…information for the paperwork she would take me to the lawyer's office I would hear their discussions but I wasn't as into it. So when I had to renew it, my senior year she was like 'go renew it' and I was all 'what?' I mean I (emphasized) went through it with them (the lawyers).

Roxana weighed whether or not getting DACA was worth the trouble. She had already worked for years by getting contracting jobs where she did not have to verify citizenship for employment. "DACA happened in 2012 I didn't apply until like 2013…I don't know for me I wouldn't really say it affects me as a big deal, it's not a big deal for me…I knew there were ways to work." She also did not feel having DACA, or any type of legal citizenship status, would elevate her sense of self- worth. "I can't believe people would think, really think your life is over just because you don't have status."

For Aaron, DACA became available soon after he graduated from high school. His family debated seeking DACA for him and his sister. After seeing the number of youth applying

for DACA, they decided there might be safety in numbers. "I think my mom was more scared of it than anyone else. About 2 to 3 months after they announced it after we heard a lot of people were applying. We were like 'well, we're going to get deported (if not done)." He also described details regarding the process.

> We went to some lawyers…it came out to like $1200 … it was pretty quick, maybe a month after I applied. They sent us a letter of approval they would schedule us for the biometrics, the fingerprints and all that… In about a month after that they send you a work permit…You have to go the Social Security Administration office to get your social.

Act Three, Scene One: Heroes Unbound

After getting DACA, life changed for the heroes of this story. This status brought new freedom but, with this freedom came limits. These were limits related to university, work, and travel opportunities which their citizen-peers do not face. Katrina verbalized an overarching concept shared by these protagonists regarding the new freedom. She had used to word free to describe what DACA did for her, but upon reflection, she wanted to clarify her definition of free.

> I said a lot of things about feeling free, about not feeling free. I think the word I was really looking for is secure. Because depending on who you ask you know I'm freer… when I can be happy with freedom but security is something, security is something… You have to be secured to be happy and then to be free…a lot of the times that is vital to going day by day because you know when cops are there, when they ask for my license and things like that and it's something very basic…I feel secure, I feel safe it's a lot more simple than freedom just to be secure…I was really thinking about, that freedom is so big…I feel like DACA helps me feel a little more secure. I mean I'm not legal but, but I do have a social.

These heroes have become unbound, and now have accepted visibility. They can present themselves openly while moving around the community and the entire United States. This started with getting a federal government issued work permit and social security number, then a state issued driver's license. Mario said, "That summer DACA was announced… it was a blessing in the sense that 'oh my God there is an opportunity to get a Social Security number' … now you

get a Social Security number, let's get a state ID." Having a legal ID was not without an ironic story from Mario. Regarding legal identification, Mario said one friend "lost it in Vegas. All he has is an expired military ID…so I was 'How is it that I'm undocumented or documented now and I have more ID then you do and you are a US citizen?' That makes no sense. So now he has no ID and I have one."

DACA had an additional perk. For the first time since entering the United States, Mario flew on an airplane. He had flown as a child on a trip inside the country of Mexico, but never when he was undocumented. Regarding a recent trip to New York he said, "I finally flew again for the first time this past summer." Roxana shared, "With DACA I've been able to travel more. I was comfortable, but now I feel more secure to travel around the country, to go places…I've gone to a lot of places around the country."

Even with DACA, there were detours to travel. The geographical jail, the invisible fence, expanded, but continued to exist. They could fly travel within the United States, but there were huge limits to leaving the country which involved federal government permission with conditions. Katrina and Aaron were still hesitant about traveling. Katrina said, "Well I can't go to Mexico…my boyfriend has said 'hey let's go to Mexico!' And I can't go…I don't want to bother explaining to them." Aaron's normal nonchalance towards his immigration status was removed when talking about traveling. When asked about where he wants to go now that he has DACA he responded,

> Not out of the state. I've been afraid to go. I like geology. I want to go to Big Bend National Park but I'm scared of checkpoints, just because different people have different experiences…it's worrisome…to go through a checkpoint. We've gotten about as far up as Dallas and I drove but not further than that. Maybe four hours each way… (I want to go to) Colorado and not because of that (laughing) not because of the obvious. New Mexico. I want to go to Arizona but it's kind of iffy just because of the media and how they report about Arizona, about the cops being discriminatory.

One of the few times Roxana viewed her immigration status as limiting was in regard to travel. "I want to travel, like outside of the country, so I would like some other type of status to be able to explore more."

The binds of financing college changed little after receiving DACA. All of these characters attended college in Texas, which had ISRT rates and state financial aid funds through TASFA for undocumented students prior to the inception of DACA. So, DACA did not change the admissions and financing aspect of attending state colleges. Having DACA did not get them access to federal financial aid or internships. Roxana "applied to UT got TASFA. I was there for a year, everything was fine, but the second year I did not get enough financial aid. Aaron added another concern regarding college opportunities. "It's not just financial aid. It's things like I don't get internships like in geology…like the United States Agricultural or Geological ones." Regarding work study programs, Katrina added, "I couldn't do it because I was not FAFSA. I was TASFA…I'm trying to get that internship and there are some…there are some government jobs you have to be a U.S. citizen."

They also found they could not count on the expertise of adults in their lives regarding accessing college opportunities. At the high school level, Mario and Roxana saw this lack of knowledge from experts. Mario was part of AVID, a program geared to connecting students to college. Regarding the AVID teacher, he shared, "I came out to her as undocumented she didn't know what to do. She didn't know what it meant so she had to call some of her colleagues." Roxana's high school was a little better as she shared "I think our Go center, they were not that helpful, but they did know that undocumented students could go to college. They knew about the affidavit. They knew about the TASFA but they did know exactly how to fill it out but that's where I had to teach myself how to do it." Sometimes they had to be their own experts, and had

to learn processes many of the experts did not understand. Aaron learned funds from TASFA were more limited than FAFSA monies and therefore the money ran out sooner. "I could never get my TASFA in on time, so for the first two years I just paid out-of-pocket… for school, out of my savings," he said. In high school. When working with a financial aid consultant at a local junior college Katrina got very frustrated, "We'd go round and round. Then she says, 'oh your TASFA you can't do this (meaning the FAFSA)' and I was like, 'really?'" She was "having to make people understand it's not the FAFSA… having to see a counselor…at the financial aid offices…maybe they haven't heard about it but they didn't know." Mario said, "To this day professors still email me. I had some professor text me that some student was having issues with TASFA."

Some did have role models within their community regarding going to college. After entering the university, Mario joined a student organization comprised of DREAMers who provided guidance. Roxana had witnessed a former valedictorian who had undocumented status from her school get a full scholarship to a local private university where she obtained her college degree. This students' story had been local headline news when, after getting stopped for a minor traffic violation, she was arrested. A local judge intervened on her behalf to stop her deportation. Roxana said,

> You probably heard about the story…she was in deportation proceedings. That's when I found out that if you're undocumented you can go to school… so someone graduated undocumented and went to a college and that was like a possibility…I knew it was possible because I had an example…I just knew about her, what happened with her just because she graduated, and the teachers would talk about it.

For the heroes of this story, their parents could not be role models in the U.S. college-going experience, but they were role models in a much more important way. Their parents were role models of caring, hard work and seekers of opportunity. Katrina acknowledged her parents

sacrifice when she said, "I mean my parents help me out with pretty much everything." Aaron admired how his parents started with nothing and created their own business.

> Whenever people of that negative view with the undocumented a lot of people still pay taxes my parents undocumented but they still pay taxes so whenever they say we steal from the government and I do think there's some people take advantage of the system but a lot of us do pay taxes and we don't get a lot of benefits Medicaid benefits… tell people my parents have a house and they pay sales tax because they have a company.

Mario had moved on to professional level work, yet he kept his mother's life in mind when thinking of the opportunities he has already had. "I still feel like I have to work, to do my best because my mom would kill for that opportunity. To be able to work in an office where she is sitting down and typing, presenting. She is busting her ass cleaning every single day and she is tired of it." Roxana expressed a similar appreciation for her parents' work ethic and how it has affected her own outlook.

> I mean, I've seen my parents and they work really hard and they accomplish a lot of stuff in the United States, without ever having had a driver's license or DACA or stuff like that. And Spanish speakers, not knowing English. So, for me it's possible for them. Why wouldn't it be possible for me" Now that I have school and I know English and I was never into that mentality of 'I don't know what to do.'

Act Three, Scene Two: Heroes Fully Awake

These heroes have been through a journey and have lived a life which forced distinct considerations and reflections. As the story closes, they are no longer the naive children born in Mexico, but young adults living in the United States. They have perspectives shorn by a series of educational experiences. In Katrina's words, DACA made her "safe," but for how long? The setting of these final conversations was prior to the split Supreme Court decision regarding Expanded DACA, and prior to the 2016 U.S. Presidential election. And, even if DACA continued into perpetuity, it has never been a path to citizenship.

Aaron pointed to a back door to citizenship some have contemplated. "Maybe I'll get married (laughter)…I dated this girl like freshman year of high school…we dated for about five years and then talking about getting married but I never really wanted to get married. I mean I know there are people who want to get married to get citizenship." He went on to tell a family tale of an uncle living in the United States whose "son married someone and I think they both thought that the other person was a citizen and it turns out they were both not citizens (laughter). Roxana was very forthcoming regarding the idea of marrying for citizenship.

> I actually have a friend, she got married to get her citizenship… Everyone was saying 'what is she doing getting married? She's too young!'…She hadn't even graduated yet and she was already engaged…she knows my situation, I think she's DACA and then she said I'm doing it because… And I said, 'I understand you I understand it'… she couldn't tell any of our friends 'I'm marrying this guy to get citizenship'…her family knows… she spoke to her mother-in-law about it and they love her and so they understand.

Now fully awake to their experiences, some of these heroes think about giving back to others in the community. "If you are able to advance yourself, you should be able to reach back and help someone who's stuck behind the line," said Mario. Roxana and Mario became sources of DACA information early through grassroots organization work. Roxana still gets "random texts from people all the time. 'Hey I want to apply for DACA and I'm like a okay, yeah they come to me and I kind of get them to a road. I enjoy talking to them introducing them to more people." She now works for a legal organization dedicated to immigrant rights.

> I saw that the community, that in the community we were the only resource for DACA so people had a lot of questions. They didn't know what to do and I thought 'it's better to work with (the agency)' and I help them with the pre-DACA. (A friend) started in January 2014 and then I started the summer of 2014….I was her helper with other people so I was like there was a much-needed resource…people that actually need help…it definitely has opened my eyes.

These heroes were now awake regarding U.S. politics and all freely shared their political views. These responses were usually accompanied with huge emotional responses. Katrina's

response to the idea of building a wall along the border between the United States and Mexico as, "All this border, wanting such borders (the wall) gets me angry." Aaron saw building a wall as ridiculous. "If we build a 40 foot wall…they can get over the wall! DACA 2014 was held up in the court system, along with Deferred Action for Parents of Americans and Lawful Permanent Resident (DAPA). DAPA was a way for parents with undocumented status to possibly get protection from deportation. Thinking of his mother, Mario said sadly, "The blocking of DAPA, that was really a tough part. Tough, tough pill to swallow for people who did not fit into that mold. It's dangerous in the sense that within the movement, for people involved with immigration reform they became, they lost vision of what really needed to be important."

Roxana's work with an immigrants' rights organization exposed her to other immigrants which informed her political views.

> Obama kind of like, yeah thanks for DACA. But, for me he was the one who opened the detention centers and he was the one to send a message to Central Americans that they shouldn't come over here. So when I see the suffering from the Central Americans, how the crazy process they have to go through to be released, or like when they have a case it, has made me hate him. Because I've been working for family detention since August 2014…a few months after I got DACA…Obama was the administration that opened detention centers. They make all the family suffer, they make people want to commit suicide because of what they are going through…with the families, the children being deported it's all in his administration…It's kind of like everyone's saying 'thank you, thank you blah blah for what you've done,' but I say 'wow if you only knew how much people are suffering because of the same politics.'

Aaron noticed there were Republican supporters of Texas legislation to give students with undocumented status ISRT and state financial aid. "It was weird to have Rick Perry supporters pass it," he said. Aaron had been following the debates as part of the Presidential election and saw, "The candidates are speaking for five minutes in a debate. Everyone has different ideas and I think I'm not sure if there's a real solution."

While the heroes were unbound to be visible with DACA, part of their voice stays hushed. They cannot vote. This did not stop them from watching the upcoming 2016 Presidential election. Katrina said, "I am following the elections now, not as much as other people. Bernie (Sanders) is talking about socialism, and I'm in a little bit about of it. I'm like, 'Yeah, his ideas about public education' and so I'm following the election." Mario did not see it feasible that someone who might revoke DACA would be elected.

> I don't have a way to see where this person is going to win this presidential election and then this is going to happen, especially with the rhetoric of anti-immigration from the Republican Party…I don't know what I'm going to do… If a Republican candidate wins and completely rejects DACA and dismantles that what am I going to do then?

Another area these heroes faced with open eyes was the idea of "deserving immigrants." Some saw immigrants getting different treatment based on county of origin; some saw immigrants getting consideration based on what which motivated their immigration. Aaron noticed, "I think a lot of it is racism towards Mexicans. Doesn't seem like they're strengthening Canada's border I think a lot of it is racism towards Mexicans." Mario and Roxana saw stratification within the Latino population. Mario felt that "Cuban immigrants have always been have had different privileges than others within our group…They were granted political exile, they were given residency rights, they were helped financially." Roxana was very passionate regarding this issue and did not like DREAMers seeing themselves as more deserving than immigrants from Central America.

> What some people don't understand…like somehow the DREAMers are untouchable. But, there are all these people who are underneath us who are completely suffering…having conversations with DREAMers I remember when all of this was happening in 2014 (immigrants coming from Central America) when big numbers were coming…DREAMers saying things like 'we should definitely close the borders' and I was like 'really!' (Laughter) I was like, 'really, really now that you're here now you want to shut the borders!'…I posted something on Facebook the other day about a family getting deported and

someone commented, 'I'm okay with DREAMers being here but the others, they need to quit crossing illegally' and I was like 'really? I don't understand these people.'

Post-quest, a level of cynicism existed with some of these youth. Possibly this was a result of the quest coupled with encountering the realities of adulthood. Katrina's cynicism focused on peers who seem to have more based on circumstance of birth. "I don't mind having to go the extra mile thinking that that have other people have it easier…it gets me angry a little bit or it actually makes me sad…I see a lot of students that came from Mexico are, they are respectful and they appreciate the opportunity…a lot of people take it for granted." "Maybe this is a cynical view," started Mario when discussing DACA recipients who did not have to fight, "you to see people now, 'I have DACA'… my sister and I have a distance between us because I think that she fits into that mold…she doesn't recognize where this is coming from…she does not understand about giving back." Roxana voiced cynicism about her country of birth. She had no romantic images of Mexico. "I think some people are so caught up in some image of Mexico, like it's our country…I went back because I also missed it. It's a strange country… It's not the same. It's not your country anymore." Mario also has no illusions about what motivates the U.S. government. "So we think of the DREAM Act as this evangelical romanticized piece of legislation that was going to help undocumented students and be a key…There's some documentary out there, I can send to you. That it was really pushed by the Department of Defense as a way enlisting more bodies into the U.S. military."

Because DACA is granted two years at a time, these heroes were awake in their knowledge they can make plans with this limit in mind. Their final thoughts showed some resignation to planning a life two years at a time. Katrina thinks in terms of contingency plans. "My mom voice told me, 'Do you have a plan B? You know what? If a Republican gets this

election…" She was "trying to have faith in the outcome." Aaron kept optimism and his sense of humor when saying, "Obama will be in office until January so I'll reapply. It'll be approved for two years. Maybe in two years I don't know what will happen. I may have to worry a little bit. In the meantime, maybe I'll get married! (laughter). At the end of his political pondering, Mario added, "I think DACA is a blessing and a curse. Whenever I talk about the DREAM Act now I don't look at it as it some magical piece of legislation to solve everything."

Katrina spoke words which may best describe the shared uncertain future of students with DACA. "I don't know anything but this (DACA). It gives me a blank canvas as far as what's going to happen. I don't know where I'm going to end up or if I will live here. Will I be free? Is that a word to put in? Because it doesn't feel free sometimes. Yeah, because you want to be here, know you're only going to be here."

The protagonists of this story began their quest as innocent heroes whose journey began after crossing over a river into a new land. Survivors when they first entered this land, they eventually emerged as reluctant heroes when they assumed personal power in determining their paths. They remained obscured during this reluctant period, yet were unbound when they sought DACA and decided to live fully visible lives. This visibility forced them to tackle the types of fears and trust issues which ultimately led them to self-awareness and to be fully awake. Quests are journeys with obstacles, and these obstacles can be in the form of large and small battles. For these heroes, the small battles often involved interactions with those who lacked knowledge of how to guide them. Their larger battles involved working within large bureaucratic systems which dehumanized them. These heroes leave this story providing foreshadowing of things to come in the ongoing battle regarding immigration in the United States. For these heroes, the stated reason to go on their quest was to live a life in the United States. By the close of this

story, these heroes achieved the real reason for the quest, to learn about themselves, as part of forming their student identity.

As part of sharing their life stories, I asked the questers to write haiku about a particularly meaningful experiences associated with their quest. Three of the questers wrote the haiku about the day they crossed the border into the United States, leaving their life in Mexico behind. One quester wrote about a visit back to Mexico to see her grandparents after her immediate family settled permanently in Texas.

One of Mario's haiku describes the crossing of the Rio Grande in an inner tube and emerging on the other side:

> Murky water flow
>
> Wet to dry feeling of clothes
>
> Warm U.S. weather

Katrina described the moment when she understood her use of the name "Mrs." instead of "Maestra" when referring to her elementary school teacher signaled border patrol agents that her family had been living in the United States without authorization. So, this crossing from Mexico into the United States, leading to interrogation of the family by the border patrol and ultimately the need for her family to become members of the undocumented community in the United States, captures the instance of this realization:

> He had caught the lie
>
> Now with tears I realize
>
> We can't go back home

Roxana's visit back to Mexico to see her grandparents was easiest for her to remember and write in Spanish. One of her haiku reflects on visiting her grandparents during the Christmas season, when nativity decorations colored their simple home:

Es la navidad

Tiempo para el niño

Y su cunita

Aaron needed to get the word petrichor into his haiku, for the smell of the rain on the dirt in the Mexico bus station, as the family left Mexico for the last time, permeated his senses. One of his haiku also reflects a farewell said to his grandparents:

Fleeing Mexico

As petrichor emanates

Te quiero mucho

Sharing the story of the quest of these participants was intertwined with my own quest to write this dissertation. And, as is true with all quests, the stated reason for my quest, writing the dissertation, was not the real reason for the quest. My quest was also to learn about myself and my relationship to these students. And, just as I asked the participants to write haiku, I asked myself to participate in this same task. Listening to their stories, evoked these final thoughts from me about them:

Choices made in faith

For freedom, voice, life like peers

Between-ness remains

Naiveness of youth

Propelled them to believe us

Will we support them?