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**Intersecting Stories: Cultural Reflexivity, Digital Storytelling, and Personal Narratives in Language Teacher Education**

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Intersecting Stories: Cultural Reflexivity, Digital Storytelling, and Personal Narratives in Language Teacher Education

by

Julie Dell-Jones

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy Second Language Acquisition and Instructional Technology College of Arts & Sciences and College of Education University of South Florida

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DEDICATION

Laine, 1940-2017

My mother’s unwavering love, courage, and support continue to be the foundation and encouragement for my love of learning. She instilled in me a profound curiosity and an appreciation for language and culture, always and in all ways.

With all my love, admiration, and gratitude...
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ABSTRACT

This narrative inquiry dissertation explores stories from three students over a two-year trajectory as they develop into language educators in diverse contexts. The study begins in a teacher education course focused on technology for language teaching in English as a second language (ESOL) and foreign language education (FLE) classrooms. As instructor, I implemented a digital storytelling (DS) project with the pedagogical goal of supporting the much-needed practice of reflexivity, and specifically, reflexivity of intercultural competence (IC) and culturally-responsive pedagogy (CRP). The DS, as an autoethnographic multimodal narrative activity, provided a creative outlet for undergraduate and master’s level students to explore their own cultural background or intercultural experiences. In this study, I re-story the experiences related to the DS project and follow my former students, now teachers, to explore how personal narratives promote or support reflexivity of critical multicultural concepts or practices. I combine and juxtapose multiple perspectives based on observations, data from the student-authored DS and reflections, and in-depth interviews. Using a critical-based autoethnographic approach, I add my own instructor-researcher narrative. The resulting descriptive and interpretive narrative inquiry accentuates complexities, invites conversation about the critical and reflexive potential of DS or personal narrative, and contributes pedagogical and methodological insights into teacher training via the “meaning-making” story process and the innate accessibility of learning through stories.
CHAPTER ONE:
INTRODUCTION

Language education and research on language education merges diverse disciplines such as linguistics, sociology, political science, geography, and technology.

Similarly, my trajectory as a qualitative researcher developed through interdisciplinary experiences that continue to shape my understanding and critical approach to education research, and specifically, language education. Research in the Social Sciences is never neutral or objective, be it qualitative or quantitative. The decision to study one discipline over another, or to ask particular questions in lieu of others reveals something about the researcher. For me, this research felt inevitable.

“Teaching is in your blood,” my mother, a professor of (Spanish) Literature, had said. Her aunt, an educator of teachers, further extended this teaching heritage into multiple generations. Undoubtedly, my mother’s experiences as an international student in multiple countries, her love of languages, literature, and linguistics, and her prioritization of knowledge through experience as well as formal education was, for me, inescapable. As a child, when I asked about a word, I would unavoidably receive a lesson on the word’s etymology. At the time, with an impetuous need for quick and explicit answers, I absorbed her teachings reluctantly. I would sometimes groan as my mother often reached for the multi-volume dictionary or encyclopedia to continue her
animated lecture for an audience of one. For my brother and me, she was our full-time source of knowledge, encouragement, support, and critical global perspectives.

My mother came from a tiny secular country with a high level of education and a feminist perspective that was present long before significant movements of women’s rights in the United States. Perhaps my mother’s memory of Uruguay remains fixed at a particular privileged point in the past, perhaps idealized or edited, but, nonetheless, influential in her proud identity as an educator from a long line of educators. Her references to her Uruguayan identity led to often-subtle historical and cultural comparisons with the US. As children, my brother and I did not define these inheritances as such, but it was impossible not to notice, even at a young age, how my mother pointedly and carefully critiqued the country she chose for us as our home. Just as freely as she recognized that there were more opportunities for us in the U.S., she was well aware of the historic and contemporary realities that deepened the gap between the inspirational ideals of this country and the realities of inequality and injustice. Additionally, she was fully aware that those opportunities came with the prerequisite of speaking English without a foreign accent. Both born abroad, yet born as U.S. citizens, my brother and I had a front row view of our mother’s unique immigrant experience, which included personal experiences with issues of language hierarchy and ideology.

I begin with this autobiographic description of my early exposure to language and culture as a dynamic and nuanced part of identity because this perspective has continued to shape my teaching, my research choices, and my understanding of pedagogical purpose. By revisiting and re-storying the various experiences I have had, I
can better understand why I pursued studies in languages and language education and ultimately became a teacher educator. I know where and why my critical perspectives began and I continue to reflect on how this trajectory influences and guides my current and future choices. In this narrative inquiry dissertation, I explore how other language teachers reflect on these questions.

During my teaching in the College of Education, I became interested in the stories of my pre-service teacher (PST) students and, specifically, their stories of (inter)cultural experiences. How do pre-service teachers describe their own cultural backgrounds? I was curious to find out how (or if) a multimodal Digital Storytelling (DS) project may encourage deeper reflection about critical multiculturalism and critical pedagogy. How would pre-service teachers use multimodal stories to share their personal narratives and how might this play a role in shaping their use of personal narratives in teaching contexts or professional development? More specifically, as their instructor, my pedagogical goal was to focus on cultural issues in the area of language education and (opportunities for) teacher self-reflexivity.

Across disciplines, cultural issues are complex and are difficult to define, express, and, thus, understand (Acuff, 2018; Lyle, 2013; Sleeter, 2017). I wanted to see if a DS project could provide future teachers with a way to approach the topic and become an opportunity to think about how (or if) their teaching trajectory may connect to their own cultural background or intercultural experiences.

The opportunity to encourage exploration of cultural issues through storytelling via a DS project came in the summer of 2015. At this time, I was to be the instructor for a teacher education course entitled Technology for Foreign Language Education and
English as a Second Language Classrooms, a course that became the initial setting for this study. I adapted and implemented the DS project to align with the technology goals of the course, but also kept the connection between language education and cultural studies at the forefront, embedded throughout the content. I knew that language and critical multicultural issues need to be holistically included throughout the education of teachers and not simply offered by “bracketing ‘diversity’ off into a separate course” (Sleeter, 2017, p. 159). For the DS project, which emphasizes narratives as personal and focused, I supported PSTs to critically explore their own language and culture-based ideas and ideologies. The DS is a student-authored multimodal autoethnographic narrative in the form of a three to five minute sharable video. Thus, the diverse students enrolled in the teacher training course would practice using technology in innovative and meaningful ways during their creation of multimodal digital stories and would share their narratives within our class.

For this study, I continued the conversations that began during the intensive summer course. I wanted to explore how former students perceive the DS project, how they think about the stories they created and shared, and if/how personal narratives about cultural issues emerged in their own teaching. In the two years following the course, I communicated with three purposefully-selected students (now teachers of a foreign language or English as an additional language) who participated in two in-depth conversation-like interviews as well as other more informal discussions. I, too, reflect on how these experiences--theirs and my own-- can inform pedagogy and professional development and I specifically focus on examples of (inter)cultural reflexivity and critical pedagogy. For the re-storying process (Polkinghorne, 1995), I layered, juxtaposed, and
combined elements from the multiple data sources to create a realistic, yet collage-like, narrative that represents my understanding of the multiple perspectives. The data sources include the DS project, related stories from post-DS experiences and reflections about the project. The stories presented in this narrative study draw heavily from the lengthy interviews as well as my own reflexivity regarding the DS project and the interactions with these now-former students. The autoethnographic component of this study helps to “navigate the complex and delicate terrain” between theory and praxis while participating in the community (Pensoneau-Conway & Toyosaki, 2011, p. 389). True to the critical framework, in the same way I encourage reflexivity in my PST students, I must demonstrate the same attention towards reflexivity of my own pedagogical practices and decision-making process related to my role as teacher and researcher (Bhattacharya & Gillen, 2016) and ‘point the analytical lens’ at one’s self. I purposely focus on examples of (inter)cultural competence and critical pedagogy and the ways in which the teachers used personal narratives to discuss their respective teaching contexts. The stories in this narrative are stories of and by individuals and not a representation of any possible norm. The stories aim to connect, teach, and reveal each student-teacher-storyteller-participant as a multifaceted individual.

**Statement of the Problem**

Education does not occur in a vacuum. We become who we are based on our environment and experiences. In my teaching, I emphasize the importance of a critical approach to both the English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and Foreign Language Education (FLE) contexts, and the need for more reflexive practices for
educators. Future teachers should be aware that education, especially language education, is never politically neutral (Giroux, 2009; Gorski, 2012; Kanpol & McLaren, 1995; Kubota, 2004; McLaren, 2009; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Pennycook, 2004).

Critical pedagogy acknowledges the power systems in society, schools, and classrooms. By using this framework, I assume educator principles that embody inclusive practices, multicultural and intercultural understanding, and assume an activist approach to social justice where I consciously question the status quo and propose possibilities for improving the lives and status of those who have less privilege (Delpit, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Sleeter, 2017). As part of a (more) critical pedagogy, language teachers need to take their students’ cultural and linguistic backgrounds into consideration and combat the idea of cultural hierarchies (Lucas & Villegas, 2010; Nieto, Rivera & Irizarry, 2012) while also reaching beyond the traditional and static ideas about culture in order to address the diversity of cultures and language contexts. Unfortunately, there remains inadequate investigation of how teachers understand the cultural dimension (Byram, 2014; Carmona & Luschen, 2014; Clark & Flores, 2006; Nieto, 2002).

As the role of teacher needs to become more aware of social issues involving students and communities and overcome an uncritical attitude towards new concepts (Berry & Loughran, 2004; Bhattacharya & Gillen, 2016; Byram, 2014; Crawford, 2000; Delpit & Dowdy, 2002, Gorski, 2008; Gunn, Bennett, Shuford-Evans, Peterson, &Welsh, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Sprecher, 2013; Sleeter, 2017), the lack of critical (self)reflexive practices persists and ways to overcome this deficiency need to be explored. If left unchallenged, this lack of (self)reflexivity allows for the politicized issues
of language policy and traditional ideologies about language to create obstacles for learning sound pedagogical practices that incorporate critical approaches (Byram, 2014; Ritchie & Wilson, 2000). Reflexivity development is an ongoing goal for educators, seen as a “deeply questioning enquiry into professionals’ actions, thoughts, feelings, beliefs, values and identity in professional, cultural and political contexts” (Bolton, 2006, p. 203), yet attempting to address the need for more reflexivity is elusive. Reflexivity is a complex, messy process for self-discovery, professional development (Bolton, 2010), requiring a qualitative, individual exploration, as in this narrative inquiry study.

As an instructor for undergraduate and graduate pre-service teachers, or teacher candidates, enrolled in English as a second language (ESOL) education courses in the state of Florida, I often see struggles and/or resistance towards critical social and pedagogical concepts that include culturally-responsive teaching practices and intercultural competency. Each semester, I teach one or two classes of a course intended to prepare future teachers in how to best include and teach students learning English and I am disappointingly surprised at the continuous lack of reflexivity and a lack of attention to or awareness of critical multicultural issues that directly affect the language-learning environments.

As a proponent of critical practices, I support and encourage more infusion of critical multicultural issues into content in most, if not all, teacher education courses, including the Technology in FLE and ESOL course (Delpit, 2009; Gay & Howard, 2000; Goodson & Gil, 2014). Goodson and Gil propose sharing personal narratives or biographies for “deeper forms of reflexivity” and “profound questioning of key issues and concepts in educational practices and the institutional and socio-political contexts of
such practices” (p. 222). Understanding beliefs about language and encouraging PST self-reflection are core steps in an ongoing effort to teach language educators to embrace the principles of culturally-responsive pedagogy and intercultural competence. Gay (1997) explains,

The systemic inclusion of multicultural education in teacher preparation programs has the potential for building bridges across the cultural borders ethnically diverse students bring to the classroom, creating shared referential linkages between students and teachers, and preventing impenetrable barriers to effective teaching and learning from occurring (p. 153).

Gay (1997) suggests that in order to meet the challenge of assessing, exploring, and changing beliefs about cultural issues, what is required is “more engaging and varied instructional strategies” (p. 159). The narratives in this study stem from digital storytelling as one such engaging strategy that leads to further conversations.

**Purpose of the Study**

The dissertation spans a two year period, intermittently re-storying and engaging with the experiences and perspectives shared by three teachers during their teacher training as well as post-graduation as they venture off into classrooms in the U.S. and Thailand and Asia¹. At the time of this dissertation, all three participants have graduated from their various university programs and are currently working as language teachers in different contexts and continents.

At the start of the study, two of the participants were graduate students who had multiple language teaching experiences in various contexts and who were near the

¹ “Asia” is purposefully vague to further anonymize the participant.
completion of their master’s degree in their teaching program. The third participant was an undergraduate with an interdisciplinary background, who had also taught in various contexts. I purposefully selected each participant for specific reasons relating to their unique trajectories, and, ultimately, their diverse stories. This narrative inquiry dissertation, or re-storying of my participants’ perspectives, aims to address the need for different voices and different narratives from different contexts and may resonate with readers in specific and/or unconventional ways (Bochner & Ellis, 2016; Cavendish, 2011; Clandinin & Connolly, 2000; Cole & Knowles, 2000; McVee & Boyd, 2016; Vasquez, 2011). In this multi-perspective narrative, I contextualize the various stories and contribute an additional researcher-instructor perspective in such a way as to humanize the participants who are multifaceted, non-representative/non-generalizable individuals.

My goal is to tell their story as closely to their account as possible and respect them as knowledgeable resources and individual voices that can uniquely contribute to the overall narrative of language teaching and teacher education. In my attempt to tell their story, I rely mostly on my participants’ words. In most cases, their words are thoughtfully chosen and often reveal the expertise or experience of the participants as they navigate internal or contextual cultural issues. Like the “compelling, emotional, and in-depth story” created by each PST (Castañeda, 2013, p. 45) at the center of the study, the dissertation aims to share a specific, situated, and evocative “story” that continues the conversation about (self)reflexivity and (inter)cultural competence in various teaching contexts. The research explores just one small part of an assumed ongoing journey towards critical multiculturalism. These stories are glimpses of where the
journey of each participant and researcher crossed or merged during shared experiences.

By applying a critical approach and using a narrative inquiry method to explore and connect the individual stories (Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2014), I attempt to adhere to a practice acknowledging that “education research should be directed away from improving educational efficacy and toward legitimizing student perspectives” (Noblit, Flores & Murillo, 2004, p.8). For this qualitative study to be accessible for readers and useful for educators, multi-layered narrative descriptions of the context and a focus on the individuality of students and their experiences is especially important. In a recent summary and call for research tasks, Norton and de Costa (2018)

recommend that an array of qualitative research methods—observations and reflections, photographs, post-lesson reflections/interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis, questionnaires and artifacts—be used to gain a holistic understanding of how teachers create a conducive learning environment through their creative mobilization of linguistic, multimodal, and cultural resources (p. 100).

This narrative inquiry draws from many of these suggested sources that are mixed, edited, contextualized, and curated to create a holistic idea of the course task, learning situations and applications, and, hopefully, a better understanding of the multifaceted characters who enter the language teaching profession. So, while the content/focus of the stories provide examples of how issues of critical pedagogy surface in student stories, the ways in which the student-teacher-participant reflects on these stories is important for teacher educators.

At the same time, I tell the stories of others in the only way I can—through my own lens and in my own way. In this manner, I reveal my own thoughts, experiences, and knowledge. I attempt to document my reflexivity through writing that draws from
multiple data sources. Thus, as I retell their stories, I include directly and indirectly, my own self-reflexivity both in parallel with their stories and in addition to their stories. On occasion, I provide a deeper context for their comments, drawing from the literature, language theory, and my own interpretations of the greater learning context. At times, I empathize with my participants and at times I question/critique or make comparisons between their stories and theory or my own stories. This autoethnographic component of this study serves as a self-exploration of my own teaching and my own language narrative. Through this dissertation, I attempt to understand and reveal the dynamic entanglement of (inter)cultural understanding, reflexivity, and storytelling. I include critical narratives (Goodson & Gil, 2014) that reveal (and problematize) my own role and approach as the researcher and instructor for the intensive teacher education course. This is meant to contribute another layer of “meaningful, accessible, and evocative research grounded in personal experience” (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011, p. 274) and to provide the reader with a deeper sense of contextualization and connection with the story as research.

I also rely on the innate accessibility of learning through stories, which draws from the deep-rooted tradition of storytelling throughout human history (Polkinghorne, 1988). As Bochner (2002) explains, “Stories are the narrative frames within which we make our experiences meaningful” (p. 73). Narrative research is both descriptive and interpretive. The re-telling of stories serves to make sense of the past and creates ways to understand the present. Barthes (as cited in Polkinghorne, 1988) believes narratives of human experience can also indicate where we are going. This is why I listen to
others’ stories and include my own story; why I center this study on the stories of students and why I attempt to tell my own teaching story.

**List of Frequent Terms**

- **Autoethnography**: An approach to research, usually with a narrative writing genre that “seeks to describe and systematically analyze (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno)” (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011, p. 1). In this proposed research the PST use an autoethnographic approach to tell the story of their cultural background intercultural experience. The product the PSTs create is a multimodal autoethnographic narrative commonly described as a digital story. The stories of the participants are short, confined by the guidelines of the DS framework; however, I use *autoethnographic approach* to allude to the personal and memory-based reflexive nature of autoethnography. This study also incorporates autoethnography in my own narrative that explores my roles as instructor and researcher and tries to understand the DS project experience and outcome. The dissertation will have autoethnographic elements or sections, but will incorporate these into the larger “story” of the narrative dissertation.

- **Critical Multiculturalism**: The approach to multiculturalism that goes beyond “tolerance” of other cultures (Nieto, 1994) or superficial appreciation and, instead, takes a critical stance, problematizing the issues related to culture as a dynamic environment and recognizes systems of power, hierarchy within globalization. Kramsch & Zhang (2015) emphasize the critical (academic) meaning of “multiculturalism” as encompassing intercultural understanding and competence.
- **Critical Pedagogy**: Teaching approaches that are based on critical theory principles of inclusion, diversity-as-assets, education for empowerment, and look for ways to challenge cultural biases, injustice, and inequality. Teachers adhering to a critical pedagogy approach see as part of their teacher responsibilities the necessity for activism in order to support and advocate for their students and students’ family.

- **Culturally-responsive pedagogy (CRP)**: A critical theory-based approach to teaching that illuminates the social inequalities and promotes cultural awareness in order to understand students and be able to connect with them as unique and culturally-complex individuals (Delpit 1995; Gay, 2000). This study focuses on the cultural diversity aspects and considers CRP as part of a larger theoretical Critical Pedagogy and Critical Multiculturalism. CRP is often associated with and part of the ESOL teacher training programs.

- **Digital Storytelling/Digital Story (DS)**: The process and the product for creating a short (under 5 minutes) video that uses still or moving images, written text, and audio and produces a sharable digital story. In my use of digital storytelling I imply a consideration of the broader social effects (individual development, empowerment, etc.) in addition to the process and product of the digital storytelling phenomenon (Couldry, 2013). I use “digital story(telling)” to refer to any type of narrative that is multimodal and sharable by computers; the “Digital Story(telling)” (DS) refers specifically to the process of creation promoted by Lambert (2013; earliest edition in 2002) and others who align their practices with the guidelines of the Center for Digital Storytelling. The popularity of their guidelines, used by many researchers in education, make DS a more accessible and
recognizable starting point for communication about any digital story or digital narrative project.

- **English to speakers of other languages (ESOL):** The area of study within language education fields that focuses on teaching English as a second language to learners in the United States (for example) as well as the closely related area of study that focuses on teaching English as a foreign language, namely in countries where English is not the predominant language of the community. TESOL generally refers to the teacher preparation for teaching ESOL education.

- **Foreign language education (FLE):** The area of study within language education that primarily teaches languages that are not dominant in the community of the learner, such as learning French, Spanish, or Arabic in the United States. In this study, FLE describes the area of teacher training for these language education contexts.

- **Intercultural competency (IC):** According to Byram, Gribkopa, and Starkey (2002), IC is the ability for foreign language learners to take part in “a shared understanding by people of different social identities, and their ability to interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and their own individuality” (p.5). This idea is often joined by the linguistic communicative counterpart to create “intercultural communicative competency.” This study focuses on the culture-related side and considers IC as part of a larger theoretical Critical Multiculturalism. IC is often associated with and part of the FLE teacher training programs.

- **Multimodal:** The mixture or juxtaposition of various modes such as visual, written text, and auditory communication and creates a new (cohesive) form of communication. In linguistics multimodal often includes non-verbal components of communication;
however, in this study, I use multimodal in more of a technology-based setting where the modes are often digitally-based.

- **Narrative**: While there are many versions and approaches to narrative, the overall agreement is narrative is based in storytelling. According to Bochner and Riggs (2014) “Storytelling is the means by which we represent our experiences to ourselves and to others; it is how we communicate and make sense of our lives; it is how we fill our lives with meaning” (p. 197). Researchers working in narrative ways describe how we “live narratively” and communicate narratively. Still, others divide the living and communicating, emphasizing the organizational possibilities of narrative (Battersby, 2006). In this proposal, I look at “narrative” as stories that are told in a multimodal DS project and in my own writing and explorations of the entire DS experience.

- **Narrative Inquiry**: Using narrative genres of writing as a means to better explore and understand life’s experiences with a resulting text that has aesthetic and evocative merit. In this proposal, this usually includes a weaving of stories and theory and may combine various perspectives into a single narrative text and may include visual data as well as creative writing.

- **Pre-service teacher (PST)**: PST refers to both undergraduate and graduate students in teacher training courses, such as the Technology in FLE/ESOL course, which is the setting for this research.

- **Reflexivity**: A practice that includes and reaches beyond reflection and makes “connections between personal lives and professional careers, and to understand personal (including early) influences on professional practice” (Cole & Knowles, 2000, p. 2).
Chapter One Summary

In this introductory chapter, I have briefly introduced the dissertation topic and background. In the FLE and ESOL context, reflexivity is an important step towards critical pedagogy practices, and yet, adequate attention towards reflexivity is unfortunately lacking in teacher education courses. New ways of investigating and addressing the deficiencies have become available through emerging and recently-accessible technologies such as the creative, personal, and social tool of digital storytelling (Couldry, 2008a; Lundby, 2008; Lambert, 2013). The convergence of critical pedagogy, narrative inquiry, and digital storytelling, all creative approaches and tools that are rooted in participatory, inclusive, critical theory, can be used to begin to address these gaps in understanding, internalizing, and applying critical (inter)cultural practices in the ESOL/FLE education context in a way that supports, develops, valorizes, and challenges PST to continue engaging in critical perspectives. This narrative inquiry research combines teacher-researcher perspectives and the perspectives of three (former) students to qualitatively explore and reveal how this can happen in the classroom and individually.

In the following section, Chapter 2, I present a literature review that connects discussions of teaching practice with theory and contextualizes the various stories at the heart of this dissertation. I include a background of critical multiculturalism as a term encompassing intercultural competency (IC) and culturally-responsive pedagogy (CRP), and provide the ways in which I focus on narrative and reflexivity in education.

In Chapter 3, I tell the story of how the Methodology structures this dissertation study. This includes my own reflections on the theoretical rationale for the choices in
methods and how they relate to context and intended purpose and introduces Jennifer, Todd, and Raul, who appear as storytellers as well as characters in my stories as a teacher educator.

In Chapter 4, I juxtapose various stories that invite the reader into my class, my reflections, and the shared experiences of Jennifer, Todd, and Raul.

In Chapter 5, I continue to share my reflections in order to highlight the usefulness of narratives in teacher education and as a means to better understand critical approaches in the (language) education context.
CHAPTER 2:
LITERATURE REVIEW

This dissertation began with an introductory story describing my own path to language education and critical pedagogy as a way to frame my approach to qualitative research through purposeful storytelling. In this Literature Review, I present a background of intercultural competency, and culturally-responsive teaching, which refines critical pedagogy issues related to the language-learning context. I purposefully seek and use these concepts to connect the individual stories of my participants and my own personal narrative(s) in order to contribute towards narrative inquiry research where stories are data, analysis, and narrative product. To further situate this narrative-based research, I focus on the intersection of Digital Storytelling and narratives as a method supporting reflexivity and meaning-making and describe the recent research within the field of Education. Finally, I share three guiding examples of pedagogically important narratives that helped shape my understanding of Narrative Inquiry and its potential as an accessible, engaging teaching tool.

Intercultural Competency and Culturally-Responsive Pedagogy

In preparation for this dissertation study, and language education and teaching in general, I had a wide focus and a stubborn unwillingness to simplify or whittle down the topics that I found beneficial and pertinent. Thus, the intersection of culturally-
responsive pedagogy (CRP), intercultural competency (IC), personal/individual language-learning trajectory and personal narratives, and creative arts-based methods of supporting reflexivity continue to be, for me, not peripheral topics, but rather are essential (integral) ideas for the language classroom. In Figure 2.1, I depict the overlapping concepts of CRP and IC as pedagogical approaches in critical multiculturalism and emphasize the need for both in language education and teacher education.

Figure 2.1. Critical Pedagogy and Pre-service Teacher Education.

Stemming from a critical theory and critical pedagogy perspective, CRP and IC each focus on the social context and question the dominant stereotypes and cultural generalizations, while aiming for a deeper, more nuanced understanding of culture and the representations of culture in the classroom (Gay, 1997; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Kramsch, 2004; Sleeter, 2011). These approaches question received knowledge and
look for ways to challenge cultural biases, injustice, and inequality. While CRP often turns inwards, acknowledging and valorizing the cultures, experiences, and perspectives of the culturally and linguistically diverse students within the classroom (Bhattacharya & Gillen, 2016; Delpit, 1995; Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Gay & Howard, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Vavrus, 2008), IC uses this democratizing critical consciousness to advance connections and understanding between cultures in a more global context (Byram, 2014; Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002; Gomez & Tavares, 2017; Kramsch, 2013).

Critical approaches also promote inclusivity through alternative instructional techniques, connect the local-global and the global-local, and emphasize the students as individuals who have diverse backgrounds and diverse educational goals. Mak (2010) states that effective teaching in diverse/multicultural classrooms “cannot happen without assisting individual teachers to internationalize their personal and professional outlooks and develop their own intercultural competence, which often involve self-reflective processes” (p. 366).

Thus, when teaching monolingual students with little-to-no intercultural experience, or when teaching multilingual and/or multicultural students, PSTs should be given exposure and experience with ways of introducing and exploring critical multicultural issues in the language class beyond attention to linguistic components (Pinho, 2015).
Teacher Training and Critical Pedagogy

While foreign language education (FLE) and English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) education are often regarded as distinct areas/fields, there are some overlapping and similar challenges (Bigelow & Walker, 2004). Teacher training that ensures an understanding and application of critical multiculturalism is one such challenge that manifests itself as intercultural competence (IC) in the FLE context and culturally-responsive pedagogy (CRP) in the ESOL context. While these terms are by no means mutually exclusive, they each address the nuances that often arise within each respective context.

In the foreign language education (FLE) context, Kramsch (2004) outlines “a view of the language teacher as a go-between” in multilingual/multicultural environments, which can “lead to a more democratically oriented foreign language education” (p. 38). Students of language education should be aware that education, especially language education, is never politically neutral (Giroux, 2009; Gorski, 2012; Kanpol & McLaren, 1995; Kubota, 2004; McLaren, 2009; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Pennycook, 2004). Perhaps even more so today, in a climate of neoliberal education and anti-multiculturalism, “a politically acquiescent position as an English language educator is an equally political position” (Pennycook, 2017, p. 179). The teaching of English as a foreign language is riddled with lingering ideas of prestige and hierarchy, as evidenced in the ongoing discussion on non-native teachers (Kramsch & Zhang, 2018).

Teacher training in ESOL courses fulfill the following content needs: introducing PST to the challenges facing English Language Learners (ELLs), the legal and moral obligation to include ELLs in classroom activities, the efficacy of engaging students
through culturally relevant ways including encouraging literacy develop in their first language, and the benefits of adopting empathetic and holistic approaches to integrating ELLs in the classroom and larger community. This list is by no means exhaustive, yet it touches upon the importance of a critical approach to both the ESOL and FLE education contexts, a position I fully encourage and emphasize in my teaching, as well as in my longstanding sense of social and civic responsibilities that include a sense of activism in teacher commitments. In this narrative inquiry study, the critical theory-based pedagogy is not just the lens through which I see the world; the critical approach also serves as part of the content in the course where the study is situated.

Since 2010, according to self-reported informal first-day student introductions, the vast majority of PST who enroll in the required ESOL courses (for state certification with an ESOL endorsement) that I teach are monolingual, grew up within the county or bordering counties of the university, and have rarely or never interacted with non-native speakers of English. This demographic background repeats itself every semester, year after year and is not unique to the particular university or state where this dissertation is situated; as a whole, the reported trend for the PST monocultural background remains similar in most of the teacher education programs in the United States (Delpit, 1995; Gay, 2014; Hermes, 2005, Sleeter, 2017). These demographic gaps between teacher backgrounds and K-12 student backgrounds often lead to PST hesitations towards the ideas of culturally-responsive teaching (Gay, 2000) and can sometimes lead to strong resistance towards research-supported approaches that encourage critical pedagogy, such as inclusive diversity-as-asset positions, bilingualism over “English Only” ideology-based assumptions, and empathetic student-centered practices that recognize students
as unique and multifaceted individuals (Cummins, 2000; Freire, 1970; Nieto, 2006; Phillion, He, & Connelly, 2005).

A similar challenge occurs when teaching PST in the teacher training programs for foreign language education (FLE) (Byram, 2014; Kramsch, 2006). In the FLE context, multicultural awareness can affect the relation to the target language of the class. Critical approaches to FLE include developing a more authentic and inclusive description of the language and its dynamic culture(s), introducing opportunities for less commonly taught languages, avoiding essentialism in representations of target language cultures, taking into account heritage language learners, assessing globalization’s influence, and considering the changing needs of the language learners rather than a continuation of the framing created by the dominant status quo (Canagarajah, 2012; Kubota, 2014). Kramsch (2013) explains the changing dynamics and demographics of the foreign language class in relation to globalization and declares, “Culture has become deterritorialized” (p. 183).

These are just some of the still-emerging issues that are already changing the language classrooms of today as well as shaping the language classrooms of the future, which will be taught by current PST students. The challenge is how to approach research on IC since “the researched ‘objects’ are phenomena in flux, explored via various disciplinary—and sometimes interdisciplinary—approaches” and influenced by “competing traditions” in IC research (Otten & Geppert, 2009, p. 5).

I take a critical perspective of culture and communication. Thus, as a language teacher educator, I adhere to a perspective where intercultural communication is a performative practice (which is both implicit and explicit), and involves actors performing
“culture” in pre-existing power structures which permeates inside and outside of the classroom community (Kubota, Austin & Saito-Abbott, 2003). Together with this critical approach, I also adopt a more flexible idea of intercultural competency which accepts that “Intercultural communication, in its very practical and existential sense, is all about: Specifically, a matter of curiosity, ambiguity, surprise, enrichment, and—occasionally—irritation” (Otten & Geppert, 2009, p. 22).

The role of the teacher who follows a culturally-responsive pedagogy is to diminish the hierarchy in the classroom and create a more student-centered approach that promotes the value of each student, and the value of their culture. Canagarajah (2012) discusses this need in the context of dysfunctional classrooms due to top-down pedagogical traditions that failed to consider the pedagogical traditions of the local context. For an example of a student-centered activity, Yi (2014) describes digital storytelling (DS) as a multimodal literacy activity for English language learners (ELL) and stresses that this type of participation highlights the strengths of the students, their personal experiences, and sociocultural knowledge, which are assets often overlooked in more traditional classroom practices. DS projects are particularly useful, even transformational, when participants are immigrants or migrants in language learning contexts since the ability to share their stories, explore their identities, and build their language skills creates opportunities for empowerment (Darvin & Norton, 2014; Lenette, Cox & Brough, 2013; Nunez-Janes & Cruz, 2013; Vinogradova, Linville & Bickel, 2011). Vinogradova, Linville and Bickel (2011) detail the complete process of introducing a DS project in a Cross-Cultural Communication university course with advanced level ELL having mixed-backgrounds. The authors highlight the multiliteracies pedagogy and the
development of communities of practice through collaborative intercultural communication. Thus, the FLE/ESOL course that I taught, which became the starting setting of my study, infuses CRP and IC topics via a self-reflexive (autoethnographic) digital storytelling process in a dual attempt to address the lack of reflexivity in PSTs (Gay, 2014, Sleeter, 2017) regarding critical multiculturalism and critical pedagogy and to explore how PSTs use narratives in their teaching or teacher development.

Sleeter (2011) writes a scathing account of misguided claims of incorporating CRP by educators (and non-educator policy makers) on all levels. She addresses the assumption of a “cultural celebration” definition of CRP and counters, “Learning ‘about’ culture then substitutes for learning to teach challenging academic knowledge and skills through the cultural processes and knowledge students bring to school with them” (p. 13). This static or limited view of “culture” is discussed in a study that used an autoethnographic writing project conducted in a course for PST (Gunn, Bennett, Evans, Peterson, & Welsh, 2013). The study is similar to the context and pedagogical aims of my dissertation study, and describes the introduction of a creative and personal writing assignment used to critically explore the developing understanding of culturally-responsive pedagogy of the mostly monolingual, monocultural “Americans” enrolled in a teacher education course. In their study, the instructor of the PST course used the autobiographies as a means or opportunity for PST to process their own thoughts about culture. Participants labeled themselves as being “American,” and not having a culture. This reveals a lack of understanding the idea of culture and the Self, and presumably, as suggested in similar theoretic research, a lack of understanding of the Other (Fought, 2006; Kubota, 2004). The authors (Gun, et al., 2013) of the PST personal writing study
suggest that this type of reflexive autobiographic portrait supports and contributes to the development of CRP understanding and practices. Of particular interest in the findings of this study is that the majority of the PST expressed fear or apprehension about teaching students with diverse backgrounds and expressed a “love of teaching” as the rationale to become a teacher without discussing the importance of educating children. This unveiling is troubling, but is necessary in the education of PSTs and reveals that ample time needs to be given to reflexivity. This attention to reflexivity includes creating a safe space for sharing the reflexive practice and reflective thoughts, and then including engaging discussion and feedback on the reflection/reflexive practice in relation to culture and pedagogy. Gun et al. (2013) conclude that “Insights from snapshot autobiographies can assist teacher educators in laying the foundation for courageous conversations in their classrooms about culture, teaching, and learning” (p. 16). In a similar study that explores pre-service teacher culture narratives, Ates, Kim, and Grigsby (2015) describe an integration of firsthand stories from ELLs, the teacher’s cultural narrative recounting her experiences as a Turkish international doctoral student, and then sharing their own cultural narratives. The authors claim the shared cultural narratives helped bridge the divide between native speakers of English and non-native speakers and affirmed the importance of relationship-building by “finding and utilizing the cultural and personal narratives of our own and others” (p. 9) in courses such as second language acquisition, sociolinguistics, or multicultural education.

Finley, Vonk, and Finley (2014) arrive at a similar conclusion after having created programs of critical arts-based methods. They state, “Personal reflection and autobiographical narratives are key to [their research] curriculum” (p.3) and “critical arts-
based research has the potential to facilitate critical race, indigenous, queer, feminist, and border theories and research methodologies” (p. 4). In ESOL contexts, attention to the cultural and linguistic ideas of PST is as important as the attention to the linguistic diversity of their future students. Using a student-centered approach, such as autobiographical digital stories, promotes a principle aspect of culturally-responsive pedagogy where students have cultural assets rather than linguistic deficits (Bartolomé, 2009; Nieto, 2009; Vavrus, 2002; Yi, 2014) and where performance/authorship and multimodality allow for more diverse reflections.

As I explore the ways in which critical pedagogies can be applied in the language teacher development course, I am also trying to expand critical reflexivity into my own educator practices. Likewise, as researcher, the critical framework is integral to the DS project I implemented as a teacher and informs my research into how I see and interpret the stories about the DS project and narratives in education and of education.

**Narrative Inquiry**

The use of stories in research and as research is a growing in multiple disciplines, including education research and, specifically, language education research (Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2014; Casanave & Schecter, 1997; Duff & Bell, 2002; McVee & Boyd, 2016; Vasquez, 2011). This dissertation is one example, joining many recent others, of research that embraces stories as data as well method of analysis and as the resulting product (Canagarajah, 2012; Ellis & Bochner, 2016; Hamilton, 2008; Luschen, 2014; Van Galen, 2014). While some definitions of narrative inquiry solely describe the narrative data to be systematically analyzed and transformed into extracted
themes and categories, or even quantified, I will adopt definitions of narrative inquiry as a methodology and product where narrative is at the core of the entire research process. Additionally, narrative inquiry includes holistic and detailed representations of the data not simply edited, decontextualized snippets. Denzin argues against the deconstruction of the story (for the claim that it somehow becomes more methodologically rigorous) and promotes hearing the story “as it was told” (Denzin, as cited in Bochner, 2002, p. 82). Bochner (2002) writes, “Narrative inquiry aspires to an ideal of participation and involvement, promoting the inclusion of multiple voices, encouraging dialogue, and attempting to keep the conversation going” (p. 77). These rich and evocative stories “activate subjectivity” (Ellis & Bochner, 2003, p. 218), privileging the emotions of writer and reader, and transcends the personal experience to create an accessible new experience for the reader (Bochner, 2002).

Polkinghorne (1988) differentiates between “analysis of narratives” and “narrative analysis” in that the former pertains to the use of stories as data where themes are then found while the latter, “narrative analysis,” refers to the emerging narrative as the result after an analysis which happens through the writing process. This latter “narrative analysis” approach appears throughout the research design, including the data collection and type of data collected, the analysis via narrative writing, and the type of accessible and pedagogically-useful narrative product result.

Describing pioneering projects using narrative-based research, Bochner and Ellis (2016, referring to work in 1991), write, “Our project emphasized subjectivity, self-reflexivity, emotionality, and the goal of connecting social sciences to humanities through first-person, ethnographic storytelling” (p. 210). Their realization that “the goal
of [their] project as one in which readers and/or viewers would not only know but also feel the ethnographic 'truth' of first-person accounts" (p. 211) is a central feature of narrative-based works, including the diverse terms used for narrative-based research such as varieties of autoethnography, personal ethnography, evocative ethnography, autobiographic works, etc.

Like my own narratives derived from interactions and conversations with former students, Bhattacharya and Gillen (2016), professor-mentor and doctoral student-mentee, respectively, have created an account which they call parallel narratives. To discuss their academic relationship through the period in which Bhattacharya advises Gillen and guides him through difficult periods of critical self-reflexivity, the authors juxtapose their own autoethnographic narratives and include instances where the “messiness of [their] stories” mingle and reveal various perspectives in “fictionalized narratives, ethnodramas, realist stories, and desired narratives” (p.xvii).

Autoethnography and the Roles of Narrative Researchers

In my own study, in describing the PST approach to their multimodal self-study of cultural and intercultural experiences through “autoethnographic digital narratives,” and in the description of my teacher-self-study narrative, my choice of “autoethnography,” over other narrative terms is deliberate. Autoethnography is a change agent (Ellis, 2004) connecting ethnography, culture, and performance, and is a process which can provide cultural commentary, deconstruct and/or transform the ways we understand experiences, and provide a space where multiple gazes interact (Pensoneau-Conway & Toyosaki, 2011). According to Ellis and Adams (2014), “Autoethnography refers to
research, writing, stories, and methods that connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social, and political" (p. 254). Various authors use terms such as autobiography, narrative inquiry, oral history, life history, etc. to describe similar self-study approaches such as those found in digital storytelling projects (Gill, 2014; Luschen, 2014) or reflexive writing prompts for PST (Gunn et al., 2013), and other self-studies in the education context (Pithouse, Mitchell, & Weber, 2009); however, autoethnography has deep roots in critical theory and originated as a discourse from those at the margins of society who, through identifying the material, political, and transformative aspects of powerful representational systems, voiced their critique, questions, and resistance to those dominant representations (Neuman, 1996).

Many researchers describe the work of an autoethnographer as a back-and-forth, looking inward and looking outward, often “exposing a vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract, and resist cultural interpretations” (Ellis, 2004, p. 37; also Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Autoethnography is a discursive activity that interprets and responds to the ambiguities, complexities, and questions of life and is a method of inquiry, making meaning through remembering, reimagining and making connections and bridges between past, present, and future. Lockford (2014) expands on the bridge metaphor, stating, “Bridges convey us from where we are to where we want to be. They are both a tool and a part of the journey” (p. 284). Like Lockford, it is my pedagogical duty to show my students how to build bridges and to help them to trust the bridge; this is the crux of reflexivity in teaching.

Educators like Bhattacharya (2018; Bhattacharya & Gillen, 2016), Delpit (1995), and Boylorn (2014) who explore their personal experiences of cross-cultural issues,
race, and power in academia employ autoethnographic narratives. Boylorn (2014) discusses auto/ethnography as a way to “encourage reciprocal [reflexive] and analytical investigations of self and culture, [and] the personal and social significance make it a useful method for introducing and discussing controversial topics related to social identity” (p. 315) and teacher identity. These issues are central to the context of both teacher education and (the politicized) language education. Additionally, Boylorn’s study informed my approach in terms of how to include the multiple roles that overlapped and evolved during the study. For example, she writes a reflexive narrative about her teaching and begins recounting the experience with the following:

Day 1. It is the start of the semester, and I am teaching a class about race, class, and gender difference. When I enter the room I realize I may be the only black professor many of the students will have during their tenure at the Southern, predominately white university where I teach. […] Day 2. Teaching about diversity is difficult. Many of my students are from homogenous communities that have not prepared them to engage difference (Boylorn, 2014, p. 321).

Her automethodological component addresses intersubjectivity and innovative embodiment of the ethnographer-researcher-instructor-self. Bhattacharya shares a similar attention to methodological positionings when she describes, “For any type of bridge-building work to occur, I have to situate myself within the academic spaces in which I work and what influences my thinking” (Bhattacharya & Gillen, 2016, p.44). Delpit (1995) is sometimes critiqued for the lack of hard “research” in her narrative reflections in which she reveals classroom practices, teacher-to-teacher colleague discussions, and personal experiences. These critiques are not new. Dewey, seemingly
always far ahead of his time, addressed these types of critiques regarding the use of experience as a source of knowledge and warned,

In casting aspersions upon the things of everyday experiences, the things of action and affection and social intercourse, [(strict) empiricists] have done something far worse than fail to give these affairs intelligent direction… To waste of time and energy, to disillusionment with life that attends every deviation from concrete experiences must be added the tragic failure to realize the value that intelligent search could reveal among the things of ordinary experience (Dewey, as cited in Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, p. 42).

Many have written about what “ordinary experience” can be, from early guidelines on qualitative research as something naturally-occurring and uncontrived (Eisner, 1998) to delineations between the “big stories” told in interviews and other constructed interactions versus the everyday “small stories” in conversations (Vasquez, 2011). I will include evidence of this attention to the “ordinary experience” and the action of reflecting on the experience. By humanizing the participants in realistic and multi-layered portrayals of persons that include stories shared during interviews, during written coursework, through multimodal personal narratives, and through less formal conversations, I hope to “first grasp, then render” (Geertz, as cited in Bochner, 2002, p. 177) their complexities and reflexive practices in the various narratives.

**Narratives of Critical Pedagogy (and Reflexivity)**

While theoretical discussions of critical multiculturalism abound, *teaching* critical multiculturalism at the level of teacher education, and specifically teaching within the FLE/ESOL language teacher education context is rather underrepresented in the literature (Delpit & Dowdy, 2008; Sleeter, 2011; Sleeter, 2017). Situated practice with detailed contextualization, critical framing within the current politicized educational
environment, and using a potentially transformative tool like the digital storytelling multimodal narrative is a new contribution to teacher narratives. Studies exploring the double layer inherent in teacher education—the teacher education context and the future classroom context of the PST—will contribute to better understanding what methodologies may work (and how they may work) by contributing more unique teacher narratives to the body of work that includes teacher self-study and specifically critical reflexive inquiry studies (Goodson & Gill, 2014).

Additionally, my reflexivity on and inclusion of conflicting accounts and my understanding of the importance of including the contextualization and methodological steps allow for vulnerabilities and positionality to be shared, discontinuities explored, contradictions presented fully, and tensions to be questioned and evaluated by the reader. This is all part of the critical and analytical process (Giroux, 2009).

**Reflexivity in Teacher Education**

Teachers in various fields have agreed on the importance of reflective and reflexive practices in teacher education and specifically practices including critical reflection and reflexivity (Sevis & Ozdogan, 2018). Freire’s emphasis on reflexivity and reflexive action, or praxis, is attributed to the American educator, John Dewey, who proposed learning by doing (action), and careful, conscious reflexive meditations on the experience; for Dewey, a great portion of teacher development was self-reflection (Freire, 1970). Bigelow and Walker (2004) provide a clear and direct defining statement for reflective practice stating, “Reflective practice helps teachers in a wide range of settings to sort through complex beliefs, understandings, experiences and practices in
personal ways” (p. 11). Bolton (2010) provides a way of understanding both reflective and reflexive practices, which I will quote at length since this practice is personally/professionally important as a supporting tenet in the autoethnographic portions in my study:

Reflexivity is finding strategies to question our own attitudes, theories-in-use, values, assumptions, prejudices and habitual actions; to understand our complex roles in relation to others. It develops responsible and ethical action, such as becoming aware of how much our ways of being are culturally determined. [...] To be reflexive is to examine, for example, the limits of our knowledge, of how our own behavior plays into organizational structures counter to our own personal and professional values, and why such practices might marginalize groups or exclude individuals. It is questioning how congruent our actions are with our espoused values and theories. Reflexivity is the near-impossible adventure of making aspects of the self strange (Bolton, 2010, p. 16).

Bolton and other authors often group terms like reflective practice, or the even more similar, critical reflective practice, and reflexive practices, appearing linked as “reflective and reflexive” or reflective/reflexive (Bolton, 2010).

Cole and Knowles (2000) also extensively explore the teacher practices of reflexive inquiry and discuss the gap between theory and practice. The explore incongruities and honor the complexity of teachers as they develop as professionals. Through systematic reflection and analysis, PST can practice reflexive awareness and autobiographical inquiry, which can also provide the benefit of a documentation of their own professional development. In terms of developing reflexive practices that can lead to more critical awareness, Bolton (2010) reminds us that “We, and our students, must be encouraged to examine our story-making processes critically; to create and re-create fresh accounts from different perspectives” (p. 9). This reminder that the critical lens is an ongoing attention that comes from within and not a reaction to an external “critical
event,” makes the DS project more significant and valuable as a learning task combining practice with a multimodal tool that supports the reflection and inquiry towards critical consciousness and critical multiculturalism (Brushwood Rose & Granger, 2010; Carmona & Luciano, 2014; Halter & Levin, 2014; Hull & Katz, 2006; Luschen, 2014) and powerful as a research tool since it disrupts the researcher-informant dichotomy (Nunez-Janes & Cruz, 2013).

In reviewing the multitude of long-standing, growing, and emerging critical-based issues embedded in the fields of ESOL and FLE education, it is imperative to acknowledge the need for developing didactic reflexivity on these and other critical matters and introduce creative ways in which PST can have opportunities to explore critical issues and better understand the rationale for and applications of CRP and IC (Byram, 2014; Carmona & Luschen, 2014; Ivala, Gachago, Condy & Chigona, 2014). Based on previous research with DS (Lambert, 2013; Lundby, 2008), student-created multimodal digital story projects offer opportunities to make meaning, communicate lived experiences, share voices, and question uncertainties.

**Digital Storytelling as Multimodal Narrative**

This dissertation initially began as an exploration of storytelling in a classroom where I introduced students to a Digital Storytelling (DS) project. This multi-step individual project used a technology-based and arts-based tool and medium for sharing personal narratives about cultural background or intercultural communication. Digital Storytelling relies on the participant’s own authoring of personal life experiences in a multimedia creation and, as Lundby (2008) explains, “Storytelling implies the
shaping of the story as well as the sharing of it with others” (pg. 4). In the same way that narrative inquiry is simultaneously method and product, the DS is a tool for storytelling process and a multimodal narrative product.

Digital stories, as described by Lambert (2013, 2017) and the many researchers, activists, and educators following the Center for Digital Storytelling (CDS) guidelines, are stories of lived experiences, told in a personal, creative and unique way using a digital video format to combine still or moving images, such as drawings, photographs, paintings, or digitally-produced art with an audio component, usually the voice of the narrator-author and other possible sound effects such as music. The storyteller composes and arranges the words and images to create a two to three minute dynamic and media-rich focused video that expresses their often-emotional experiences in a concise way, which can be shared with select individuals or with a much wider audience (Lambert, 2013; Lundby, 2008; Ohler, 2006).

While there are many examples of personal narrative and/or digital storytelling research for the purpose of reflexivity, there are very few examples of connecting this reflexivity with critical pedagogy, and specifically the critical pedagogy of (inter)cultural issues, which is essential in the language learning contexts of FLE and ESOL (Darvin, 2015; van Leeuwen, 2015; and, to some extent, others in the 2015 special issue on Multimodality of *TESOL Quarterly*). One example sponsored/authored by The Council of Europe (2009), however, specifically informed this aspect of my study. The authors describe a detailed portfolio approach, available online, created to explore intercultural competence (IC) through a project called “Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media (AIEVM).” This attempt to teach and learn about IC is offered as a
response to the Council’s suggestion, “Complementary tools should be developed to encourage students to exercise independent critical faculties including to reflect critically on their own responses and attitudes to experiences of other cultures” (Council of Europe, 2009, p. 2). The online portfolio of teaching resources includes instructions for implementing the intercultural activity, including question prompts and suggestions on how the activity may be used, and concepts for discussion. The guidelines for the use of the autobiography approach overlaps with many of my intentions for the DS project, yet was less connected to the in-depth interviews post-project. The AIEVM guide states that the Autobiography can be used as “something for private use only, a self-reflection and self-assessment” and/or “something to be shared by learner and facilitator in confidence as part of a joint conversation and assessment of intercultural learning” and/or “a group exercise and focus for classroom discussion and collaborative learning” (AIEVM, 2009, p. 6). Since the introduction of the Europe-based AIEVM project, multiple countries have adopted the teaching tool. In a study with pre-service language teachers on the impact of the activity on intercultural visual literacy, Lindner and Garcia (2014) found that the in-depth attention, through prompts and discussion, to the chosen visuals for the AIEVM “enabled participants to ‘discover’ aspects of the image and the media production processes involved in its creation that might otherwise not have surfaced” (p. 234).

Van Galen’s (2014) research with DS and PST is similar to my proposed study in that she uses DS as a means for reflexivity regarding critical issues in education, such as exploring issues of social mobility and professional development. She proposes stories as critical pedagogy and recounts the experiences of her students, a mix of in-service teachers who are at the early stage of their careers and pre-service teachers
who are seniors in college. Van Galen focuses on the experiences of first generation college students and looks at their socioeconomic backgrounds and the challenges they face from society, institutions, and introduces a critical perspective for understanding these realities. Through a DS project, she turns attention towards the myth of the upward mobility, which perpetuates a narrative describing an environment of meritocracy while ignoring the socioeconomic complexities that continue to stack the odds against economic and educational opportunity for poor and working-class students. During the intensely personal and revealing narratives told by her students through the DS process, Van Galen writes about her own self-reflexivity regarding the assignment and states, “I came too slowly to understand the pain that would come as I tapped into these silences, trained as I am to intellectualize social experiences” (p. 42). In describing the initial reluctance to open up and share their personal stories, she states, “I have come to understand the tightly folded arms at talk of class stratification as one sign of how much may be at stake for these students, and as only the first step toward eventually knowing—and telling—their own stories” (p. 43). This insight was especially pertinent to my own research, which, like issues of class and socioeconomic status, has a focus on culture and the personal stories that accompany these often-charged topics. Issues of culture and language ideologies are highly connected to identity and a sense of self, which can lead to diverse, defensive, and divisive postures/sentiment (Norton, 2016). Precisely for this strong sense of identity, together with the self-reflexive affordances of DS in exploring personal issues, the DS project served as an opportunity for transformation (Lambert, 2013) and contributes more perspectives into the context of language teacher education.
Digital storytelling, thus, is a multimodal narrative tool, which became a springboard for PST-as-storytellers to communicate and reflect. According to the literature, the creative multimodal constructions often result in developing connections and deepening dialog between the author, the story, and a wider audience (Brushwood Rose & Granger, 2013; Frazel, 2011; Kearney, 2009; Lambert, 2013; Lundby, 2008). Like Skrouge and Rao (2009), who call the collaborative side of DS “shared ‘mediated’ events” (p.54), I discuss DS as a narrative process, encompassing many of the characteristics of narrative inquiry (Bach, 2007; Hull & Katz, 2006; Garcia & Rossiter, 2010), namely, the idea that “narrative is the best way of representing and understanding experience” and that experience happens temporally and continuously within a context and authored from a particular perspective (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 18). According to Scott (2018), our understanding of stories is culturally-based and changes as we change, so that “Storytelling is visceral and collaborative; it is also susceptible. [...] Susceptibility draws attention to storytelling’s perpetual openness to revision, competing interpretations, and new meanings as stories surface through bodies situated in continually evolving cultures” (Scott, 2018, np). As such, the stories may have differing or multiple interpretations and the conversations that grow from the discussion of stories is mediated/negotiated by the context and people/audience.

**Sharing Narratives as Pedagogy**

In my master’s program, I was a student of Lisa Delpit, a scholar who uses narrative to teach and to communicate critical issues of race, power, and inequalities in the education context. Through writing personal accounts of teaching and interacting with students, other teachers, and community members, Delpit shares “Teachers’ Voices,” reveals similarities between “Lessons from Home and Abroad,” and reopens “The Silenced Dialogue” with a broader (education-centered) audience (Delpit, 1995).

In Other People’s Children, Delpit authors various chapters (of which I incorporated some chapter titles above) that can be read independently or consecutively and re-stories her experiences teaching often-marginalized youth and teaching future teachers who feel either marginalized themselves, or who begin to identify critical issues with diverse student populations. Delpit’s stories were, for me, transformative. I have often recommend her writing to students I teach in the ESOL context and have previously included one of her narratives as course content. In numerous instances, my students responded with expressions of gratitude and feelings of awakening (as per informal student communication). I attribute the success of the lessons to be, at least in part, Delpit’s accessible writing, which includes situated characters who dialog and an unfolding story that engages students who are often only exposed to more academically-structured readings (textbooks with definitions to memorize, theory to absorb, and de-contextualized methods that fail to emphasize the dynamic uniqueness of each classroom). When students read Delpit’s stories, they could identify with the characters, settings, and the experiences depicted.

In a similar, engaging way, readers of Carolyn Ellis can feel as if they know the characters. Ellis creates a methodological novel that presents autoethnography to
readers through an (auto)ethnographic narrative on teaching the methodology to students. In the introductory pages of the novel, Ellis prepares the reader for innovatively bringing together a novel, which “tells an evocative story,” and a methodological text, which is “a dry how-to treatise” (p. xix). The story, set in a course on autoethnography, begins as the class begins. Students, or “characters,” are introduced, the syllabus is discussed, the course progresses, and the “story” of what ensues combines ethnographic descriptions and infused analysis (reflection), and fictional scenes that best represent the essence of the course. Reading the book places the reader inside the classroom, learning alongside the character-students and Dr. Ellis. Through evocative writing, Ellis engages the reader with the autoethnographic text and presents each “class” as a thematic chapter that presents the course content with and through the students. I used the book as a companion text, expanding my course experience when taking Ellis’ autoethnography class myself. As I prepared to teach the Technology in FLE and ESOL course, I thought about the helpful experience of reading a narrative account of a course and how it taught me to think about ethnography, instructor-student relations, and research as a whole.

These two influential books do not simply present narratives as part of the text-based product; the resulting product is a narrative (Delpit, 1995; Ellis, 2004). In the narrative-based text by Clough, Narratives and Fictions in Educational Research, he situates the stories of five students within an education and teacher-training context. I was first attracted to the way in which the stories unfold in an organized “back and forth” style. Clough (2002) explains the structure of his book as guided by the notion of the novel as “a metaphor and model of research” (p. 99) and as influenced by Denzin’s
(1997) “crisis of representation.” He introduces narratives about students followed by a more systematic analysis that describes Clough’s critical thoughts and “readings” of the stories. While this does separate the more literary and aesthetic narrative and the more traditional academic narrative by chapters, he suggests a contemplative integrated approach to the book. Clough describes this as allowing the reader to “redefine research” as they move back and forth between the stories and readings, experience and the analysis that weaves the historical context and epistemological issues with the presentation of the short narratives representing the experience. In essence, Clough tells a story of personal experience with five students (participants), discusses his “reading” of the stories, and then presents further reflexivity through theory and narrative contextualization to, as Clough describes it, “test the moral and political intent of the researcher (and the reader)” (p. 100).

Narrative research has an established tradition within education, notably, as teacher narratives that can serve to develop learning and pedagogic strategies (Bochner, 2014; Delpit, 1995; Ellis, 2004; Goodson & Gill, 2014; Ritchie & Wilson, 2000; Van Galen, 2014). Based on the idea that humans live a storied life, individually and socially (Connelly & Clandinin, 2004; Bochner, 2014), narrative research (re)tells the stories that people live. Through this layered study of PST narratives, weaved together into a new narrative, I build on the multiple manifestations of narrative research, such as narrative work that “engages with the situatedness of one’s experiences” (Canagarajah, 2012, p. 260); narratives that create aesthetic dialogic works between authors and audience (Ellis & Bochner, 2003; Freeman, 2007); narratives that emphasize subjectivity and (self)reflexive inquiry (Clandinin, 2007; Kennedy-Lewis, 2012);
narratives that combine and encompass multiple perspectives and theory (Bochner, 2014; Nelson, 2011); narratives that can generate critical insights with potential for exploring in-between identities (Canagarajah, 2012; Mulder & Dull, 2014); and narratives that bridge past, present, and future, and integrate multiple disciplinary contexts (Nelson, 2011).

With these literary and methodological references in mind, I proceeded with this study and began to reflect on and tell the story of preparing (updating, recreating) the Technology in Foreign and English Language Education, documenting the student DS projects, and re-engaging with students post-course.

Chapter Two Summary

In this Literature Review section, I synthesized and made broad connections between the critical pedagogy-based ideas of intercultural competency, culturally-responsive pedagogy, and reflexivity in education, and described the rationale for the digital storytelling and personal narrative practices in the language education and teacher training contexts. To introduce the theory and structure of the narrative inquiry, I explain how narrative analysis produces a narrative as the product of research and allows me to combine data from multiple sources and perspectives through re-storying as holistically as possible in this dissertation. To conclude, I included methodologically-inspirational and guiding examples of relatively recent research that use creative/aesthetic approaches such as narrative and autoethnography.
CHAPTER 3:
METHODOLOGY

A Methodology to Match the Critical Pedagogy Framework

Sharing one’s stories and individual reflections and multiple perspectives are central aspects in both the core activity of the research (the DS project) as well as the research into the stories told stemming from the DS project. Additionally, the narrative inquiry allows for an acceptance of contradiction, nuance, discontinuity, and invites readers to “enter into a dialogue with narratives” (Bochner, 2002, p. 81). My attention to critical issues in language education directly influenced my recognition of pedagogical challenges and instructor-student/researcher-participant relations and guided my choice of research topic as well as my chosen methods, my analysis approach, and my intention of writing an accessible account that can be useful for pedagogical purposes.

The narrative inquiry methodology I use to tell the story of student-teacher’s experiences with digital storytelling is presented here in connection with my description of the Digital Story project. I will detail the DS project as the springboard for the subsequent shared stories and then describe the setting, participants or characters who appear as both storytellers and as characters in my own descriptions. In addition to the DS project, which serves as multimodal data, I will also describe the post-course interview data that I used to construct the narratives in the next chapter. Finally, an important component in any qualitative research, I will address the rigor and
trustworthiness and the limitations and delimitations of the study, including detailed
comments on my dual roles of instructor and researcher.

A Narrative Inquiry about a DS

This narrative inquiry is informed by stories in multiple layers and from multiple
perspectives. In essence, this dissertation is a story about stories. The idea to
implement a DS project in a course about technology and the critical pedagogy
approaches to language teaching was a way to start conversations about (inter)cultural
issues. While the rationale for DS (and DS as a tool for reflexivity) was rooted in the
literature on innovative and engaging technology in education, personal narratives in
language classes and teacher training, and arts-based approaches to explore issues in
critical pedagogy, the questions I had about how students would perceive the DS
project, what stories they would create/share, and what might students get out of the
project were broad, open-ended questions that could lead in diverse directions.

These questions could not be answered with decontextualized facts and figures,
nor by amassing countless broad impersonal statistics. These questions led to more
stories and sometimes, to more questions. In Bochner’s (2014) story of Coming to
Narrative, he demonstrates how the work itself is an example of Narrative Inquiry and
writes, “I wanted to make modes of communicating lived experience not only what we
study but also how we study it—in forms that can convey the unfolding of lived
experience” (p. 301). In this dissertation (Chapter 4 and 5), I present multiple stories
from, with, and about three former students, now teachers, who contribute different
perspectives and, of course, have different stories to share. I include my own stories
and reflections as either an autoethnographic component or blended into other stories as a way to connect and engage with the various stories about language, reflexivity, culture, teaching, and other critical concepts in (language) education.

Qualitative researchers often, if not always, adopt and adapt various tools and approaches to investigate the world (Clandinin, Pushor, & Orr, 2007; Saldaña, 2016). The arts-infused methods, including a narrative process, were chosen to reflect the inclusive, personal, accessible, and transformative aspects intrinsic to these methods (Chilton & Leavy, 2014; Gubrium & Harper, 2013, Hamilton, 2013; Kim, 2016; Kress, 2000). The multimodal DS introduces a creative project for the teacher education course and also provides rich possibilities for further post-course communication. The idea that the DS project is a process-oriented activity extends to the overall pedagogical approach of the course as well. Learning is process-oriented and I approach both the research and my teaching with the following idea: “Effective teachers have an openness to the new, untried, dynamic, unpredictable, and unexpected” (Gay, 1997, p. 164). I welcomed this unfolding intellectual and creative challenge when I shared the DS instructions with students. My introduction of the DS project as a collaborative endeavor alluded to a sense of community and safe, open, inclusion. Like my undergraduate and master’s level students, I too am a student and continue to learn about teaching and researching. This openness to reveal and perhaps even at times emphasize that we are learning together hopefully modeled for students that I continue to link my conduct to my theoretical and pedagogical foundation of continued development. It was likely this sense of community that encouraged the participants to want to “help” me with this study even after the former students had graduated and went in different directions.
Due to the time restriction of the intensive summer course where these former students experienced the DS process and created the DS product, approximately five weeks and five minutes, respectively, the DS activity served as a starting point or opportunity for further self-exploration and self-expression (Carmona & Luschen, 2014; Tendero, 2006). The narrative inquiry following the class project DS continued (intermittently) for over two years as I checked back with students, reflected on the connections between their past stories and their new experiences as language teachers, and wrote about my own reflexive practices. Figure 3.1 outlines the data used to create or recreate the narrative entries in the next chapters.

Figure 3.1. Data Sources
The Digital Storytelling Project

The instructions and implementation of the DS project followed the guidelines outlined in Lambert’s (2013) book *Digital Storytelling: Capturing Lives, Creating Community* (4th edition) with some modifications to adapt the project to align with the course goals and language education context, and the time-restricted intensive summer course of Technology in FLE/ESOL Classrooms. This intensive eight-week summer course emphasizes a pedagogical use of technology for supporting language learning and is offered to both undergraduate and graduate PST students who are in language teacher training fields in the College of Education. The course concluded in August 2015 (Summer B session). All students enrolled in the course completed the multi-step process of the DS project, a required course task, independent of the proposed dissertation research study.

During the course, I instructed all of my students to choose from two (inter)cultural prompts and gave PST opportunities to engage with their own work and the work of peers. Later, during interviews with three student-participants, the DS was used as a springboard for further discussion about (inter)cultural issues and perspectives. The topics I provided guided the PSTs to create a story about either 1) an intercultural experience, or 2) their own cultural background. The complete instructions can be found in Appendix E, including the prompt, below:

Option #1: Describe an intercultural encounter/experience that made an impression on you (either positive or negative). Explore how that experience has or may influence your role as a language instructor.
Option #2: Explore your own cultural background and include how you define this concept. Does or How does language define or influence your concept of cultural background? How might this influence your role as a language instructor?

These topics were chosen to be general guides that could still be interpreted in a variety of personal and creative ways. In discussing the final outcome-- the DS product--Lambert shies away from judgments about the possible (aesthetic) quality of the work and emphasizes the importance of looking at the production as a way to better understand the story behind the storyteller’s efforts and intensions. Lambert explains, “The trick then is assisting with the appropriate contextualization of a given storyteller’s effort” (Lambert, 2013, p. 42). Again, for Lambert, the process as a whole should be taken into consideration from the individual and collective perspectives. In a classroom setting, this includes participation in the collaborative feedback efforts (the Story Circle) between and among students and instructor. The aim was to allow learning to grow individually and collectively through guidance and reflection.

With my attention to DS as a multimodal narrative process (Hull & Katz, 2006; Garcia & Rossiter, 2010), I also wanted to provide PSTs with an opportunity for self-exploration and self-expression (Carmona & Luschen, 2014; Tendero, 2006), which has the goal of moving PSTs towards noticing their own and their peers’ understandings of intercultural issues, including their positionality and ability to critically interpret lived experiences.

A large project such as a digital story, or, as some students initially thought, “a movie,” would be a daunting task, even overwhelming, if not broken down into manageable steps with guidance and feedback at due date intervals. I divided the whole
project into four weeks within the eight weeks of the semester. Briefly, the first week was reading articles, instructions, and looking at examples. To prepare my students prior to their own DS task, both the online students and the face-to-face students, I assigned them various articles to read and summarize. Throughout the course, students had some choices as well as some required technology-related articles about how DS is used in the language classroom. I included options among the “recommended” list of articles that described DS in either the foreign language classroom (Castañeda, 2013; Goodwin-Jones, 2013; and others) or the English as a Second Language classroom (Goodwin-Jones, 2012; Gregori-Signes, 2014; Hull, 2006; Kajder, 2004; and others). I chose the articles based on their diverse ways of using DS and/or because of their inclusion of detailed steps, written for a practitioner reader rather than theory-heavy articles laden with teacher or high-tech jargon. Admittedly, the Technology Article Summary was not created as a very engaging or innovative task; however, I did guide my students towards texts that would be useful for their contexts and the summary task served its purpose of providing examples of DS.

The more engaging and memorable (according to student reflections) task that prepared students for creating their own personal narratives in digital form were the suggested videos available on the Center for Digital Storytelling (StoryCenter) website (affiliated with Lambert, 2013). Multiple three-minute videos were assigned to watch and others were suggested (See Appendix C, for the Syllabus, Appendix D, for Readings, and Appendix E, for DS Instructions and Calendar). Topics that were suggested connected with education, language, race/power, and/or immigration. I made sure to include a StoryCenter example that was in a language other than English and, for their
own stories, I instructed students to use the language they prefer and/or the language that best represents the experience they chose to (re)tell through the multimodal DS narrative.

Once students had an idea of what the DS looked like, I provided a detailed schedule, rubric (Appendix F), and shared the completions stages (Fig 3.2), in the instructions. For pedagogical accountability and research purposes, each stage had written or in some way sharable/deliverable evidence of progress.

In the second week, students communicated within instructor-formed small groups of five students, or “Story Circles” (Lambert, 2013), and shared a rough draft. The third week was for feedback from peers in the Story Circles and individual (not shared with the whole group) instructor feedback from me. A second draft was due shortly before the final due date. This served to ensure that students were on track for creating the video, since the first draft was simply for the story idea and script and did not require the images or video production yet. The final week, the fifth week of the
project, was the due date, which meant that the DS would be shared beyond the Story Circle and be accessible to the whole class. During that final week, students had to provide feedback and reflections about classmates’ DS works, their own story, and the process of creating the DS.

All students except one had no significant issues with the quick pace of the course and this particular task. One student had to re-do the task due to not following guidelines. In the narratives about the project, I include this disappointment, or student-described “failure,” as well as the surprises and successes of the resulting projects and interactions.

**Setting: Shared Virtual and Physical Spaces**

For a study that spans multiple years, starting in a hybrid class where most students were online and some were face-to-face, then reconnecting with students to revive the conversation in one-on-one interviews in an instructor office, on Skype, and via email, all with participants interacting with me from various places in the US and worldwide, describing any “setting” as a physical place is impossible and simply becomes a reminder of the diverse and fluid nature of this study. Figure 3.3 (below) is the first space that students would see after enrolling in the Technology for Language Education course.
According to Trahar (2013), “all researchers should foreground the importance of the context in which research takes place and develop methodological approaches that are grounded in their local contexts” (p.i). That said, the idea of setting and context is important to mention and describe in terms of teacher training because a better understanding of the “setting” will also help describe the people involved and will help to inform the reader in their attempts to make connections and comparisons with the study and stories.

In one of the upcoming narratives, I describe meeting a student in my office before the course and situate the story in the classroom we shared. In another narrative, I discuss the importance of rapport, familiarity, and connection and explain how a Skype interview helped me better understand the participant. These physical and
virtual settings each worked surprisingly well in terms of supporting a conversation that was anti-hierarchical and more collegial (Fig. 3.4).

Figure 3.4. Examples of the Various “Settings”: A Classroom and Virtual Space

The setting for the course, again, both physical and virtual, was initially simply a course, and not a “site” of dissertation research. The students did coursework that was required from all students (not-yet-participants), and my observations and notes were teacher reflections that could possibly help me better understand my own teaching practices. During the intensive summer session of only eight weeks, I filled the role of instructor and facilitator who provided pedagogical support for a whole-class required assignment of the DS project. The Technology in the FLE/ESOL Classroom included merged sections of both online undergraduate and graduates and face-to-face graduate students. The technology-based course content naturally fits into the online format, so much of the readings, discussions, and interactions occurred asynchronously, online. For this reason, the small number of face-to-face students met in a blended (online and face-to-face) format with four meetings and three scheduled optional meetings. I encouraged interaction between the five face-to-face students and the fifteen online students and various tasks required interaction, such as in the peer feedback “Story
Circle” sessions for the DS project. I also invited the online students to meet for a technology workshop to demonstrate the digital storytelling technology options, such as iMovie. I advised all students of the possibility of using on-campus equipment and receiving individual help from me or from university technology staff at a designated student-accessible technology laboratory equipped with MacBook laptops. In short, due to course preparations and the overall digital literacy of my students, technology problems were minimal.

The university context has a predominantly white and female (to use the binary terminology that most of the Education research uses) student body within the College of Education (74% Female, 65% White) (USF, 2015). Unsurprisingly, the course contained thirteen females and seven males. Because of the mixed students levels and the mixed track of language teachers (English language and foreign/non-English language), the classroom setting had diverse demographics, including monolingual students as well as international students and U.S. students who are multilingual. After the course, and once my proposal had been defended, I applied for the research to begin via the Institutional Review Board (IRB). At that time, once approved, I contacted six students who I felt would best reveal the way in which the DS project had been done and could share what they have been doing since the conclusion of the Technology course. I had a deep curiosity to clarify or explore details of their past narratives as well as see how these students develop into teachers.

I purposefully selected three of the four students who remained in contact with me and agreed to participate. The one student not included in this narrative inquiry shared her own unique and deeply personal story with me. Despite the potential of
contributing a very different type of pedagogical case study that may help educators better understand teacher training, at the time of writing the dissertation, I did not see a possibility of adhering to the IRB’s guidelines of anonymity while still sufficiently remaining “true” to her story. Additionally, her story about her journey to becoming a language teacher deserves a unique case study or duoethnographic approach with a relational framework instead of a critical pedagogy story. The three other former students, now participants, are what I also refer to as “characters” in the following narrative inquiry stories.

**Characters: Jennifer, Todd, Raul, and Me (Instructor-Researcher)**

In this narrative inquiry research, I enacted the roles of instructor and researcher-storyteller, with an emphasis on the role of reflexive instructor during the summer course and an emphasis on the researcher-storyteller role performed after the course and during the interview and analysis writing stage. These roles are not compartmentalized since reflexive instructors continuously “study” their intentions, actions, and the resulting outcomes. Likewise, my role as an instructor with a critical theory-based outlook does not end on the last date of the semester. As I mentioned, developing reflexivity is an ongoing process and the dialogic interview interactions extended this development beyond the summer course, and beyond the initial critical pedagogy ideas of culturally-responsive pedagogy and intercultural communication.

The attempt to bridge research and teachers is considered a “major obstacle over the last decades” (Byram, 2014, p. 221), but the presentation of these characters—the teachers—as individuals with diverse trajectories, insightful thoughts and
perspectives on their experiences, and relatable challenges and goals can make the infused “lessons” more accessible to readers who will be teachers or will work with teachers. I attempt to present the narratives as closely as possible to their original stories, while still focusing on a pedagogical purpose for the overall narrative inquiry.

The following stories are from and about Jennifer, Todd, Raul, and myself. The names mentioned here are pseudonyms, chosen either by me or by the characters. Jennifer was an undergraduate student, finishing her degree in Anthropology and has a theater background. As the only monolingual and undergraduate participant, I wanted to include her teaching trajectory and her stories of teaching English as a foreign language. The other two former students, both male, both multilingual, have all graduated with master's degrees in language education and have various teaching experiences in the US and abroad. Todd is an American with an undergraduate degree in Anthropology who learned Spanish while teaching in South America. Additionally, he "learned French and some Arabic" while teaching English in Morocco. Raul now self-describes himself as bicultural, Puerto Rican-American, and speaks Spanish and French in addition to English. Jennifer and Todd are currently teaching English as a foreign language, online and abroad, respectively, while Raul teaches Spanish in a public school in the southern US. A snapshot of this basic data is in Table 3.1, below.
Table 3.1 Character-Participants. ("Asia" is purposefully unspecific.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym During: Pre-service teacher in Tech. course</th>
<th>Jennifer</th>
<th>Raul</th>
<th>Todd</th>
<th>Julie</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender:</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Online, via Skype</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>Asynchronous; email communications</td>
<td>Self-study: teacher-researcher reflexive notes and data sketches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Teaching</td>
<td>English as a Foreign Language Online</td>
<td>Teaching Spanish K-12</td>
<td>Teaching English as a Foreign Language Asia</td>
<td>English as a Second Language; higher ed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Experience</td>
<td>1 year or less: US Elementary public school (internship), Central America, Zanzibar, Thailand</td>
<td>Multi-year: French as a Foreign Language, higher ed.</td>
<td>Multi-year: Asia Morocco, South America; ESL in US. (unclear duration)</td>
<td>Multi-year: ESL; Teacher Training; French as a Foreign Language, higher ed.; EFL (&lt;1yr)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as a Second or Foreign Language (ESL/EFL)</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>Puerto-Rico (Hispanic-American) English and Spanish, French</td>
<td>American English and (unknown fluency in Arabic, Chinese, Spanish)</td>
<td>American Mixed cultural heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture Linguistic background</td>
<td>English (Monolingual)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English, French, Spanish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Contact and Invitation to Participate**

To ensure that there was no coercion or appearance of coercion, I did not contact my former students until grades were turned in and the IRB was completed. Due to the time between the end of the summer course and the IRB approval, it was
difficult to regain contact with students via email. Many of the students had since
graduated and I suspect many were not checking their university email address. This
obstacle was not unforeseen, as I had had a discussion about reaching participants
during an email exchange with a “critical friend” who had warned me about the
unavailability of past-students. He advised me to try and gather as much data during the
course, while students were still engaged and responsive to their emails and the course.
While I did increase the depth and breadth of the post-task student reflection and added
guiding questions to elicit better reflective responses about their perception of the DS
project, I knew I still wanted to engage with certain students in in-depth interviews.

Once I had authorization to contact my former students, I sent an email to eight
students, with the hopes that between four to six would respond. The emails were
targeted to the specific student who had stories that were personal and had
(intercultural) issues at the heart of the story. These exemplars were chosen with the
thought that deeper exploration into their stories might be the most rewarding for
pedagogical examples. I also hoped that the student who had to create a second DS
project might also be able to serve as a balancing counter example that also injects
some reality into the high and positive expectations of teacher research. His
participation is further explained in the next section interview data.

Four students responded with signed consent forms and were interviewed;
however, as mentioned in the Characters/Participants, one of the former students had
deeply personal and relational stories, which needs a closer co-construction with the
participant storyteller and, ultimately, is a very different type of language-learning story.
**Data and Writing Process**

Qualitative researchers often adopt and adapt various tools and approaches to investigate the world (Clandinin, Pushor, & Orr, 2007; Saldaña, 2016). The arts-infused methods, including a narrative process, were chosen to reflect the inclusive, personal, accessible, and transformative aspects intrinsic to these methods (Chilton & Leavy, 2014; Gubrium & Harper, 2013, Kim, 2016; Kress, 2000). Richardson (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2008) uses the term CAP ethnographies for the creative analytic process (CAP) used to create representational works the social. These works include autoethnography, fiction, theater, writing stories, layered texts, conversations, visual texts, and other types of qualitative writings where the writing process is valued as much as the product. Issues of “subjectivity, authority, reflexivity, and process,” are on one hand and “representational form, on the other” (p. 962), always “filtered through human eyes and human perceptions” (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2008, p. 964).

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) describe narrative inquiry as “both phenomenon and method” (p. 2). For this dissertation study, I draw from the diverse associations that accompany the terms “narrative,” research where the researcher is the primary tool for collecting and analyzing/interpreting data and re-storying the data into a new narrative or narratives. This idea is present in Barkhuizen’s (2011) description of his procedure as, “What I did was reconstruct into a coherent whole told experiences and events and their accompanying narrator emotions and moral positionings” (p. 392). Of course, it may be easier to say what it is rather than how it is done. Researchers give rather broad descriptions for “ways” of doing narrative inquiry in an attempt to arrive at “narrative knowing,” which is “A cognitive activity [for] making sense of and re-shaping
an experience through narrating, analyzing narratives” [and] reporting narrative research” (Barkhuizen, 2011, p. 396). This description of “re-storying” is often how narrative writer-researchers describe the analysis.

Figure 3.5, below, displays an overview of the Narrative Inquiry design, where four data sources often inter-influence the data and converge. Through the analysis process, I combine theory, research literature, multimodal data from the DS project, my teacher-researcher narratives, narratives from interviews, and course-based work into an iterative re-storying process to create the resulting narrative.

![Figure 3.5. Overview of Narrative Inquiry.](image)

**Data Sources**

The data used in this study include the concise multimodal Digital Story video, seen in conjunction with reflective posts and journals (participant and researcher). I
combined this arts-based data source with interview data from participants and my own teacher-researcher reflections to create the multilayered, multi-perspectival narrative. I welcomed the inherent multimethod nature of qualitative research and considered this plurality as a way to create a more in-depth study and narrative product (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002). With the combination of data sources and data modes that contribute to the complexity and richness, my aim was to make the narrative more engaging and believable. This was important since some of the narratives were created with the alternative motive of informing pre-service teachers or educators about the personal stories that encompass the critical pedagogy ideas and principles. Additionally, because this narrative inquiry is shared as a dissertation, there is a heavy inclusion of theory and references to prior studies rather than a more literary or abstract/esoteric account.

To create, or re-story, the various short narratives that cumulatively make up the narrative study, I worked with and through data from the DS, including various written posts and reflections from the participating students that relate to the DS project, interviews done almost two semesters following the course and again almost a year later. Between and since those in-depth interviews, I also accumulated various shorter follow-up communications. Also, as a teacher-researcher-storyteller, my own reflections and connections to theory and practice also informed my writings and are included in direct forms, such as excerpts from my written reflections, or appear in less obvious ways, such as via the connections I make or words I choose. For example, in two of the stories that rely heavily on the interview interactions and communications, I narrate the events while allowing myself to pause and add reflections from my unspoken thoughts.
at the time of the interview or thoughts which emerged or developed during the writing (analysis) process. Table 3.2 displays the data sources, approximately quantified.

Table 3.2. Data Types Collected.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Types Collected</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Quantified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital Stories</td>
<td>A Concise video of multimodal data authored by each participant</td>
<td>30-35 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio Recorded Interview data</td>
<td>Jennifer approximately 150 pages. Raul approximately 90 pages</td>
<td>90-120 minutes (twice, each)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Todd, during the course) Email Communications</td>
<td>20 email communications (his initial messages &amp; his replies to me)</td>
<td>20 emails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Todd, Post-course/study) Email Communications</td>
<td>14 email communications from Todd post-course</td>
<td>Approximately 20 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During course written works</td>
<td>Reflections, text-based draft of DS, DS-related postings (feedback), and introductions</td>
<td>Approximately 40 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up Communications</td>
<td>Email and other online written communication</td>
<td>Approximately 10 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-Researcher reflections</td>
<td>Mostly in emails to myself, but also text-based files; includes (isolated) notes to self on drafts.</td>
<td>Over 300 pages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher-researcher multimodal data sketches</td>
<td>Analysis/organization process Multiple data sketches combining text and images per participant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Digital Stories and Coursework.** I documented and reviewed the work created in the summer 2015 course including and related to the DS videos, and I focused on three students who were interviewed post-course. The coursework related to the DS project includes the short three-to-five minute digital story videos, student communications during the collaborative creation-feedback process, and student
introductions and reflections shared with the class. Since most of the videos were shared using YouTube (after discussing privacy settings and other sharable options), I used a screen-saving software to re-record the videos so that I could store the DS for later viewing and not need to rely on the YouTube account remaining active and the video remaining accessible online. Jennifer and Raul each have one five-minute video, while Todd has two videos, one of over fifteen minutes and the other under five minutes (as instructed).

I transcribed the audio portions of the video, which in all cases were the voices of the storyteller. For notetaking or making comments connecting the DS to other data, I used screenshots of the video. Since the videos were so short, I didn’t timestamp the video stills; however, I did often keep the video still and the time-related voice-over content together. This multimodal notetaking was done through data sketches, explained below.

**Teacher-Researcher Reflections and Data Sketches.** To create the narrative components of this narrative inquiry, I wrote teacher-researcher field note reflections before, during, and after the Technology in the Second/Foreign Language Classroom. Usually, I emailed the notes to myself in order to date and store them in a searchable location. Some of the emails included attachments of written or multimodal documents, but most reflections were simply textual. To mix the text-based reflections with other data, including visual and audio data, I created data sketches, which served as an extended field note.

Data sketches are a type of researcher memo emphasizing the dynamic, fleeting, and shifting multimodal quality of reflexive processes; a multimodal notation tool to
document my brainstorming, which serves to combine various types of data in order to see new connections, note emerging questions, focus attention to particular interplay between modes, or generate other meaning-making intersections. Sketch alludes to a temporary documentation of an idea in development. The data sketch is similar to a field text (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), yet the data sketch begins the analysis process and can be developed through multiple iterations of editing while still retaining the flexibility to include multiple perspectives and/or to layer diverse modal and temporal story elements in purposeful and aesthetically engaging ways. In earlier work by Connelly and Clandinin (1990), they use the term “narrative sketch” to describe a “descriptive overview,” or holistic view, of the entire inquiry. They write,

A ‘narrative sketch’ something like a character sketch except that it applies to the overall inquiry, is useful. It is primarily a chronicle of the inquiry. Like the notes playgoers receive as they are escorted to their seats, it has broad descriptions of scene and plot and a number of sub-sketches of key characters, spaces, and major events that figure in the narrative (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 11).

This idea of a “narrative sketch,” which does not seem to be used as a frequent description in their subsequent works, differs from my emphasis on the nature of the term “sketch” as a preliminary tool, often used to quickly capture ideas or details for a larger work or product. The idea of “data sketches,” as opposed to narrative sketches which act as an overview, helped me to see the data in new ways and make new connections between data and literature. This is part of my analysis process where I start organizing and/or mapping the data from various sources through a blank canvas approach that fits my small-scale study with multimodal data, and my propensity for a hands-on approach. In a “data sketch” I can combine various data modes into a
composite visual that I can edit, expand, and use as a preliminary sketch-board. It is not a coincidence that I combine the arts-based term “sketch” and the inquiry-related “data” to describe my way of intuitively and viscerally mixing, juxtaposing, and trying out how ideas, details, and theory connect in a preliminary, evolving visual organizer or sketch. With the multiple data sketches that evolved throughout the data collection and analysis process, I can start looking at the data early on and record preliminary thoughts, fleeting ideas etc., which can later be used to generate new questions and avenues to explore during the interview period and the narrative writing process. This analytical tool is not meant to break up the interaction between modes, but rather to be used in conjunction with viewing the DS video as a whole and noting new interactions (Bezemer & Jewitt, 2010).

Some of the resulting stories rely more heavily on my reflections, or the interview data, or a combination of different data sources from different times over the timespan of two years. For narrative analysis, the draft is analogous to the data sketch; however, with the “sketch,” I can include visual and audio (embedded into the online visualization tool) with the written data to write a narrative. The sketch allows me to break down or, more likely, keep the information as holistically as possible in order to convey the context, spirit or intention of the participant-storytellers, and present this as a narrative that connects (directly or indirectly) with the other narratives in this narrative inquiry.

**Interviews.** Digital Storytelling, with its incorporation of the human voice of the storyteller, broadens the possibilities of self-expression and self-exploration. Likewise, the ability to hear and see the interviewee is ideal. I had planned on face-to-face interviews with each participant, but I had to rely on technology for two of the distance
participants. Still, I was able to voice record and re-listen to Jennifer and Raul often. I had their voices in my head often: at home, on long car rides, and over coffee at my local writing café. While I did transcribe the lengthy interviews, I mostly listened to their voices again and again in order to start to hear what was important, what was meant, and/or what was relevant to my focus on critical pedagogy.

In the post-course conversations-interviews, participants discussed the challenges and real and/or potential benefits of using DS in their own teaching environments. Talmy (2010) refers to these more naturalistic research interviews as social practice rather than seeing interviews as a research tool that is product (collected data) oriented. Ellis calls these interactive interviews, where information is accessed on a deeper, more emotional and intimate level. These interviews with Raul and Jennifer were not done as two strangers, researcher-interviewer and participant-interviewee. The interviews occurred in settings that were comfortable for each participant and between interlocutors who have much in common and have had many discussions and points of view shared. Additionally, the content from the DS served as an elicitation devise during the interviews to engage the participants in continued dialog. Since the DS were creations of the participants, this “topic” of discussion was familiar to them and augmented the positive feelings. For example, both Jennifer and Raul are quite proud and happy with their DS creations and are, thus, happy to engage in conversation about their stories.

In each case, the participant conversations took vastly different directions and touched on diverse personal and professional subjects. Each interview is described
within the context of the interview-based narrative (See Appendix G for Guiding Questions).

Since my participants were my former students, I had to consider the way in which I contacted them for the study as well as the relational dynamics during the interview. The interviews were informal and semi-structured due to the way in which I presented myself as a graduate student and less as a “professor.” After an initial description of the study I was conducting and a brief explanation of the IRB consent form, which they had received and signed via email, I would ask, “Is it alright if I record the audio of this conversation?”

In three of the four cases, the students were naturally outgoing, confident, and eloquent in expressing their stories. During their storytelling (during the interview), I was genuinely eager to hear about their experiences and reflections since our course. In some instances, I shared my own personal narratives that related to their stories; however, mostly, I tried to listen much more than speak, and I interacted with them in nonverbal or subtle ways, such as nodding, laughing, and only speaking when additional questions or encouragement was needed. The interviews were between 90 and 120 minutes with each participant (not including Todd, who opted to use email).

**Skype.** I had met Jennifer face-to-face during our summer course because she was interested in getting to know more about teaching abroad. We met before the course started and once again on the first day of the face-to-face class. Subsequently, our communications were via email and the online learning management system of the university. By the time I began interviews, Jennifer was hundreds of miles away. Jennifer works on Skype as a tutor/instructor, and is of the generation that has grown up
with a cell phone in their pocket or palm. This ordinariness of technology-mediated communication was helpful during our interview/conversation.

Iacono, Symonds, & Brown (2016) use Skype for overcoming distance (transcultural interviews) and point out a more democratization in the elimination of distance and other logistic barriers (finding a space). Instead of seeing an interview via Skype as an inferior option, they extoll the benefits and state that “time can be used in a more flexible way, around the needs of participants, while retaining synchronicity with the interviewer” (n.p.). Some warn that building rapport may be a challenge and interviewing is about trust and (re)establishing rapport (Weller, 2017). However, participants using Skype (or other voice over Internet options) can feel more comfortable, or, as Weller (2017) describes, a “co-presence that transcended the actual physical locations of researcher and participant to a more emotional connection that was of importance in building and sustaining rapport” (2017, p. 618). Furthermore, since the interview was conducted in her home or her home office where she works online, I was able to see how she presents herself to her students and she was able to share artifacts that were mentioned in the interview. Without prior knowledge, or additional follow-up interviews, I would not have known to ask the participant to bring the examples of her autobiographic storybook that she shared with her students while in Thailand/abroad.

Weller (2017) also describes the reduced pressure since the recording device is less visually present, embedded into the technology that the participant is accustomed to using daily. Seitz (2016) mentions the potential of misinterpretation during technology-mediated communication; however, in the exchanges between Jennifer and
me, I was consciously aware of the ratio of talk time and made great efforts to allow the interviewee to speak freely and, perhaps more importantly, as a prerequisite of this, I sustained enough quiet space for her to speak continuously. Again, since Jennifer is neither shy, nor without stories to tell, there was rarely, if at all, any moments of silence.

**Email.** Each interview was one-on-one, although one participant, Todd, was abroad throughout the duration of the data collection process, so he opted to respond to my questions via email. I initially resisted this idea and nudged the participant towards a Skype option, or, at least, a synchronous chat, but finally accepted the email correspondence as a suitable, if not ideal, method of communication. Todd had enthusiastically volunteered at the end of the semester, when I briefly mentioned that I might contact a few students to be interviewed about the DS project. Later, after the IRB approval, Todd responded positively again and sent his signed IRB Informed Consent form. Initially, I requested to have a synchronous chat, but due to the time differences and the busy schedule of the participant, I agreed to emailing the questions (Appendix G), which were peppered with my usual/anticipated follow-up questions, and he responded via email, at his convenience. The back-and-forth written communications included some short follow-ups, mainly to remind the participant to respond. These seemed to be well-received and Todd would often express how he wants to answer the questions fully, and give it enough time, which meant that the responses would come later. Often, his emails had expressions of “Please excuse the late reply” and subject lines such as “Late Answers” (email communication). While I truly do believe that Todd wanted to and intended to be fully included in this study, I understand that teaching and family were his priorities and he didn’t respond to the last few attempts at
communication. For this reason, Todd makes a brief appearance compared to the other characters in the narratives and my reflections on his contributions are only a fraction of what I would have liked to include. Because of the lack of response and inability to request a member-checking on Todd’s narrative and my reflexive narrative of our teacher-student roles, I feel it would be unfair to portray his narrative as closely (holistically) as I have with the other participants. In short, without giving Todd a chance to respond to my reflections about his student performance and “interview” contributions, any narrative about Todd would be mostly, if not entirely, from my own perspective.

To include some of his/my relevant ideas about narrative and culturally responsive teaching, I am writing about Todd with a creative nonfiction approach, which means that I 1) changed many of the details to provide even greater anonymity, and 2) have incorporated data from my overall course reflections in order to convey a character who exhibits true experiences, yet perhaps not the experiences of a single individual. While blurring the “known,” my aim is to write an “authentic and resonate” portrayal (Pinnegar & Daynes, 2007) based on my experiences with multiple years of observing student pre-service teachers in similar language teacher education contexts. I address my treatment of Todd and “his” stories in more detail in the Ethics portion of the methodology section.

**Flexibility and Following New Inquiries**

Prior to this study, I had guiding research questions; however, that attempt at a more-structured study didn’t allow me to follow the natural directions of the various
narratives that seemed—at least initially—unrelated. Simons (2014) warns, “Opting to start with a theoretical framework provides a basis for formulating questions and issues, but it can also constrain the study” (p. 461). I followed the research and reflected on how “Only later will the research questions make sense (and will change throughout the research process) as will a continuing conversation [with theory]” (Schaafsma & Vinz, 2011, pg. 70). The change in focus of my study relates to how I initially elevated the DS project as central to the research and all else stemming directly from the DS. Later, what became apparent was that “all else” may emerge in messy connections, not direct lines. What became important was how the DS served as a catalyst for other conversations and how the ideas of personal narrative can be interpreted in many ways. For me, what became central was the process of reflexivity in using narratives and the differing messiness of making meaning, rather than the tool (DS) to create the personal narratives. Some realizations emerged early, some needed reshaping, and others led to more questions.

While looking at the process of creating one’s narratives, I, too, was in the midst of creating and re-creating my research narrative. Thus, autoethnography became an ideal option to connect reflexivity, ethnography, culture, and the unfolding process of discovering, which aligns with the critical attention to self-reflexivity and multiple perspectives (in time and/or in a narrative that incorporates various types of data). The back-and-forth that many narrative researchers describe is also a useful description for the teacher-researcher role, as I found myself looking back at my teacher reflections with a critical researcher perspective. Likewise, the passage of time also augmented this back-and-forth. For example, I asked my students to share what they remember
and I was able to think about their reflections written during the course as well as shared reflections one and/or two years after the course.

The outcome of being able to compare or juxtapose these narratives from coursework with my observations and their reflexive work of their then-present selves, and the interview data from their now-present selves (or most recent selves for this study), creates a layered narrative dissertation. The composite narrative presents a spatiotemporal approach “to produce a more nuanced understanding of how teacher identities change over time and space” (Norton & de Costa, 2018, p. 96). While Norton and de Costa are focused on identity issues in a linguistic ethnography, this identity work intersects with research on teacher reflexivity, and critical issues of globalism, social inequalities, multidimensionality, and inclusivity. Additionally, the researchers call for a post-critical examination of “their own researcher identities in relation to their participants and their research sites” (Norton & de Costa, 2018, p. 99), These issues were central to my data collection, curation, and subsequent writing.

**Time and Memory.** Revisiting the DS experience approximately a year after the course introduced reflections on the temporal differences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). With the unplanned, but valuable amount of time that occurred between the Technology course and the various interviews and follow-up communications, we had all changed and were navigating very different waters. Recalling Dewey, the authors Caine, Estefan, and Clandinin (2013) explain, “A narrative ontology implies that experiences are continuously interactive, resulting in changes in both people and contexts in which they interact” and this storying is how “people make sense of their existence” (p. 576).
When I extended the focus of the study from the course-based DS project and course-based interactions and reflections from my then-students to include how the post-course teacher participants each used DS and/or personal narratives in their teaching, I had two influences in mind. First was a comment that a student spontaneously made in an ESOL class, and the second was an example of the research-teacher dichotomy that appeared in Garcia and Guerra’s (2004) study with pre-service teachers and critical multiculturalism.

In a prior ESOL course, I recalled hearing a student lament the fact that their internship would be so late in their program. This practical, hands-on experience of working directly with students in the K-12 system would come “when we have already forgotten what we learned in these courses.” The student who had said this made me wonder about all the prior students I have taught for a semester, or, on rare occasion, two semesters, and from whom I have not heard since the final exam of the course. What did they remember? How much did they forget? Could a storytelling approach be more memorable? Were the case studies used in the ESOL courses engaging enough to be considered compelling narratives and perhaps more memorable than textbook-based definitions and theories?

The other half of the rationale for checking back with students post-course was to see how their teacher experiences may or may not have incorporated the DS. In various student reflections at the end of the semester, after they had shared their DS and had commented on multiple peer DS work, many students from the technology course came up with novel ideas—or at least new with respect to the readings I had assigned in the
course, the DS instructions I had shared, and the DS examples I had required and suggested that they watch.

The need to make the PST course content applicable for addressing the critical pedagogical needs of their future classes and as a way to provide opportunities to see how creative projects can promote the principles of inclusivity, cross-cultural communication and understanding, and flexibility for use in diverse contexts and for various objectives. I had included a number of personal examples from teaching prior ESOL courses, as well as the following example of a PST comment found in a study involving professional development and the lack of systematic linkage between equity knowledge and classroom practice (Garcia & Guerra, 2004). In the study, a PST student is quoted as saying:

I’m trying to think if I even had one class that addressed multicultural or diverse students in undergrad. We did have one as a graduate student, and it was basically reading articles, summarizing them, what did you think about it. … I didn’t get any help with transferring it to the classroom (Garcia & Guerra, 2004, p. 157).

This student response is indeed unfortunate and hopefully not representative of the experience of my own students, but in the end, each student is unique and as their former instructor, I cannot be sure that each student left the course, left the college, and maybe even left the country, with a better understanding of critical pedagogy or the importance of reflexivity.

So many experiences and “stories” from the participants transpired between the DS and our interviews that the memory of the project seemed distant. Still, for me, this was an interesting part of the research because we, as teachers, let our students go and time will pass between our teachings and their practice. Thus, the narrative inquiry,
as a method to “make meaning” includes the stories from participants as they connect past, present, and future. In essence I tried to “Tell good stories and tell them well. Or let key actors tell their own stories” (Simmons, 2014, p.468).

I felt a duty to look for stories that may highlight teacher training pedagogy in a way that realistically reflects the setting, characters, interactions, and events and to preserve and portray the complexity of experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Polkinghorne, 1988). As Goodson and Gill (2014) describe, “The temporality and spatiality of narratives give rise to an explanation of how events take place and under what circumstances, the settings in which one must act in order to pursue one’s goals and objectives and how individuals’ lives and experiences are placed in the greater scheme of things” (p. 71). The narratives included in this study ultimately address not just the introduction or implementation of a DS project, but how PSTs reflect on the experience during, after, and multiple months post-DS project.

**Writing as Analysis**

The dissertation writing, which led to a curated collection of multiple narratives, was a challenge. As Richardson (1994) points out,

> Although we are freer to present our texts in a variety of forms to diverse audiences, we have different constraints arising from the self-consciousness about claims to authorship, authority, truth, validity, and reliability. Self-reflexivity unmasks complex political/ideological agendas hidden in our writing. […] The opportunities for writing worthy texts—books and articles that are a ‘good read’—are multiple, exciting, and demanding. But the work is harder. The guarantees are fewer. There is a lot more for us to think about (p. 523).
In order to overcome the critique of “agendas hidden in our writing,” I include as much contextualization as needed, including my dual role as instructor and researcher.

The multi-perspective, inclusive, and critical reflexive goals of the digital storytelling process for PST students and their experiences represented within the DS project cannot be understood through a vocabulary of neutrality, objectivity, or detachment. Their stories and voices are accepted and represented without the traditional assumed authority from the researcher who, as in more rigid methods, is the sole interpreter and voice.

Additionally, before starting the study and attempting to write the stories, it was difficult to explain my intention to employ narrative inquiry and convey the idea that the writing of the narrative(s) is the form of analysis. Of course, to just say “writing” tends to ignore all what the analytic act of writing entails: observing, listening, making connections, and documenting all the iterations and layers of thought that emerge and disappear over time throughout the emerging research and during the rewriting and editing process. Benson (2014) states: “Narrative analysis, or the telling of stories as a research outcome [is challenging and it] can be difficult to understand how a story can encapsulate the findings of a research project” (p. 163).

The critical influences, my teacher experiences, my attention to reflexivity, culturally-responsive pedagogy, and intercultural competency are all based on my individual storied path. As a researcher using narrative inquiry, it is also important to “articulate a relationship between one’s personal interests and sense of significance and larger social concerns expressed in the works and lives of others” (Clandinin & Connolly, 2000, p. 122). In this narrative inquiry dissertation, connections and
references to the work’s significance are subtly and implicitly incorporated throughout the study as the story navigates various pedagogical and (inter)cultural concerns. This is a less direct approach to connecting the personal stories to a “grand story” of pedagogical importance, but my emphasis on the individual participants and their stories aligns with my critical paradigm and is most appropriate for accepting the dynamic nature of context (and non-representative research) and the aim of an aesthetically-engaging holistic narrative.

**Evaluating the Narrative Writing**

Together with consideration of the narrative work as research, which involves questions of rigor, trustworthiness, and verisimilitude, or believability, narrative writers, according to Richardson, should also consider the following four criteria: substantive contribution, aesthetic merit, reflexivity, and emotional or intellectual impact (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2008).

With regards to contribution, my thoughts are directed towards the intended reader, educators, or teacher educators and language educators. While a wider audience of readers who employ qualitative methods, arts-based practices, or who those wish to reflect on the connections between critical intercultural communication and pedagogy may find interest in this dissertation, the aim is that the narratives may reach educators or teachers in training and provide individual, human, real life, relatable examples of how language educators reflect on their pedagogy/practices and cultural issues. The push for using narrative inquiry in this context was precisely for reasons of accessibility and person to person, *qualitative* connections. In the Discussion area, I
provide a narrative that may support this possibility of reaching and engaging with teachers.

The potential contributions are intertwined with demonstrations of reflexivity, which is of huge importance in teacher education and professional development. In this dissertation narrative, I look for examples of reflexivity in my former students and in their recent stories of current teacher practices. At the same time, in adhering to an open and holistic process of writing this narrative, I hope that my own reflexive practices are revealed, both to myself, as I learn how to become more reflexive through writing about my teaching and making connections to others, and to the readers as they, too make connections and make meaning from the various stories and the narrative study as a whole.

The aesthetic merit and the emotional or intellectual impact are similarly intertwined in that without the ability to engage with the reader, there will be no impact. This dissertation has areas of purposeful redundancy and makes the ideas and connections more explicit than if I solely presented a creative narrative product without the background connections and situated explanations in the Literature Review, Methodology, or the Discussion Chapters.

Rigor, Trustworthiness, and Verisimilitude

As Polkinghorne (1988) explains, the aim should be to produce results that are “believable and verisimilar” (p. 161). Lamott (1994) emphasizes the moral responsibility of the writer who has an obligation to “tell the truth as you [the writer] understand it” (p. 225). The rigor of the research is seen via the detailed descriptions of the narrative that includes researcher reflections, the variety of data sources, and openness of
methodology or writing process. The narrative product also includes a balance between new research and theory. I include excerpts as holistically as possible, yet still aware and acknowledging that they are representations in need of context for any meaning. 

While this dissertation has a more explicit, guided purpose than many other narrative inquiries that rely on the reader to decipher and shape the meaning, I am still cognizant of the need for context so that connections by the reader can be made instead of purely researcher-based abstract or unique constellation-like forms or representations. Hammer (2009) describes this as “multiplying voices multiplying meanings, implying truths, not truth” and explains, “The fragmentary nature of their juxtaposition is to encourage the audience to wrestle with ambiguities created by disjunction” (p. 149). As mentioned, in this narrative study aims to have some pedagogical contributions for teacher education, so some interpretive responsibility rests with each reader in terms of recognizing critical instances in education and regarding the applicability of narratives as pedagogy.

In most qualitative research, and in narrative in particular, a goal of the research is not to “represent” a greater population, but rather to contextualize the case or participant in the fullest way possible and to tell an evocative story about that experience. Simons (2014) explains, “In our search for general laws, we not only lose sight of the uniqueness and humanity of individuals, but reduce them in the process, failing to present their experience in any “real” sense” (p. 467). Through the narrative method, research knowledge, and intuitive and reflexive practice, the narrative may be appreciated by various readers who relate to the work in diverse ways. This qualitative version of validity, or verisimilitude, is addressed by Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011)
when they describe how autoethnography “evokes in readers a feeling that the experience described is lifelike, believable, and possible, a feeling that what has been represented could be true. The story is coherent. It connects readers to writers and provides continuity in their lives” (np).

**Role of the Instructor-Researcher.**

My dissertation is, by nature of my critical theory-based perspective, not an attempt at seemingly neutral observations. By contrast, as a teacher and as a researcher I have clear and open goals about the necessity of critical multiculturalism in the form of culturally-responsive pedagogy and intercultural competence. My focus on a multimodal method in order to engage students in reflexive practices is an attempt to pedagogically solve the problem of a lack of understanding of CRP and IC and aims to explore any increased reflexivity and understanding of critical pedagogies and possibly a greater and deeper acceptance of the approach. Thus, my responsibility emerges in various areas: as a teacher’s responsibility to teach the appropriate content; a teacher’s responsibility to ensure students understand and internalize the important course concepts, such as the critical pedagogy theories; a teacher’s responsibility to be attuned to the needs of each student and the class as a whole. As a researcher, my responsibilities are again in service of the participant’s overall well-being, but also a responsibility to the larger education community in terms of contributing useful research, and a responsibility to the specific participant-based factors imposed by the IRB that are meant to protect the participant (and institution). The issues regarding responsibility to the participants, and the unique issues that arise with research including visual data, is
seen in a few instances within the narratives. Here, I simply state that work with visuals and issues of relational ethics depend on valuing the relationship ties with the participant (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). The teacher-student interpersonal relationship should be one of mutual respect, especially if the teacher is a proponent of critical pedagogy.

**Ethics, IRB, and Visuals.**

Pauwels (2011) rightfully argues that the field of visual research has been “reinvented over and over again without gaining much methodological depth” or clarity and has not adequately situated its practice within the long history of classic visual methods (p. 3). It is with this in mind that I have included my explanation of how I dealt with multimodal data by using what I call data sketches. The descriptions of the video in ekphrastic narrative is also problematized in one of my narrative shorts since there are often misunderstandings or manipulations when the medium is changed. According to Pauwels, many researchers working with visual research divulge the choice of method or format, such as photo-voice or digital storytelling, and omit the underlying issues involved with the method, such as the diversity in application, the methodological caveats, or clear analytic explanations or integrated approach.

The question of ethics related to visual material is built into the content of the Technology for FLE and ESOL classrooms since teachers should be aware of copyright issues, publication implications, and privacy and authorship of multimodal materials. These topics are peripherally-related to the multimodal video creation (the DS) which is part of the course requirements. Teachers often create or appropriate various materials
into their own teaching toolbox, including visuals from media or personal sources. To keep ethics at the forefront with students and later with participants, I asked multiple times if participants agree to share the photographs as data and made sure they are aware of what levels of privacy are available for them regarding their photographs and possible publications or other research uses (Bach, 2007).

Many researchers avoid sharing the visual elements used or created in the research process; they are confined by publication restrictions, ethical issues, or simply self-confined by choice or inexperience with visual data. The aversion to include the visual arts in the final product is unfortunately a missed opportunity to address and include the audience-reader in multiple ways. Emerging encouragement argues for more inclusion or the Arts in arts-based research in lieu of ekphrastic attempts, which do not actually represent the visuals, but rather is “a representation of thinking about having seen a picture—it’s already formulated in its own terms. While the image is, text is always about” (Baxandall, as cited in Sousanis, 2015, p. 58).

**Participant and researcher interactions** As mentioned in my introduction of the characters, Todd was recently unavailable for this post-writing member-checking; however, my way of providing a less person-specific narrative and explaining the process for creating a more creative nonfiction approach to the characterization of this participant should strengthen the believability of the study as a whole. Clandinin, Murphy, Huber, and Orr (2009) addressed the tensions in autoethnographic research by creating fictionalized texts that protect the privacy of the individual in ways that include the researcher’s own divergent reflections of the student-participant written as
counterstories. These texts may combine multiple experiences into one event or one character, creating a composite story.

According to Roberts (2015), who has focused on the ethics of working with online participants when doing qualitative research, researchers who want to provide suitable or additional anonymity for their participants may advocate for presenting the potentially-revealing data as aggregated quotes or composite accounts. The continued ethics in practice, or situated ethics, refers to the researcher’s consideration throughout the study and beyond; issues of ethics do not end with the IRB. In the case of Todd, my thoughts rest more in my own reflections and depiction of him rather than in his own words. As stated earlier, I have solid reasons to believe that Todd wanted to participate and would enjoy contributing his quotes to my study. With interactions between interlocutors in the same field of language education as well as a shared “student-teacher” status where both Todd and myself are simultaneously teachers and students, it is fair to assume that the communication was potentially enjoyable and not at all distressful. Without the coercion of a hierarchical me-teacher and him-student relation, and especially since Todd had since graduated, there was nothing forcing him to participate. In my experience, as in research (Wolgemuth et al., 2015), participant interviewees often look forward to being able to tell their story. My ethics-based questions are about a lack of response to my reflections where he is a character in my own reflections. The member checking process is often most crucial at the end of the writing stages, when there is a text that can be shared and on which the participant can comment or critique. To establish credibility, this member checking is often seen as the most important technique (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). And yet, at the time of writing this
dissertation, Todd has not responded to follow-up emails asking short clarification questions. I take this as a sign that he is no longer checking the email account, he has not prioritized responding to my emails, or, he is no longer interested in “helping” (as he had worded his participation in earlier emails).

The pseudonym Todd, then, has become more anonymized by purposefully vague placements, such as teaching English in “Asia” and small changes to his prior experiences and timeline of teaching English. This creative nonfiction reveals real student examples and fictionalizes the characteristics or events into a single character. Pinnegar and Daynes (2007) refers to creative nonfiction and a “blurred way of knowing” as a way that narrative inquirers can explore different concerns as they question and explore culture. Since Pinnegar’s 1997 arts-based session that included creative nonfiction at the largest education conference, this genre has been growing and gaining acceptance as a valid way of knowing within the (qualitative) research communities (Cole & Knowles, 2008). Ellis (2007) discusses relational ethics between researcher and participants and suggests ways in which to avoid harm. While Todd is not a friend and his story is not intimate, he did share personal details about his life, I do feel a responsibility to think critically and remind myself of the position of “researcher” and “instructor,” two roles that are likely how Todd defines me. Had Todd’s narrative be one of an exemplary student who excelled in all his work and who shared a wonderfully creative digital story that still fit within the guidelines of the instructions, then I would likely have no hesitation in sharing his success story. His story, at least initially, is one of failure, and the “do no harm” ethical default lingers on my shoulders. Todd had completed all assignments and re-did the DS assignment that caused me to feel
disappointment, even anger, when I first viewed it. He passed the course and his worries about not graduating did not closely approach reality. He has moved on from the program, from the country (at least for now), and it seems, he has moved on from this study.

I contemplated not including Todd; however, I do think it is important to admit when a teacher’s plans don’t work. It happens often, but is less often discussed in the research or in practice with anyone other than same-level teachers. I should stress here that while Todd did not seem to read the instructions for his first project, and didn’t take my advice for the focus of his re-done DS project, he now has a master’s degree and is, at last contact, successfully teaching abroad, which was the goal of “Todd the Traveler.”

“Do no harm” seems like a low threshold, but I believe his early efforts to “help” me means more that he sought for his contributions to “do good.”

**Limitations: Methodology and Researcher-as-Instrument**

In many qualitative research approaches, there is ambiguity as the counterweight of flexibility. When I began the study, the existing data from the course and then the extended interview data kept pulling me in various directions, all valid, all worthy of my curiosity. My interdisciplinary theoretical study of diverse approaches and my familiarity with equally diverse outcomes (in terms of genre or format of the narrative product) allowed me the flexibility to follow the data. At the same time, however, this meant that I had few self-imposed parameters in terms of what I would follow or how I would proceed. As stated, the critical lens and pedagogical goals of looking for ways students share ideas or understandings of culture, intercultural communication, and the ways
students demonstrate reflexivity gave me a wide lens on narrative possibilities. I could have strictly limited myself to the questions I had prepared for interviews (Appendix G), but this would surely negatively affect the discourse dynamics as well as ignore any new, unforeseen insight.

In qualitative research, the outcome may be unpredictable (Knowles & Cole, 2008) and may be disappointing (Long, 2011). While my own tolerance for ambiguity is quite high, I cannot expect the same of others. Participants may not have grasped what or why I was asking them questions, despite my attempts to inform them. At one point in an interview, Jennifer states, “...now I see what you're looking at...” and I wondered if her responses would from then on be performed to appeal to her former teacher. Similar researcher effects may have surfaced with Todd both during the course and after, when he wanted to “help me” by being a participant.

**Limitations in Aesthetic Qualities.**

This limitation spans both student-produced data and my own researcher-produced data. Qualitative research in general, and narrative work in particular heavily rely on the quality of the writing and the honesty or transparency of the researcher (Weber & Mitchell, 2013). My own writing and editing skills need development; I have included examples of guidelines I use for the writing process as well as textual examples for organizational issues of the juxtaposition of narratives.
Limitations of Arts-based Data.

The balance between limitation in this arts-based multimodal data study and the strength of validity is a tenuous one since multimodal data can be powerful as well as ambiguous. The ambiguity is minimized since the participants also verbally discuss the DS process and the product through reflections, feedback sessions, and in-depth interviews. Thus, their interpretations, their intentions, and their experiences are expressed in multiple ways to ensure that their voices are recorded and (re)presented as honestly and diligently as possible.

Limitation of Ideological barriers.

Does research lead to critical change? Can participants, students, language learners be empowered through a critical pedagogy approach? Critics of critical pedagogy often express that it is too much theory with not enough application or pragmatic approaches (Pennycook, 2008). Additionally, the aim of this research to encourage (more) critical reflection and critical pedagogy awareness is admittedly lofty, if not impossible, especially with such short time.

Limitations of time.

The course was an intensive summer course. This has positive and negative aspects. While the schedule fits within many of the other digital storytelling studies, and exceeds many, there is little time for “re-do” or second chances within the same semester. Thankfully, almost all the students completed the assignment successfully,
except for one student who I did require a re-submission. As stated earlier, this student (Todd) is one of my participants.

In terms of time and hindsight, autoethnography is often strengthened through the ability to look back with new insights that have developed or been influenced over time. (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011, np). The amount of time in this non-longitudinal study may be considered a limitation since the core goal is tied with a pedagogical understanding of critical pedagogy, a lesson that may take years or learning and experience to comprehend and internalize. While a longitudinal case study brings other types of limitations, the possibility to follow participants for a much longer time has multiple research benefits. In this particular case, it would be useful to follow PST into their teaching practices to see how they may use DS in their own new contexts and to have a longer window into their professional development with regards to critical pedagogies. One aspect of the Digital Storytelling project that was not (nor intended to be) explored is the response and interpretations from an outside audience. To create a relatively protected classroom environment, where students can feel comfortable and not pushed too far beyond their comfort areas, I gave students the choice of sharing the DS products with an outside audience, or simply, sharing their work within the boundaries of the class community. While the outsider audience perspective is an important factor in supporting the self-reflexivity of teachers-in-training (Gubrium & Harper, 2013), due to the limited time for preparing an educational, constructive, and safe environment for outside feedback, which would entail a continued dedication from the students beyond the parameters of the scheduled semester, this type of audience
response and participant reaction to the outside audience response will not be part of this dissertation.

**Delimitations**

The choice to research a course which I taught poses additional ethical issues; however, I have attempted to address these through careful planning and consideration for minimizing any aspects of coercion. The teaching of the course did (throughout) shape the direction of the research, of course.

Unlike quantitative research, which often is strengthened by sample size, qualitative research aims to create a rich and detailed report, which is time-consuming and focused on particular individuals or relations. Thus, only a handful of participants had been purposefully chosen and invited to participate (Duff, 2008; Small; 2009). Of these, four responded and three are included in the study (in addition to the researcher). My attempt is to present these characters with realistic detail so as to make them engaging and their stories compelling.

**Summary of Methodology**

In this chapter, I have described the methodological process of the dissertation. I have explained how participants were chosen, contacted, and interviewed. I have described the data used in the re-storying process and have attempted to describe the writing process with a helpful organizational strategy of creating multiple data sketches to make connections between the different modalities of data.
The narratives themselves, in the next chapter, can be read with or without the methodological details; however, as research, it is important to clarify how the narratives developed.
CHAPTER 4: 
THE NARRATIVES

Updating A Course with Digital Storytelling

I walked out of the ESOL supervisor’s office with a renewed invigoration and determination. I had been teaching ESOL methods courses in the College of Education for over eighteen semesters, often teaching two courses each semester. My experience included both graduate and undergraduate classes in online and face-to-face contexts, and I felt confident in my knowledge of the content as well as the typical student demographics in these pre-service and in-service teacher education courses.

The news that I would be teaching a new course (for me) was exciting and aligned superbly with my intention to create a digital storytelling (DS) project as a creative and personal narrative activity in teacher education. In this course, entitled Technology in FLE and ESOL Classroom, I thought I could match the methods--of both teaching and researching--to the social, academic, and technology-infused context (Gubrium & Harper, 2013). I could also introduce the task of self-authoring a DS project in such a way as to accentuate (and benefit from) the tendency of teachers to teach in the same way they were taught (Gay, 2004). I wanted to use the DS as a starting point and follow the narratives of students after the (now former) students, had a chance to implement the ideas about reflexivity and narrative in new settings, namely, their own new, unique teaching contexts.
In thinking about the goals of the DS project, I thought about the nuanced terms I would use, both in my own planning and in the resulting account. The use of (self)reflexivity is defined using Cole and Knowles’ (2000) comparison between reflective and reflexive inquiry, where “Reflexive inquiry is reflective inquiry situated within the context of personal histories in order to make connections between personal lives and professional careers, and to understand personal (including early) influences on professional practice” (p. 2). The addition on the “self” emphasizes the awareness of this reflexivity and one’s role in developing reflexive practice. I was hoping to see evidence of critical reflexivity from the pre-service teachers. I wasn’t sure what exactly I would be looking for or what I might find, but I hoped for some communication about critical multicultural issues, or making connections to critical pedagogy course content, raising questions related to language ideologies and policies, analyzing/interpreting Stories in relation to critical multicultural issues and pedagogical issues, or proposing solutions for improving language education in relation to critical multicultural issues. This attention to critical reflexivity was built-in to the project since I knew I wanted to explore the perceptions of students regarding their own stories of intercultural communications/experiences and/or their own cultural backgrounds.

While I might have been open to the various types of stories and discourse that can occur between pre-service teachers and their instructor, I knew what I did not want to see. A few semesters prior to this new course I was to teach, I had accepted a temporary adjunct position at a nearby College of Education. I was charged with teaching ESOL courses, which was the same type of course I had already been used to teaching. The new context surprised me, though, in the push-back I received from many
students. Reactions to the culturally-responsive pedagogy and teaching inclusion and respect for home language ranged between disbelief in the approach to hostility towards the teaching of the approach.

After “reading the room,” I was careful in my instructions regarding the pre-service teacher presentations and explained, “To the pair of students doing their presentation on “Phonology and English language learners”: You can talk about accents. You may even include an example of an accent and discuss the troublesome sounds for speakers of a particular first language. Your book has examples of these, like “P” and “B” for Arabic speakers or “CH” and “SH” for Spanish speakers learning English.” In the next instructional tips for their presentation, I was very clear and made sure that I had a serious tone. “What I do NOT want to see is a video making fun of accents. Make sure you are using academic resources to find linguistic examples. Let me know if you need help finding examples of accents or language varieties. Do NOT include offensive examples of people pretending to speak with a foreign accent.”

Either in spite of this warning, or because of this warning, the two male students prepared their presentation with a video of an American pretending to have an extreme foreign accent. The video was a poor attempt at humor; instead, it fit right into the trend of mocking and demeaning those who do not speak with a non-foreign accent. This occurred around the same time when Coca Cola had created a diversity campaign that included a Super Bowl advertisement with “America the Beautiful” sung in multiple languages. The ad inspired an intensely ugly response, with online and social media comments stating variations of “We speak ENGLISH here,” and “English Only in America,” and countless “proud red-white-and-blue Americans” mistakenly calling the
song the National Anthem in their condemnation of the ad featuring a multilingual America with Americans of all colors, religions, and (non traditional) family options. Unfortunately, the “English Only” movement was alive and kicking in my ESOL teacher training course.

In other classroom discussions, when a handful of students would question the rationale for allowing and encouraging children to continue to speak and read in their home language, I focused on the common goals. “If the goal is to help them learn English, then encouraging them to continue using and learning in their home language at home will actually help them when they are able to apply similar learning strategies in the classroom, for English. They will be more motivated to learn... Of course they will learn English; this is usually inevitable in this society. Contrary to popular rhetoric, immigrants ARE indeed learning English, so let’s focus on teaching them English in the classroom and not focus so much on trying to change their home language.”

When I saw skeptical faces, I asked, “How many hours a day do you have the kids in your classroom? Compare that to how many waking hours the kids are at home....”

It was a difficult semester at a school where only one hand was raised when I asked if they knew any non-native speakers of English. One of the core assignments for that ESOL class was to interview a non-native speaker who was learning English. At my larger university, this same task is a challenge as well, but those students usually encounter international students in the library or other areas on campus or, know someone who fits the “non-native speaker” criteria. Rarely is my question unanswered when I follow up with, “It can be a friend or a friend of a friend, a neighbor, or co-worker.
They just need to be someone who speaks another language and is still learning or improving their English language skills.”

When I made the same remark at the small College of Education classroom, a hand went up and replied, “My housekeeper?”

In a class of approximately twenty-five university students who are training to be teachers, not a single person had any connection to a non-native speaker, other than a housekeeper. So, in hindsight, I should not have been surprised that a pair of students doing presentations on linguistic terminology would use a demeaning parody video that mocked people with foreign accents. I knew, even then, that it would happen.

The backlash against multicultural education and critical pedagogy is ever-present, but certainly not to the extent as my one-semester only stint at the small college. On occasion, I encounter doubt about the well-documented benefits of bilingualism, and on rarer occasions I encounter opposition to the thoroughly-researched recommendation to encourage the learning trajectory of a non-English home/mother language. Still, this is why I continue to include the critical (inter)cultural curriculum in each ESOL course.

In previous semesters, I had already introduced ESOL students to a task similar to a DS project via a multimodal reflexive response task, so I knew that the multiple steps leading to the creation of a video would entail a longer production process and may be daunting for students initially.

The following excerpt is from a long email chain with a mentor who had always offered great advice, and who had recently graduated at the start of my research study. In the last semesters of my coursework in my doctoral program, as I delved deeper into
the different areas of qualitative research and I became more focused on arts-based and narrative works, one colleague was helpful—even inspirational—in my pursuit of what seemed to be, at that time, a “peripheral” methodology compared to most of the work passing by me in the College of Education and in my Second Language Acquisition program. Therefore, this mentor had been an informal “critical friend” for years and now, he continued that role.

I have seen [the previous] syllabus and I am updating a couple of the readings. Also, of course, I am adding the DS project to the course tasks. The fact that it's an intensive summer B class is both good & bad.... I just hope the students understand what "intensive" means. Also, I hope it's a large class since they seem to be making the F2F especially for international students. So, it will be quite a mix: undergrad + grads; online + blended; ESOL + FLE. The more diverse, the better in terms of chances of interesting interactions (and hence, perhaps getting good data). (email exchange from me to Critical Friend)

In the Technology in the Language Education Classroom, I was curious about the mixture of ESOL and FLE, both language education, but often divided and kept independent in research as well as in classroom settings. I was looking forward to the interactions between international students from China in the class, and the other students who were a mix of monolingual and multilingual pre-service teachers.

An Ethnographic Story of a Classroom

The room seemed too large for just the six of us, but we sat in a close circle using two narrow desks that reflected the abundant natural light surrounding us. The five graduate students before me were enrolled in the face-to-face section of
Technology in the ESOL and FLE classroom. Fifteen others, a mix of both graduate students and undergraduates, were taking the same course online.

Initially I was surprised at the number of online students; however, it is an intensive summer course, so it’s understandable students might prefer the flexibility of taking a course online. After all, I have students located in other states who are registered for the course and, prior to the start of the semester, I received a request to switch from the face-to-face section to the online section from a Muslim student who is fasting for the month of Ramadan. If I am teaching with the hope of students internalizing culturally-responsive pedagogy, how can I not practice recognizing each student as an individual with unique needs? Allowing the Muslim student to take the online section seemed a reasonable accommodation during the stifling hot summer of Florida.

I was also hoping that the pseudo-anonymity of the online environment would afford my students the time and space to dedicate more attention to their work. I
expected high caliber work from all students taking the technology-infused class, but those taking the course online may have an openness to talking about sensitive topics such as culture and personal experiences.

So far, I was quite impressed with the participation around the table. In our small group brainstorming session—or what Lambert would call “Story Circle” (2013)—two graduate students had just finished sharing their ideas for the upcoming digital storytelling project. Their stories were diverse and personal, revealing challenges and vulnerabilities. I was eager to see how their stories would develop into a final three to five minute multimodal video.

When I conceived this plan for a digital storytelling project focused on exploring cultural issues and cross-cultural understanding, I had imagined the hurdles of a class full of monolingual, monocultural students. After over five years of teaching ESOL education courses, I have found this to be the typical demographic for the majority of students, which actually follows the demographic trend of most Colleges of Education within the United States (Gay, 2000).

However, a last minute serendipitous change allowed me to teach a mixed-level, mixed-focus class that included students of foreign language education (FLE). Also, since the course I was offered to teach is about technology, it was fitting to introduce a digital storytelling project that uses multiple forms of technology and aligns with theories of computer-mediated pedagogy (Couldry, 2008b; Ware, 2006).

I wondered how this mélange of ESOL education and FLE education and the collaborative feedback within the storytelling process could contribute to better understanding cultural issues. I was curious to see how students would use multimodal
elements in their personal narratives and how might the process of creating a digital story contribute towards critical reflexivity. With the face-to-face students, I could observe this process unfolding live.

I turned to Stacy, a bilingual English/Spanish speaker in her early 50s who had just begun the master’s program for foreign language education. She sat leaning forward with her chin in her palms, nodding as her classmates shared their ideas. With her decades of teaching experience, she wasn’t shy about offering supportive comments after the two first presentations. I was glad to see such active participation.

“I don’t have too much of a script, but I thought the digital story was our first realization of culture.”

I nodded in agreement and encouragement as Stacy continued to recount the story of how her parents moved from a monocultural environment to a large—and growing—multilingual city in the southern US.

She returns to the task at hand, planning the Digital Story, and describes her recollections of an abrupt but exciting shift in her childhood.

I could see the direction the story was taking. After over fifteen years of living in Miami, I was familiar with the multi-lingual and multicultural landscape that must have been very different compared to the NorthEast of decades ago. Raul, a graduate student of Puerto Rican decent, and I nodded and knowingly smiled as we thought about the contrast. I glanced at the three Chinese students who most likely were unfamiliar with the cultural traditions and images that caused Raul and me to simultaneously smile.
Stacy continued with her story, providing a detailed description of the newness of visiting the home of her parents’ friends and the cross-cultural experience she encountered.

She explained, “After you ate your meal, then you talked for a long time before you served coffee and dessert.” She jokingly slammed her palm on the table for emphasis as she said, “You do not leave until coffee and dessert have been served.”

Stacy even included a spontaneous dramatic dialogue where she embodied her child-self and her mother, speaking in a slow and soothing voice.

“We sleepily came to my mom one time “Aren’t we gonna go yet?” (in the voice of a tired child).

“Noooo,” she said. “Here, we don’t leave before dessert & coffee.” (in the slow voice of her mother).

She then shared how she wanted to use a song by Celia Cruz as a background music and explained, “I love the energy of Celia Cruz and how she says “Azucar,” which mean sugar in Spanish.”

Raul interjected, “Azucar!” in the same enthusiastic outburst similar to Celia Cruz. Again, only the three of us laughed and I thought about how to explain the joke without falling into the trap of essentializing Cuban culture by a single example of music. Addressing the way we can talk about culture—our own and others—is definitely a pertinent area for a class of language teachers; however, I didn’t want to interrupt my student’s planning with this loaded discussion. Not yet, at least.

In my reflections at the time of that first face-to-face class where we discussed the Digital Storytelling project, I wrote:
My hope is that, first, the DS project will bring about more conversations like this one and students will really delve into their past experiences to make connections with the principles of this class. It looks like we have just begun to touch the surface of the wide range of critical issues that can come to the forefront when we talk about cultural experiences. If I can document these instances, and demonstrate how students are thinking critically about these topics, then maybe the learning from this course can be shared beyond the immediate students and can serve as a model for others. (Summer, 2015 reflection).

Education courses are places of learning, but first they are social places of experiencing, reflecting, and communicating. By using digital Storytelling as a creative, multimodal personal narrative, my students may have an additional tool to make sense of one’s cultural background and inter-cultural experiences.

**Jennifer: The Planner**

“Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?”

(Quote by Mary Oliver, selected by participant to conclude her introductory online post to the class, Summer, 2015)

As I came to realize after conversations with Jennifer, the quote she had chosen to share in her introductory online post was quite reflective of her vigorous enthusiasm.
for new adventures and discoveries. When I initially met Jennifer, she was in her final undergraduate semesters and enrolled in a mixed course of graduate and undergraduate students of English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) and/or foreign language education (FLE). It was my first time teaching this particular course, but I had grandiose plans and expectations for the intensive summer course where face-to-face students and online students would mingle on an inclusive hybrid online platform.

While it was the master’s level students who were enrolled in the face-to-face section of the course, Jennifer contacted me via email to inquire about participating in the classroom and met me to discuss what types of opportunities might be available for teaching abroad. Additionally, she wanted to discuss the course in relation to her alternative major, Anthropology. I quickly confirmed that there was no problem with having a non-Education studies background and welcomed her to include her recent study abroad experience and her previous English language teaching experience in her posts and reflections for this course.

“You can draw from multiple disciplines when teaching languages,” I told her, thinking about how this summer course in particular, more than my regular ESOL education courses, would need to incorporate interdisciplinary approaches and topics such as multiculturalism, intercultural communication, and principles of technology in education.

Jennifer was in her last semester at the university and had registered for the online undergraduate course, but expressed a desire to come to the face-to-face section, which had five master’s students enrolled. I was sure her multiple experiences
of traveling and studying abroad would be an excellent contribution to the class, especially considering the digital storytelling project that I was excited to implement as a course task and as the first apparent step in my dissertation research. In our brief interaction, Jennifer presented herself with maturity, thoughtfulness, and seemed genuinely inquisitive regarding the course goals, or, as Jennifer later described, “the cause.” As if to warn any potential group members that she was a serious and diligent student, she introduced herself to the class via the online posting excerpt: “I sincerely enjoy group work, but when the group is creative, collaborative, and cares about the cause” (emphasis mine).

Jennifer exuded both expertise and humility in that first introductory post that was shared with the whole class of online students and face-to-face students. She wrote:

I have spent time in third world countries working on sustainable community development and education. I have taught English in these communities, but I have never had any formal training so I decided it would benefit me to pick up a minor in Foreign and Secondary Language Education. [...] I would like to work with a nonprofit organization that focuses on education and cultural community development, possibly with refugees. Again, it’s all in the air at this moment in time. [...] I would not consider myself ‘tech-savvy’ in the slightest bit. Actually, I would say the contrary. Many communities I have worked with do not have access to simple technologies, and the life style I live does not use much of technology, so it has never been a focus of mine. Hopefully this class will improve my skills though...in time (Jennifer, 2015, online course post excerpt).

After many years of teaching online, I knew I needed to guide students for their introductory posts in order to set the tone for the course community; gather the information pertinent to my teaching, such as language skills and technology experience; and begin to get to know my students. I wanted to know the interests, intentions, and future goals of my students in order to incorporate this into the
curriculum and make the course meaningful as well as engaging (Bigelow & Walker, 2004; Canagarajah, 2012; Nieto, 2009). The course topic was to teach the technical tools of the profession, but any teaching or teacher training should include more personal perspectives or, as Bartolomé (2009) calls it, “the humanizing effects of a more democratic pedagogy” (p. 347).

The summer course turned out to be quite diverse. In addition to the different areas and levels of study and their individual trajectories which brought them to language education, the summer course included multiple international students from China, Japan, Saudi Arabia, and students who self-identified as bi-cultural and multilingual, as well as mono-cultural (“American”) and monolingual. I felt fortunate that this dissertation project might benefit from this serendipitous diversity and, of course, I also wanted to elicit as much interaction between students as possible in order for them to gain knowledge from each other as well as with each other and establish critical communities of practice or professional friendships (Delpit, 2009; Gorski, 2008; Nieto, 2009; Yi, 2014).

Asking students where they want to go says a lot about where they have been and who they are, as evidenced in Jennifer’s response:

If I could go anywhere in the world it would be to a place called Little Corn Island. It is an island, off of an island, off of the coast of Nicaragua in Central America. With no roads, no cars, a population of less than a few hundred, and only electricity for a few short hours a day, this island holds some of the most beautiful people and scenery in the entire world. I worked in a school there and out of all the promises I have made to people of "coming back to visit," this is one promise I intend to keep.

While I admired her passion and her eloquence, I also began to notice a romanticizing (Sleeter, 2011) of her experiences with people and places abroad. This positive
positioning resurfaced in multiple assignments and throughout our interviews when she recounts her teaching experiences in Tanzania and, more recently, in Thailand. However, her enthusiasm was captivating and her altruistic disposition was infectious. With her cultural anthropology background, she was a keen observer of cultural norms and representations and seemed to already have a tendency to reflect on and connect experiences and theory. I wondered how she would communicate her experience of creating the digital story and how she might incorporate personal narrative in her teaching. She seemed to already be a storyteller and a teacher, though neither was explicitly expressed. Along with the diversity of experiences she contributed during the summer course, her openness and interdisciplinary background struck me as an ideal participant to interview post-course. I waited until the course concluded before contacting any potential participants and Jennifer was one of the first to respond “looking forward” to being a participant. It wasn’t until months later that I finally arranged for a Skype interview and she accommodated me just days before she was set to leave for a temporary teaching opportunity in Thailand.

**Todd: The Traveller**

Todd was one of the online students, so we have actually never met. Initially, I thought that Todd and I had a lot on common, but after the semester and multiple email communications, I still feel as though I do not understand who he really is. Perhaps some of this is due to the identity he performs online. We all "perform" ourselves, but with Todd, I was never got a chance to know what was behind the performance. Todd was what I would call a counter-example student; he did, however, appear to be
interested in participating in this research and I was interested in his story precisely because of his self-declared “failure” regarding the DS project, which he re-did in order to pass the course and graduate. I wanted to know what had gone wrong and I wanted an additional opportunity to engage with the student. After all, what had “gone wrong” was also a reflection on my teaching. Both his first and second attempts at the class project were very distinct from the other students’ submissions and I had asked myself if my expectations were too high, or if I had just not given him enough scaffolding online to lead him to the successful creation of a personal narrative story relating to cross-cultural issues or cultural background.

After the initial viewing of his first DS video, I didn’t have positive comments regarding the content or technical execution. I forced myself to wait a few days before writing and sending any feedback. What should have been a three to five minute DS was over fifteen minutes long and “My ears still hurt from that Gnawa music [that was inserted into the video at a high volume] and I’m sure there was no script or planning” (teacher notes to myself during the course, 2015). In one of the email exchanges with Todd, my verbose nature was absent. For me, this curt communication revealed my level of confusion and disappointment: “Brevity is difficult, but that was part of the DS challenge” (email to Todd, 2015).

In my teacher reflections I noted:

*Perhaps Todd was trying to use poetic language with the repetition of the phrase ‘So here I am…’ (Figure 4.2); however, the subsequent dis-jointed descriptions were more like a voiced stream of consciousness. [...] the remaining 15 minutes of the video [included] travels he has taken in the past years* (teacher notes, 2015).
I was surprised when Todd was one of the first students to respond to my initial email requesting specific students to participate in this study. Following the summer session, Todd had graduated and I worried that he would never see my invitation to participate mailed to his school email address. After all, by the time I completed the dissertation proposal defense and waited for IRB approval, a semester had already escaped me before I contacted my former students. Todd replied with his permanent email address and encouraged me to contact him as soon as I was ready and he “would be happy to help [me] with [my] research.” Later, after a reminder regarding the IRB informed consent form, he responded with “I hope I am not too late to help you” and explained that “email communication is our only option” since he was in a country where Skype was blocked. Todd had graduated with a master's degree in Teaching English as a Foreign/Second Language (TEFL) and had moved on to teach English in Asia. I was happy to hear that he was doing well and was content with his teaching position. Aside from better understanding what happened during the Technology course, and what he thought of doing the DS (twice!), I was curious to know if and how his current teachings included forms of narrative, even though his experience in my class was vastly different than Jennifer or Raul. Additionally, his contribution would be a vastly different context, from a country that is technology-rich, but perhaps limited in freedoms to use technology in expressive ways.
During the Technology course, Todd's initial online post introducing himself caught my attention because some of what he shared with the class was similar to my own experiences. Between earning a degree in Visual Arts and Sociology, and my graduate studies in language education, I visited Morocco frequently, fascinated by the mix of cultural elements of the indigenous Amazigt (Berbers), Arab, and French. Where Todd and I differed was while I was most interested in the history and work of the artisans of the various regions of Morocco and the resurgence of attention/recognition and inclusion of indigenous languages, Todd was interested in the music of the Maghreb. He presented himself as "doing research" in Morocco, and specifically focused on the music of the Gnawa. I also knew of this music, having experienced the loud clanking of the metal hand symbols that accompanied the roaming musicians in long loose robes. The visuality of the robes, their dark faces, and the small caps embellished with shells atop their heads had left a lasting image in my mind. Surely, Todd and I would have a lot to talk about and his contributions to the online discussions about cross-cultural issues would be a great asset in the classroom where many students had never left the US.

Some disappointment was inevitable due to my raised expectations. Todd, who wrote about travel and research in Morocco as well as "on four continents," had entered the online space with a post that spoke of experience and expertise. After briefly listing his teaching posts in various countries, he wrote,

So, I consider myself a brave American who spent 8 years abroad teaching English, studying foreign languages, and doing Anthropological research. I am now fluent in [Chinese], Spanish, and some Moroccan-Arabic. I just returned to the US, where I am [teaching]. In my neighborhood, I can practice speaking in other languages. I even used some Arabic today when I bought my coffee from a guy from Yemen. I am
proud of being multi-lingual. I worked hard to learn new languages, [and] now in America, I can show off my skills (Todd’s online post, 2015).

The post likely impressed and intimidated other students, but as the course quickly progressed, his participation in the course was minimal, at best. He had been enrolled in the online section of the graduate-level course, so I never met him face-to-face. Most of my teacher-student interactions with him were regarding the Digital Story submission. After viewing his lengthy DS video a few times, I had asked him to (re)read the DS instructions and try again. He expressed appreciation for the chance to re-do the task and described the challenges he faced upon his return the US. His “culture shock” re-entry would have made a compelling topic for the DS assignment, but this personal narrative about cross-cultural differences and assimilation came to me in the form of an email explaining what had gone wrong with the project.

Figure 4.4. Still Images, Quote, and Researcher Notes (Excerpt of data sketch, 2016)
According to Todd’s communication while still a student of mine, his DS project suffered because he was juggling multiple new roles and was therefore distracted from his final course during his final semester. I expressed to him how I found his descriptive excuses regarding the challenges of the DS assignment much more on target with the pedagogical intentions of the DS project than the meandering video he had submitted. Between the first and second video productions, I had advised Todd, “This ‘culture-shock’ you mention as the obstacle in completing the task should have been the topic of your DS narrative.” He never did take my overt suggestion for his “take two” DS assignment.

Over a year after the class, I was still intermittently communicating with my former students and attempting to gauge how much they recalled from their experience with DS in the intensive (short) summer course. In our “interview” email communications I asked Todd to describe the Digital Storytelling assignment in his own words. He began by admitting that he “failed at it miserably,” and continued,

My first topic […] wasn't very good so I had to redo it. My second project followed the professor's guidelines but I still do not think it was very good. I remember some of the other students' projects better than my own. I remember a great project by a Puerto Rican student who describes his family's immigration story (Todd, email communication, 2016).

It was rewarding to see how a student who seemed to be “minimally present” (teacher reflections about Todd, 2015), fondly remembered the narratives of other students which were presented in the concise digital story format.

Is Todd, my former student, telling me, his former instructor, what he thinks I want to hear? (teacher-researcher reflections, 2016).
Is Todd, my participant who “wants to help with [my] research,” telling me, the researcher asking about DS, what he thinks I want to hear? (researcher reflections, 2017).

I remember the best stories were ‘American’ stories about immigration and struggle. I also loved the stories that described how immigrant families stayed in contact with their cultural roots through food and music. I loved the stories about immigrants the best (Todd via email, 2016).

Todd remains a bit of a mystery, so I have created a character of “Todd” who is a creative composite of the former student and other former students I have known. Together, this representation of Todd is, I believe, true to a real type of student I know.

Raul: “Our own Identities”

Figure 4.5: Video Still from Raul’s Digital Story (Summer, 2015)

I was looking forward to meeting with Raul because he was one of the students from the summer course who impressed me with his enthusiastic approach to the course and his deeply personal and surprising personal narrative. He is an eloquent and introspective person who was simultaneously a language instructor and a master’s student. Thus, in addition to a former instructor-student relationship, we were also
colleagues with teaching and language-learning experiences in common. During our conversation, I was immediately aware of how our communication style synched as we discussed backgrounds and circumstances with jargon and shorthand references. More than a researcher-participant dichotomy, we were equals engaged in mutually-captivating discussion.

Raul came to my shared office on campus, a setting that was private and quiet, yet not sterile or institutional. As he entered and I asked how he was doing, he exhales slowly and loudly, overly dramatic to demonstrate some of the frustration and sheer fatigue he has been experiencing as a teacher. He places his large bag on the unoccupied desk next to mine and reclines in the rolling chair. We sit facing each other in the sun-lit office.

After exchanging some of the personal frustrations that occupy so much of our time, we seem to quickly agree how plans can often change and surprises—both good and bad—can distract and derail agendas. He begins to tell me about the overwhelming number of students he has, but I stop him and point to the laptop. I reassure him that I want to hear all about that, but I want to include it in the interview and audio record him. He nods in agreement as I set up the recording and ask again, for the record, if he will allow me to record our conversation. After the recorded verbal agreement [in addition to the prior written consent], I try not to allow the formality of the Institutional Review Board to interfere with my intention to create a relaxed atmosphere and I quickly move on to the questions I had been thinking about for over a year regarding the Technology course, storytelling, and this particular student-participant.
I re-orient our conversation by saying, “As you may know, this interview is related to research I'm doing for my dissertation which stems from the digital storytelling project that you did. By now it's been over a year, so I'm curious to know what you're doing now and if you've thought back to the project at all.”

The time between my teaching the course for Technology in Classroom and the interviews with my former students was not initially planned to be much more than a semester. The dissertation was not meant to be a longitudinal study of changes of ideas over time, but rather a focused review and exploration about my students’ experiences during a digital storytelling project. That said, I also knew that my former students were now, over a year after our shared course, scattered across the globe and were immersed in quite diverse teaching experiences. How did our classroom project using digital storytelling as a personal narrative activity affect their teaching and reflexivity on their teaching practices? The optimist in me had expectations of a transformative experience, where the teacher-training project influenced my students to think more critically about culture and cross-cultural understanding. I was curious to know if the personal narrative videos they created were ever re-visited by the student authors, or by their own students. The realist in me worried, after so much time, did they recall the project at all?

In order to gain an understanding of how to proceed with the interview-conversation, I began by asking, “So it was summer 2015. In your own words and however much detail you would like to provide, can you describe what you remember about that digital storytelling project?”
Raul replied, “Yes, so the digital storytelling project was a process so that we can learn to utilize an instructional strategy-- a technological instructional strategy for the classroom. It had a twofold process. It was: one, for us to journal our own identities and [two] to learn a process to include in our own instructional methods.”

Raul, always an exemplary student, responded with slow, deliberate words. His understanding of the dual goals of the project were exactly what I had intended and exceeded my expectations of “I hope they remember the project/I hope they remember me.” Combining my own experiences in teaching ESOL courses for pre-service teachers (PST) and the research on the ongoing needs in language teacher education, the summer course needed to contain activities relating to classroom diversity and create opportunities to reflect on critical cultural issues (Delpit, 2009; Gay & Howard, 2000; Goodson & Gil, 2014) while also providing an opportunity for PST to use multimodal technology tools in order to develop and share their stories, which reciprocally contribute to reflexivity on critical issues. As Goodson and Gil argue, sharing personal narratives or biographies leads to “deeper forms of reflexivity” and “profound questioning of key issues and concepts in educational practices and the institutional and socio-political contexts of such practices” (p. 222).

In Raul’s digital story, he had shared a more personal interpretation of the socio-cultural contexts and educational practices from his bi-cultural upbringing. At the end of the course, he had written a reflective entry that alluded to sharing his video with future students and family and seemed to appreciate the difficulty in addressing cultural and cross-cultural topics. In this written reflection, Raul wrote:

I think that that Digital Storytelling offers a subtly unique way to incorporate technology into the classroom. I can see myself presenting
my DS for my students and then posing questions for them to reflect on what culture means to them. It would be a great start to the semester and to set the tone for how to think about culture. How can we expect our students to examine and contrast a new target culture if they do not know what culture means to them to begin with? I also found ways to relate with Spanish heritage learners that might shy away from maintaining their L1 [first language]. In fact, I think I would be able to share my story with parents of heritage learners so that they can understand that there exists an identity struggle in living between two cultures and I can safely let them know that is ok to be part of both. [...] 

On a personal note, it gave me a new format by which to express my love of genealogy. I foresee me making many video shorts using pictures and stories of our ancestors. I can’t wait for my family to see them (Raul, Written Reflection excerpt, August, 2015).

Since reading that reflection, I wondered about the reaction Raul may have received if/when he shared his video. Moreover, now, I wondered how his personal story from the video fit into his current practices. I ask Raul if he can talk a little bit about what he shared in his video and I listened for instances of critical questioning about educational practices.

“Yes. For mine, I decided to explore my Puerto Rican heritage and talk a little bit about what it means to be bicultural in the United States and how there was a lot of ...uh...” He pauses briefly as he searches for the exact word, then clearly states, “...difficulty for me growing up speaking English primarily at home, but living in a culture--my cultural environment was Puerto Rican.”

While describing how both of his parents spoke Spanish at home, he adds, “But they didn't really teach us to speak Spanish because my older brother had issues. They decided to not teach Spanish in the house, but then I picked up on it when I heard them talk to one another.” As he continues recounting the story from his video, I nod and note the emphasis he places on the generational difference between his Spanish-speaking
parents and the next generation of Raul and his three siblings. Thus far, what he describes is a common outcome regarding the loss of a mother tongue in the US (Bialystok, 2016; Nieto, 2015). It was a scenario I knew from personal experience as well as research.

Raul’s personal experience diverged from this norm, however. He explains at length, “So, I became really interested in wanting to learn the language and so over a period of time, with the help of my grandparents, aunts and uncles, I developed my Spanish. And then—but I still never felt fully either Puerto Rican or fully American because no matter if I was in Puerto Rico I never quite felt Puerto Rican, when I was here in the States, I never...” His voiced trailed off a bit, leaving the thought unstated, yet clear: he never quite felt American.

“You know, a lot of my classmates would definitely notice that I was not your standard everyday American, so because of that duality, it caused me to have a very hard time grasping and understanding what my culture was and I didn't realize at that young age that you could be both cultures. And so, I kind of grew up with this emptiness, not really having a specific culture, and it wasn't until much later, as a matter of fact, when I went to France, that I realized.”

He describes how his study abroad for a year in Paris was a transformative cultural experience and retells the story of this cultural awakening in a manor that I had first heard in the DS video he shared a year prior. In an almost verbatim recreation of the DS, Raul explains, “And it wasn't until that experience that I realized, ‘oh I'm learning about a completely different culture’ and now I was able to grasp and I was able to see different parts of my both halves of my cultural identity, both the Puerto Rican and the
American side, within a third culture. And so it allowed me to be able to grasp that and say, 'hey I own both of these cultures. I am Puerto Rican and I am American,' and so both of these things are okay and I'm okay with them. So, it really helped me to come to terms with that and see it in a unified way."

His response is animated and the tempo has increased from the tentative pace at the start of the conversation. When he is done, I try to clarify his personal trajectory and identity-formation; I ask if the study abroad was in high school or college. Laughing at my question, he modestly responds, “Oh, no, it wasn’t until I was in college. No, I was definitely still confused when it came to which culture I belonged to when I was in high school. It wasn’t until college that I was able to think about that and focus on that a bit better.”

I gently encourage Raul to continue by interjecting details I remembered from his DS, essentially using the DS as a device to elicit more and more guided and focused data. “And the area where you grew up was not a very diverse area...” I say and let my voice fade away.

“No. No, not really. My dad was in the [military] and so we traveled around quite a bit and he decided to be stationed in [military base in the Northwest coast of the US] and so the majority of the people around me were very Caucasian, with the exception of Mexican migrant workers. So, a lot of times, if people found out I was Hispanic, people thought I was Mexican and not Puerto Rican. It was a hard time being able to defend my Puerto Rican culture; so, in essence, what we ended up doing (me and my brothers and sisters) we ended up assuming American culture. On the outside, when we were not at home, we were just like any other American child. And then, when we were at
home, you know, we were Puerto Rican kids doing what our Puerto Rican parents told us. And we ate rice and beans and, you know, all except for the language, because my parents decided not to teach us the language—e even though the language was present—we were not used to speaking Spanish at home.”

Raul’s story about “defending” his heritage exemplifies the need for culturally-responsive teaching. And while his youthful school days were likely in the 1990s, the staggeringly regressive socio-political issues have been deepening over the past decades (Hewitt, 2005), with a disastrously visible outcome in 2016. The backlash against multiculturalism and the resistance to inclusive ESOL curriculum has percolated, little by little, but steadily, into classrooms for teacher education (Dell-Jones, 2015) and has made attention to and application of critical pedagogies critical.

The integration of critical pedagogy approaches in the broad language education context include classroom intercultural practices and curriculum, and specific classroom power dynamics between and among teacher and students. This includes how to connect to students in mutually respectful ways, how to create an inclusive environment, how to address diversity in the classroom and acknowledge diversity as an asset instead of a deficit (Holmes, Rutledge & Gauthier, 2009), how to address globalization (Kramsch & Ware, 2013), (im)migration, and other factors in language ideologies (Bigelow & Walker, 2004; Danzak, 2011), and how to create a more democratic learning environment by problematizing and critiquing the traditional systems that perpetuate inequality (Delpit, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 2009).

To achieve this aforementioned integration of ideas and practices, “teacher education programs must be revised to reflect the cultures, histories, and heritages of
Gay (1997) summarizes the problem of a lack of multicultural pedagogical skills, in the following way:

Teachers need to develop multicultural pedagogical knowledge and skills [in two areas], general and content-specific. There are powerful ideas about what constitutes multicultural teaching, but too many teachers do not know what these are, what they mean, or how to accomplish them in classroom instruction. They are even more puzzled about how to do multicultural teaching within various content areas (p. 12).

Teachers need to be able to connect in a humanizing way that fosters empathy for students (Lucas & Villegas, 2010). And yet, teachers are often members of the dominant ethnic group, a scenario where “ignorance of ethnic differences related to language can cause misunderstandings and lead to unwarranted negative evaluations” (Fought, 2006, p. 182). Raul is very aware of his bicultural background and the potential positive modeling effects this may have on his current or future students. In subsequent communications, he highlights how he can show heritage learners of Spanish that they, too, can master the language, even if they feel they have much to learn.

Figure 4.6. Digital Story in Data Sketch (detail): Transcription Excerpt and Video Still
An additional asset is Raul’s personal understanding that speakers of “Spanish” do not have one culture and that treating culture as monolithic and static (Byram, 1997; Sleeter, 2011), or the essentializing of culture, augments the challenge of teaching and understanding the nuances of visible and invisible culture.

Challenges in Zanzibar and Jennifer’s Digital Story

During the course, after Jennifer had introduced herself to the class via her online post, and after our brief email communications, I was really looking forward to her Digital Story, as evidenced in an excerpt from my teacher notes:

[...]

When I heard the idea she had for her digital story, I was excited about bringing in new cultural contexts and approaches to education policy. Coincidentally, her story sounded familiar. Yes, my former professor who is very active in global policies and practices related to TEFL [Teaching English language] just posted about this on social media. I had listened to the video in the news link and the story made quite an impression on me. Perhaps it was the story itself—the difficulty of adhering to policies of globalization and the spread of English. Often this is not planned in the best ways and the expectations outpace the practice/education. But maybe I had this story about Zanzibar in my mind because the news story, in essence, had a DS created by the students of Zanzibar. It fit all the guidelines of Lambert (personal, focused/concise, and sharable). With the video reaching across oceans, making news on NPR, it certainly was a critical attempt at bringing attention to the challenges of the students and schools. While not calling the digitally created story that was shared online a digital storytelling creation, it was in fact, an example of how digital storytelling can be used.
When I told Jennifer that I knew about the Zanzibar challenges regarding English education and testing she was definitely surprised. It was quite the coincidence that I had just read about the situation a couple weeks earlier. I shared the article with Jennifer and she was happy to see that the problem was getting attention. I should have suggested that she also share the article with her posts about her DS, but I only thought of this later. It was also too late to share it myself and I missed an opportunity to extend the issues from class into more global contexts and events, even the personal issues experienced and shared by one student via her DS. At least the response from her video was very positive. I believe that her video was seen by every student in the class.

[…] I wonder what Jennifer will do with this video. I want to ask her about her inclusion of faces of children from Zanzibar. Do they know they were being filmed? Some did, of course. A few smiled and acted up for the camera, as kids and young people often do. But do they know where this video is going? Who is watching? I like that the video in the NPR article is student-authored and they seemed to be very aware of what will happen to the video [showing it globally, online]. In that case, the students had authorship and had a clear intention of sharing the challenges, but for what purpose did Jennifer take the video? Where will it be shared? Did she ask the students for permission?

Later, as I collect the images, re-story the images with the stories of both Jennifer and the published online NPR article (Warner, 2015), I am careful to NOT include any recognizable faces in my still images documenting the video.
Jennifer’s video opens with a view of colorful books on a shelf. The lens is close to the book spines as it moves along the shelf, only briefly showing some dark wood chairs in the background. The next scene displays street signs and the blue skies of Florida. As Jennifer describes how she gained knowledge about a program to teach in Zanzibar, we see Jennifer walking with a friend at the botanical gardens of her university.

“I had no idea of the influence this one meeting would have over my life,” she narrates leading up to the information about the organization that arranged her teaching abroad.

The video is a mixture of still images and video, which she later explained as found images, excerpts from videos from her trip to Zanzibar, and recently-made videos, such as Jennifer walking with her friend in the gardens, that were specifically made for this digital storytelling project.
Jennifer briefly describes a program that “does projects in education and sustainable community development projects all over the world.” She continues, “Next thing I knew, there I was, 9 months, 2 jobs and a whole lot of fundraising later, on a flight to Africa.” As revealed in Figure 4.9 (below), her narration works well with the elected images and demonstrates both planning and practice (for timing).

Figure 4.9. “On a Flight to Africa,” Still in Jennifer’s Digital Story, Summer 2015

When she arrives in the small village, she describes the experience as being “exposed to a way of life that was almost the polar opposite to the one I’ve been living for the past eighteen years at the time.” I smile when I notice that the words “polar opposite” are spoken while the image shows palm trees against a blue sky, a familiar scene to Floridians. Of course, I understood that Jennifer was not talking about the natural environment, but the village and people… and poverty. The next scenes describe the way of life, without electricity, without running water, “and yet these kids were so happy. They played in ways that children at home could never dream of.”
The following is a transcript of the remaining audio from her digital story. Jennifer’s voice is soft, thoughtful, and clear. She had mentioned her undergraduate work in theater, and I suspect she is quite comfortable with this voice-over performance on the digital story. Despite her quick pace/tempo, there are areas that she edited for time, as noted below, in brackets, as a comparison between the final project and her shared “Story Circle” draft(s). With images of classrooms and smiling faces, she narrates:

The first day of classes teaching in the school, I noticed that there was one girl much older than the group of 16-17 year olds who were teaching. I asked the principal what her story was and he explained to me how the school system works there. During primary schooling all of the classes are taught in their first language (Swahili) but in order to get to secondary school all students are required to take a standardized examination, which is given in English and has questions in formatting such as multiple choice, that some students have never been exposed to. Most of the class fails this exam, and the one’s who pass he says are mostly by chance.

[Deleted from the draft version: Once secondary schooling starts, the classes are taught with textbooks that are all written in English, and by teachers who have little knowledge of the subjects themselves.]
To move on to the different Forms and to graduate (similar to high school grades) there are other standardized tests that need to be passed, again given in English with still no English classes being implemented into the schooling itself.

From primary school to graduation, if a student fails one of these exams, that is the end of their education. Bottom line. The only exception is to pay a fee close to 50 American Dollars to retake the test, which doesn’t seem like a lot, right? Well, the girl who I originally asked about was 23 years old and failed her exam when she was 17. It took her six years working and saving to make that $50 American Dollars

[delete from draft: half the amount someone her age in America could easily spend on a night out in the city buying dinner and drinks.]

Now as her teacher, knowing that she failed her exam and hasn’t been in school for almost six years, imagining trying to teach her enough so that she will be able to catch up and pass just seems so impossible. And she knows this too. Yet she is willing to walk 3 miles in the summer to and from school every single day,

[deleted from draft: during Ramadan (a religious holiday in the Muslim religion which allows no food or water between sunrise and sunset)]

just to have the chance.

[deleted from draft: at finishing her education].

Figure 4.11. Still Scene with Student in Jennifer’s Digital Story, Summer 2015
Jennifer reads the hand-written words from the letter given to her by the student. The letter is first presented with the shells as gifts, and then clearly visible for the video viewer.

So many other students had such incredible stories that I was able to hear through the time spent together inside and outside of the classroom. Students who had close to nothing, with pressure placed on them by family to go straight to work and not to school, but who wanted an education so badly that they went anyway.

The last day of school, one of my students, a 17-year-old boy named ["Mohammed"], gave me three seashells that reminded him of me and a letter that was written both in Swahili and English. The letter read:

"Dear Mrs. [Jennifer],

It is my hope that you are doing well as me here I’m fine and if you hope about your family they are okay. My name is [Mohammed], I was born in [the 1990s], I was born at [....] Zanzibar, I’m eighteen (18) years old. The first purpose of my letter is just to thank you Mrs. [Jennifer] to show us your hospitality and to leave all you things at home, to come to teach us and to save in the ignorance and then you teach us everything in a life, in the sociaty, to study, etc. And also I haven’t to give you but I can say thank you so that God bless you. The secondly purpose of this letter is when you would go home, don’t forget about is yours students but also I don’t forget you because you are our teach, I will remember for everyday, I will forever in my mind. One day if I will make much money I will visit you home okay. I can say thank you, see you."
I cried reading this letter, and he laughed and said “Oh Mrs. [Jennifer], don’t cry.” But I couldn’t stop, and I cried the whole flight home back to America.

The last thing someone had said to me before I left was “Kukumbuka milele” which can translate to “Always I will remember.” And I do remember, I remember every detail I saw, every person I met, every song that was sang, and I plan to remember that for the rest of my life. I came back and dedicated myself to doing what I could to make sure that kids like [Mohammed] had the opportunities we take for such granted here.

[Deleted: And I plan to do that for the rest of my life.]

Jennifer added a new ending in her final draft and product. She concludes, “It’s not a battle I can fight by myself, but I can do my best to try.”

In Jennifer’s final essay for the reflexive post-project essay at the end of the course, she discussed how the project was a successful way to bring the ideas of the course together. While the course was, of course, a Technology-focused course, I was reassured about the way students understood the importance of language-related ideas of culture, critical multiculturalism, and what is sometimes treated as “peripheral” concepts in language acquisition and teacher education. As I mentioned to introduce this study, these ideas are integral to language studies. Jennifer acknowledged this by her recognition of the DS project as a “closure to the course [which combined] everything we learned about language learning, culture, and our own personal experiences.” Her essay continued, “The digital story inspires cultural awareness, self-awareness, and global awareness...” In this regard, I would interject and emphasize that the DS projects *cumulatively* did this, notably by including stories from students with diverse backgrounds, languages, and teacher-training trajectories. Jennifer, too, seems
to suggest this idea (referring to the feedback during “Story Circles”) in her closing of her essay:

By implementing groups for reflection and critique such as this course does, students were able to come together to work on their own project with the help of students who may have a different background and culture than their own. Besides group feedback, I read my story out loud to friends at home to get their feedback as well. Also, by being the one to critique another student’s project, one can learn an endless amount of information and possibly personal experiences to then reflect upon for their own selves. My Digital Story specifically reflects just this topic by recounting a personal story of an in-classroom experience and I am looking forward to hearing what others think of my story now that it is finished! (Jennifer, 2015, written coursework).

The response to Jennifer’s story was unsurprisingly positive since both the story itself was compelling as well as her concise and effective execution of the multimodal video. In my own (individual) feedback to Jennifer, I expanded on the idea of sharing to a wider audience and explained the typical “closure” of many DS projects is actually a more public “viewing” of the videos and/or the participants posting of videos online. I shared with her my hesitations to request students share their videos online (publically) due to protecting students’ privacy. Students could individually choose to share their project with whomever they would like, as evidenced from the plans and accounts of multiple students. Additionally, I explained to Jennifer (via my written feedback to her reflective essay) my conclusion that the summer semester was such a hectic and intensive session that adding the pressure of a formal public viewing was potentially counterproductive when asking students to share personal stories.
Teacher Reflections on Critical Pedagogy and Student Connections

Researching my students’ experiences related to the creation of the DS entailed revisiting student work, communications, and reflections from during the Technology in the Language Classroom teacher education course. Through a (self)reflexive process, teachers can understand their practice, become self-aware, and improve their teaching (Cole & Knowles, 2000; Vavrus, 2008).

For me, this return to my own interactions with students obliged me to reflect in a very different way that was neither objective nor unattached, yet somehow felt far-removed. The distance in time created an opportunity to re-evaluate my words, re-read my tone, and re-frame some of these interactions.

Was I really so blunt? So lacking nuance? So critical in my critique and so uncritical in my pedagogical perspective based on empathy and empowerment?

The response to Todd’s first DS project was brutally honest. I expressed my confusion and even my disappointment. In hindsight, I wonder why he showed such interest in participating in this research. I did explain to him that it was his experience of having to re-do the assignment and his perspective on the success or failure of the task that was of interest to me. Still, as I research and document my teacher role during the summer course, I regret the severity of my feedback:

While this is much better than the last attempt, I think you are missing the point of the assignment. The entire DS project is a reflection-based collaborative process that produces an individual product. While this meets the minimum for the use of technology, you have missed all of the stages of reflexivity, collaboration, and process-focused attention. [...] I suggest that you upload this video and give your full effort in participating in the reflective feedback for others. I hope that it is not too late for you to also receive peer feedback on this video. Feedback is due tomorrow, so perhaps there are still students who are leaving posts. Please wait until after you receive multiple feedback comments before
writing your final in-depth, reflective/reflexive essay [...] (Email communication to Todd, post-resubmission, 2015)

Todd bounced back, though, and I could tell he made an extra effort to leave comments on each student’s post regarding their DS. The comments were typically about his language-learning adventures abroad and he often gave advice that encouraged others to travel and teach abroad. I never did get to ask him about the various programs he used for securing teaching positions. Unfortunately, this only came to my mind after talking with Jennifer about her experience in Thailand. So much was left unanswered (and unasked) with Todd.

**Reflexivity on Digital Divides, Hierarchy, and Representation**

I was able to reach Jennifer just days before her departure to Thailand, yet she generously spent approximately two hours with me via Skype.

“I considered how I could use that project in my future classes, but then I thought about the places I go. Making that video, even in the short time we had, was super awesome. I believe we all had access to technology, at least at the library, so we could do that but not every classroom has the technology that would support that [type of project],” Jennifer explained.

When she mentioned the technology challenges, I had to agree. She’s right, of course, to not make assumptions about teaching conditions in any context, here in the US or abroad. When I had asked what type of solutions might help, Jennifer continued, “Well, of course the money to make it available, you know, to buy the computers and actual technology. But then you also need a classroom to put these things in, and that
classroom needs electricity to charge the laptops. So, it’s not just about getting a laptop or a tablet out there.”

Jennifer had clearly reflected on these issues before our conversation and likely based her openness to the diversity or scarcity of resources on her prior experience in Zanzibar. I encouraged her to think about what types of solutions may be used to work around not having the technology. My focus, after all, was not solely the technology, but rather the way multimodal and/or personal narratives can be used as a tool or catalyst for reflexivity and communication. This storytelling core was the overlap shared between the DS project and this approach to research. Extending from Dewey’s idea of learning through experience, and based on the idea we use stories to relate to these experiences and each other (Caine, Estefan & Clandinin, 2013; Connelly & Clandinin, 2004; Bochner, 2014), narrative research (re)tells the stories that people live.

During the course, we had read about and discussed how multimodality offers young children diverse forms of expression merging sound, script, and image to express complex thoughts or emotions (Nilsson, 2010) or provide creative language-bridging opportunities in second language or foreign language classrooms (Angay-Crowder, Choi, & Yi, 2013; Castañeda, 2013; Hafner, 2014; Vinogradova, Linville, & Bickel, 2011; Yang, 2012). The interpretation or definition of multimodal can be diverse, and even in our summer course, some students chose to include other arts-based forms, such as music and poetry, in addition to the DS affordances based on technology (digital) creative visual and multimodal connections. A focus on higher order metacognitive thinking means that PSTs’ pedagogical learning needs to extend beyond a concern with
the technical tools of the profession to more personal perspectives of caring for children’s growth and welfare (Bentley-Williams & Morgan, 2013).

Jennifer discusses the possibility of the “idea” of the DS, or potentially, a technology solution via shared video-recording and editing options and thinks of it as a “team-building exercise.” I interpret this to mean a collaborative project among students, where the “team” is the group or groups of students.

Jennifer ponders alternatives or work-arounds and says, “If I was able to bring my own, maybe we could do a group project, but not each student doing personal work and creating an individual video. But you know, it would be pretty cool to have the class work together, it would be like a great team-building exercise. And if they wanted to share it widely, I could do that and share it with the world online.”

I receive this comment as representative of her positive “can-do” energy she continuously exudes. I do wonder if I missed the opportunity in addressing the “team” as an inclusive dialog between (foreign) teacher and the (Thai) students. I reiterated what she had said about group projects and that just because individual projects may not be possible, it’s good to think of alternatives. I segued into her teaching job in Thailand and asked if she knew the context.

Jennifer answers what little she can about her upcoming adventure. “[I have] just a minor in education, not a certification, so I don’t have any official paperwork to say that I can teach. So, when I get to Thailand, I will do a special training. Once I do that, they will place me... and it could be a small village or in Bangkok. So it just depends where I get placed. I have no idea!”
This idea of qualifications and certifications has recently been brought to my attention in terms of finding short-term work abroad. Since my master’s program, with professors who were very much involved with advocacy and policy (as English language teachers (ELT) professionals should be), I have heard the argument about the decline or refusal to accept standards of professionalism. I was glad to hear about Jennifer’s prior experience and her teaching internship (re-storied later), because all too often there is an assumption of “I speak English, therefore, I can teach English.” This is perpetuated by the commercialization of English as a lingua franca and as the language of business, and globalization in general. More specifically, the very issue of unqualified and/or undocumented workers-as-teachers of English who travel predominantly from the US or the UK is gaining more attention for economic and tourist reasons (Stainton, 2018). While I do believe that Jennifer has demonstrated a high degree of professionalism and competency in language teaching, I had been curious to know more about the program, which organized her teach abroad. Based on subsequent interviews, her special training had been a month-long teaching workshop, similar to an internship, where she worked with very young children. Post-training, her three-month teaching position was with Thai students in secondary education (mainly teens).

Our discussion turned towards the DS she had made and changes that she would now want to make if she had the opportunity to re-do the task. Mostly, she focused on the technical aspects, mentioning that her voice had a slight echo and how on this trip, she will have better equipment. Perhaps selfishly (for this research or because I am curious, or for more academic visual literacy reasons), I’m greatly interested in her intentions to document her teaching experiences in Thailand.
“I will take a small video camera, a flip camera. I want to capture people and more action.” She begins to describe the “flip” viewing screen and explains, “…this allows me to not look directly at the camera—-not that I want to be sneaky, but people are different when they see the camera.”

I’m unsure if she recalls that I have a background in photography. I have been able to merge this background with more recent research activities and the issue of ethical practices in photo-based research and documentation is a close interest and one where I have both practitioner and theory-based knowledge. Jennifer, too, may have had some exposure to the theoretical and ethical issues with visual documentation in her Anthropology studies. I want to encourage her, but I am aware that this topic can open a whole new direction.

“That sounds wonderful, Jennifer. My tip regarding taking pictures is to go [to school or the community] with the camera, but you don’t have to take pictures the first days. It’s best to get permission, of course, and that’s easier when they know you. Then, after they are used to seeing the camera with you, then you can start taking pictures. Just ease into it versus being a stranger with a camera. Yes, you’ll probably get the silly faces and poses, but keep at it, let them have fun. Keep taking pictures and you will inevitably get some more interesting images after the ‘cheese’. Build a rapport,” I say, realizing that there is a lot of similarity with visual documentation and interviewing.

In Jennifer’s DS created for the summer course, she had incorporated video clips as well as photographs of various people. With her story, in particular, I was very aware of the ethical issues of sharing images of classrooms with students who were probably unaware of the potential audience of their captured image. When I began to take field
notes, or what I called data sketches, I made a conscious decision to not include any faces when I captured video stills (Fig. 4.13) that can inform my narratives when combined with transcript excerpts from the video, and reflections in my research notes.

In my teacher reflections, I had noted:

Documenting DS excerpts as series of still images is not the same as seeing the video. There is a challenge in preserving or retaining the meaning that matches what the original format conveys. In the example above, is the meaning playfulness versus carrying child in emergency? Depending on the intent and reason for changes in the format, such as research documentation for analysis or sharing, the challenge must be taken into account so as not to misunderstand the context (Sontag, 1999).

The question of ethics related to visual material is built into the content of the Technology for FLE and ESOL classrooms since teachers should be aware of copyright issues, publication implications, and privacy and authorship of multimodal materials. These topics are peripherally-related to the multimodal video creation (the DS) which is part of the course requirements. Teachers often create or appropriate various materials into their own teaching toolbox, including visuals from media or personal sources. The use of these visuals provides an opening to discuss ethical issues pertaining to the visual, often recognizable, representation of others. Unlike typical courses in History or Science, the visual representations that are useful and authentic to the language
learning experience are often contemporary images and may include personal images of family, friends, etc., so issues about consent are at the forefront (Bach, 2007).

Both Raul and Jennifer included images of people in their DS. Raul included family pictures and when I asked about this, he joked that since he was the family archivist, he gave himself the authority to use the images. When I asked Jennifer about the images in her story and the inclusion of the faces of children, she mentioned how she had previously given presentations about and/or for the program with permission. In this work, I have not included any images of faces or recognizable people in order to keep all participants and unknown (and unaware) others anonymous. During the summer course, a student from Saudi Arabia had created an engaging and evocative digital story mostly composed of found images including representations of people, such as artistic renderings (drawings), and silhouettes. Despite the ethical concerns that inevitably, or should, arise, when using video or photography, there are countless examples of why it is worth pursuing (Leavy, 2015). In other classroom examples (video projects from a prior semester and/or not included in this study), a student with a cochlear implant wanted to use a video with no sound to accompany her images of communicating via hand-signing and another student’s visuals depicting his “Korean style” (traditional) clothing served to help me realize that his story was about cultural identity, displacement, and xenophobia. In the case of the female Saudi student and the Korean heritage student (from China), I had multiple questions about cultural influences on their ideas about representation and the use of visuals. Unfortunately, these questions remain unasked and unanswered since, for a few students in the summer Technology course, my course was the final semester before graduation and it is quite
likely that many students, diploma in hand, now living in their home countries outside of the U.S., had not seen my email requests sent to their student accounts multiple semesters post-graduation.

Jennifer: “I’m going to be a language teacher”

For the instructional handout for students to learn about their upcoming multimodal personal narrative task, I used a short passage from Lambert’s (2013) Digital Storytelling book to introduce the process of DS:

We want stories. We love stories. Stories keep us alive. Stories that come from a place of deep insight and with a knowing wink to their audience, and stories that tease us into examining our own feelings and beliefs, and stories that guide us on our own path. But most importantly, stories told as stories, that honor the simple idea that we want to relive what the author experienced in time and space (p. 54).

This passage presents the essence of the DS rationale and served as an introduction to the project during the Technology in FLE and ESOL course (See Appendix E for DS instructions). Jennifer’s story about teaching in Zanzibar did really seem to convey what she had done over a summer. I was truly looking forward to interviewing her about her creative process.

“Did the Digital Story accurately reflect your experience?” I ask Jennifer.

“Not as accurate as I could tell it. I mean, you can always do it better, but I think it was a good representation. I have told the stories so many times at the university, in relation to the organization or at other meetings. At times, I’ve told the story and there’s multiple people crying, so I would note, ‘oh, that’s a meaningful or emotional part of the story.’”
This was news to me, but it explained the expertly-edited video that managed to really focus on the experience of her teaching in Zanzibar and addressed the problem of testing in a language, English, which is not the students’ dominant language. While the creation of a video may have been a new format for Jennifer, she had “heard the story so many times [that] in listening to the DS before this interview, [Jennifer] didn’t have so much of a reaction.” She admits, “I think I could have done a better job, but, for my first time doing a DS, I think I did a good job. I’m happy.”

I was happy, too, in her remark revealing that she had watched the video as preparation for the interview, which, like Raul’s interview, was close to a year after the conclusion of the course.

Figure 4.14. A Data Sketch (unfinished) to Organize Multimodal Data.

“Yes, it was very concise. You put a lot of content into this few minutes. Now that I hear that you had already told the story a number of times, it shows. I think that’s how you were able to really focus on the story, on what you wanted to highlight, which was the education system and the challenges of the students in Zanzibar.” As soon as I say this, I immediately reconsider and regret that I had just chosen the “highlight” of the video instead of asking Jennifer about her intentions. I try to give her an opportunity to
expand or correct me. “Do you think the story was more about your experience or that of the students [learning English]?”

“I tried to make it more personal. I remember one of the key things you said was make sure you show who you are when you’re speaking. So maybe that’s why I started it off about myself, but the story, the point of it, was really about the students and their system, which hopefully got across.”

Jennifer was probably alluding to my brief description of Lambert’s (2013) DS guidelines and the idea represented in the following adapted Figure 4.15.

![Figure 4.15. Approaches to Content in DS (adapted from Lambert, 2013, p. 43).](image)

I’m impressed with the details with which Jennifer recounts the experience of the DS project, which had taken place long ago. “Yes, definitely,” I reply. “How does the story shape you into a language teacher?” Again, I immediately back-tracked a bit after asking this. “Do you think of yourself as a English Language Teacher?”

“The story definitely shaped me into a language teacher. 100%. Like definitely 100%,” she responds enthusiastically and laughs, as if I was asking the obvious.
At this point, I’d love to take credit and think of the DS story task as a tool that helped her to understand the reason(s) she sees herself a language teacher, but I know she’s not talking about the experience of creating the DS, but rather the story that formed the content of the DS. That is the story that shaped her into a teacher. She continues to explain:

“It’s the reason I’m doing what I’m doing now. I’m going to be a language teacher. So, it definitely, one hundred percent-- Like the letter I read at the end of the story; those students who asked, ‘You promise you’ll come back? You promise you’ll do this somewhere else?’ And just that was meaningful. And now I’m doing that [language teaching]. So definitely it shaped me for sure.”

“When you said you told the story multiple times, how do you think that affected the story that you ultimately told when you did the DS?” I was mostly curious to know who was the audience of the past versions of the story. Admittedly, when I first saw the Story Circle peer discussion via our course’s online platform where I had opened a space for the small groups to discuss the creation process of their individual narratives, I thought about the problematic issue of the “white savior” where all-too-often, inexperienced and unskilled (white) (western) (affluent) youth engage in volunteer programs abroad. The well-meaning intentions of “volunteer tourism” are often ill-fitting for the host country and the negative “white savior” term often describes a voyeuristic, narcissistic, and/or naïve “tourist.” I was only superficially aware of the language education challenge in Zanzibar since it relates to language policy and the globalization of English (Warner, 2015); however, upon meeting Jennifer, and emailing about the DS project, I realized that she was knowledgeable about the problematic policies, and had
the ability to connect with her students. She was a sojourner versus a tourist. In describing the critical awareness, humanizing connection and mutual understanding, Byram (1997) alludes to the concept of “the tourist and the sojourner,” where the tourist remains unchanged and the experience of the sojourner leads to “an understanding of others and of themselves which makes them more conscious of their humanity and more able to reflect upon and question the social conditions in which they live” (p. 2). This applies to the FLE context as a description of bridging language learner with target language population and instructor with overall target language content, but it also should apply to instructor-student (pedagogical) connections.

“I think it helped it,” Jennifer was quick to respond, but seemed to seriously contemplate the question of re-telling the story multiple times. “I’ve also used this video to continue to find meaning. So it’s a process.”

Jennifer described the DS project in the same manner as most of the literature supporting the “transformational” outcomes as well as the descriptive words I use to discuss the narratives I am collecting and (re)writing. I found her comments noteworthy since I had not shared these words with her, nor do I think Jennifer sought the literature on DS (I intentionally assigned articles presenting DS to the Technology in Language Classrooms that were less theory-based and more procedural, written more for teachers than researchers). Yet, there is always a thought that my intentions or research goals are transparent and participants who want to comply, as Todd had phrased it “help me,” will try to respond in a manner they think is “correct” for my research. This bias of researcher influence lessened with clear statements to indicate that the researcher is (I am) looking to get their honest perspectives. Many books and papers on qualitative
interviewing address the issue of researcher subjectivity and bias and suggest mitigating the bias by being upfront about the lack of objectivity (Wolcott, 2005). Often creative choices that elicit data with the aid of visuals or other arts-based methods can also minimize inauthentic or unsubstantial reactions or responses (Pauwels, 2011; Pink, 2001). Between the interviews, I wondered what types of images Jennifer would capture. I was hoping to have a chance to ask her about colonialist perspectives of “natives” and the camera as a tool for social justice (PhotoVoice tradition of Wang & Buris, 1997, or Depression-era photos of Lewis Hine, Dorthea Lange, and others) as well as an instrument of power and positionality of the gaze.

Raul: “A hybrid of the two”

I find Raul’s clear distinction of “Puerto Rican” and “American” -- almost as if these were mutually exclusive compartments, or “both halves,” of a person— noteworthy. Additionally, when he refers to these cultures, he alludes to symbols and tangible representations that reiterate the idea of culture as a shared cuisine and language, with potentially geographic borders. In my ESOL classrooms, I often introduced the fact that the term “America(n)” has a different meaning for people outside the United States. My explanation of a plural “Americas,” encompassing both North and South America and everything in between, was a foreign concept for the monolingual, monocultural students who comprised the majority of my ESOL courses. This demographic trend of monolingual future teachers is pervasive in most Colleges of Education within the United States (Fogle & Moser, 2017; Gay, 2000; Ramos, 2017). In the years prior to this study, when I invoked the topic of culture as part of teacher
training lessons on cultural awareness and culturally-responsive teaching practices, my ESOL education students often respond, "Oh, I don't have a culture. I'm just American." These responses suggested they were unprepared for discussing issues of cultural identity, which is a common obstacle in the related literature on teacher development (Delpit, 2009; Gay, 2014; Gill, 2014).

As mentioned previously, this lack of deep understanding about culture/Culture was also a strong impetus for this current dissertation exploration. While the mixed mono-cultural/lingual and multi-cultural/lingual technology course presented a new, more-diversified teaching context for me (and perhaps for students as well), I could still see some of the same challenges in articulating ideas and interpretations of “culture” beyond the “food and music” (Todd’s remembrances/communications, 2016). So, while many of my summer course students embodied diverse cultural experiences, how they communicated their ideas and experiences regarding culture was meaningful and perhaps revealing of an ongoing identity construction. For me, investigating and learning how to teach culture-related topics with the pedagogical intention to support and develop teaching skills remained a challenge for me (and others: Delpit, 2006; Sleeter, 2011).

As part of the DS project, students created a storyboard, or draft of the story idea where they could share the narrative and some or all of the visuals and receive feedback from the small peer group, or “Story Circle” (Lambert, 2013). Raul’s class had both face-to-face feedback as well as online, asynchronous opportunities for feedback. In Raul’s communication with his classmates regarding the creation process of the DS, he shared his work and wrote: “... here are my drafts; I am still in the process of
revising. I would like to use a hybrid of the two" (Raul, 2015 online posting within his Story Circle group). So, while Raul wrote that he wanted to create a hybrid of the two by combining his narrative story about (discovering) being bicultural with a metaphor-based poem he had written about his cultural heritage, his DS final product was more of a juxtaposition of the multimodal video (images and his voice-over narrative) and a still document of his text-based poem rather than a hybrid that combines the two ideas to create something new. Both the poem and the narrative presented the (separate) cultural components of his identity. Through the use of imagery and code-switching, Raul’s poem and narrative presented the sights, sounds, and tastes of Puerto Rico

\begin{quote}
I am from
loud salsa music
dominoes clinking from the dining room
tostones sizzling on the pan and bellowing laughter
\end{quote}

(Raul, 2015, excerpt/first stanza of poem included in his DS)

as well as the “American”-ness Raul felt “In the States, [where he] was just ordinary [Raul] with a last name that was often misspelled or mispronounced” (Raul, 2015 DS excerpt).

As I listen to our conversation a year after the creation of this DS project, I become more interested in Raul’s differentiating of “American culture” and “Puerto Rican culture,” in his identity as a bicultural individual occupying, as Darder (1995) would say, this “contested terrain of difference” (p. 2). This differentiation remains consistent in the (re)storying of his identity journey, as seen in the inception of his DS, through the peer feedback he received during our class, to his final video product, and now, as he recounts the confusion of “which culture he belonged to.”
The conversational interview reminded me of an exchange I had read during one of the online Story Circle posts from the course. When Raul asked for feedback, his classmate, Patricia, commented on Raul’s use of the term “bicultural” instead of “Puerto Rican American” [sic], as seen in Figure 4.16, below.

Figure 4.16. Screenshot of Student Peer Feedback Excerpt.

Patricia’s questions and feedback, in red font, reveal reflexivity in the communication about identity and cultural identity as self-determined as well as nuanced (differentiating between her more specific suggestion and the initial non-specific term, bicultural). During the DS video, Raul had mentioned “foreign culture perspectives” and may have preferred the term “bicultural” as a way to preserve the dual existence versus a blending, as in the term “Puerto Rican-American.” Since Raul lived in places where he felt like an outsider, perhaps the cultures do seem to be kept apart versus, for example, a community where there are many self-identified Puerto Ricans.

As I listen to him, I remain silent about the idea of an implied single “American culture” that is different from that of the “Puerto Rican kids” with “Puerto Rican parents.” Who am I to define what a “hybrid of the two” cultures may feel like or look like? Raul has the “authority of experience,” as hooks (1994) would describe it, and through the
DS project and this interview, I want to hear Raul's “passion of experience [and] passion of remembrance” (hooks, 1994, p.90). I consciously and deliberately refrain from questioning Raul's seemingly-divided or compartmentalized bicultural identity, or, at least his consistent references to this during his past identity journey. I am, however, interested in language as one of his choices of representations that “clarify” the cultural distinctions. Thus, I ask about Raul’s efforts to learn Spanish and I take note of how his path to bilingualism differed from my own and the many others who lost the ability, or practice, of speaking the native language of one’s parent(s).

**Julie: Like a Gringa**

Through storytelling, we share our culture, beliefs, and values; in essence, learning occurs through stories. My life experiences have given me certain values and insights; these experiences are inseparable from my self (Richardson, 2000). I share these experiences as personal stories in my teaching and encourage students to explore their own cultural and linguistic narratives as authentic and reflexive learning opportunities. Teaching often demands the sharing of one’s self (Clandinin & Connolly, 2004; Mulder & Dull, 2014; Nieto, 2009). Others who blur genres, question the dichotomy of subjectivity and objectivity, fact and fiction, and expand the peripheries of social science research would interject: Research often demands the sharing of one’s self (Ellis, 2003; Bochner, Richardson, 2000).

While living in Miami during my undergraduate studies, I often got compliments on my Spanish. My fluency, mixed with my non-native accent, was what most likely led to the surprised appreciation in a city where Spanish is commonplace.
“Gracias. Mi madre es de Uruguay,” I explained smiling as I revealed that I was of Spanish language heritage. The reaction was often furrowed eyebrows and fading smiles. “¿Ah sí? …entonces tienes que hablar sin acento ‘gringa,’.” Casually using a common term in Miami to refer to any non-Hispanic person, the Spanish speaker would jokingly point out my “gringa” accent. In another context, in other varieties of Spanish, this word may have been an insult or a vulgar othering. As usual, I knew the impromptu discussion would lead back to my unmistakable non-native speaker accent. “Es verdad, pero no soy de Miami.” This short phrase divulged a wealth of sociolinguistic assumptions and explanations. True, I had admitted my cultural roots, but the words were incongruous with my pronunciation, and now I felt I had to explain. Within the response that I was “not from Miami,” I was implying that the expectations of heritage language maintenance should be instantaneously lowered. In fact, I had never really studied Spanish. Like many children with a mother tongue other than English, my bilingual abilities came naturally, but did not stay long, nor fully develop (Bialystok, 2016; Nieto, 2015). Code-switching in our house became more about listening in one language and answering in another (Cummins, 2014).

In our mostly monolingual community in the late 1980s, there were no mainstream conversations about bilingual education or offerings of special language classes that tailor to heritage language learners (Bialystok, 2009; Valdés, 2005). It didn’t take long before my mother, a scholar of languages and professor of literature, steered us away from the available Spanish language classes. My brother and I attended a small private school that had the uncommon opportunity to begin studying a
foreign language at the elementary and middle school level; however, the teacher of the
Spanish class did not meet my mother’s standards. It took just one incident where the
teacher had erroneously corrected my brother in front of the class and insisted the word
for “banana” was plátanos. For many Spanish speakers, plátanos, like the cognate in
English, plantains, describes a banana-shaped green fruit that is inedible when raw and
was never used to refer to the sweet yellow fruit. I recall my mother’s attempt to discuss
these variations with the inexperienced and/or uninformed non-native Spanish speaker,
but, despite the school’s small size and “community-ness” of the parents and school
staff, the teacher dug in his heels. The teacher’s ignorance/ignoring of varietal
differences and his insistence that all Spanish speakers only use one word to describe
the same item sealed his fate according to my mother. The man would from then on be
referred to as “Mr. Plátanos” in our house and this moniker came to represent numerous
examples of American cultural assumptions and fallacies.

“No, no. Not ‘American;’ you mean those from the United States.”

This is what my mother would interject as a reminder to my brother and me that
even “basic” geography is perspectival and political. She often pointed to the Americas
on a map depicting Antarctica hugging the top of the poster, a white land mass reaching
out to the tip of Argentina and Chile. In bright green and yellow, the two bordering
countries continued downward, until Argentina expanded in width and made way for
Uruguay. Under Uruguay, Brazil and the rest of South America followed downward,
appearing in vibrant, tropical colors. The words “The World: Upside Down” were
surrounded in Pacific blue, and further downward, Mexico, the United States, and
Canada appeared, protruding from the bottom of the map poster.
“People here in the United States forget that they live in just one country in the Americas and in that respect, we are all American.” She would then predictably point out that even the makers of the map, a map which is supposed to provide a different critical perspective of the world, made a mistake in calling itself the “upside down map.” They still defaulted to the perpetuation of the north-south discrimination. With this title, the mapmakers still marked north as “up” and south as “down,” unable to escape from the geography-based ranking structure. This was just one of many examples from my immigrant mother on the ethnocentrisms surrounding us. It was an early lesson that in social environments, “culture cannot be thought about other than in the presence of power” (Kress & Pachler, 2007, p. 20). Geography, language, everything was political and a critical perspective was necessary.

My brother and I had arrived to the United States as toddler and infant, but in order to take full advantage of being treated like “natives” and gaining the privilege of those who spoke English without a foreign accent, we would need to sound unlike the implacable-but-definitely-foreign accent of my mother. My mother took special care to expose us to native-spoken English. This meant that while my mother’s collection of books were in multiple languages, the home library for my brother and me had stacks of books on cassettes. We delighted in pressing “play” to hear Disney stories and Star Wars on audio cassettes with accompanying booklets of English text and colorful images. My mother, despite her (multilingual and international) education, still felt the burden of imposed language hierarchies and the discriminations that came with having a foreign accent (Norton & Toohey, 2004; Pennycook, 2003; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2008; Valdés, 2005).
At a young age, I sensed the power of English and the prevalence of linguistic discriminations; later, as a teenager I had the opportunity to study abroad and returned with a passion for languages social activism; as a young adult, I spent summers traveling and working abroad; as an adult, I entered into language education. These early impressions are ingrained in my critical perspective and influence my approach to teaching. In English language education, critical ideas of English spoke to my experience as well as my privilege, including an awareness that American or British models of English variety are rewarded with cultural, economic, and political capital (Kachru, Kachru, and Nelson, 2006).

In my current teaching, I encounter the idea that monolingualism is the norm. Each semester, my students state—either directly or indirectly-- that speaking languages other than English in the home is somehow problematic and that English language learners in their future classrooms will be “time-consuming” and burdensome. My students are young adults in a large public university studying to become teachers. In my classes, they express how their personal networks, social or other, do not include any non-native speakers of English or learners of English language. As their instructor, and knowing that their future classes in the K-12 system in Florida (or anywhere in the U.S.) will certainly have students who are English language learners, I want to be sure that they are aware of how to teach their diverse classrooms. During the semester we share, I try to challenge their assumptions and hope they consciously expand their networks (Byram, 2014; Kramsch, 2013; Kramsch & Ware, 2013).
A Monolingual on Bilingualism and a Multilingual on Monolingualism

During our first official-yet-informal Skype interview, I had asked Jennifer about her academic/professional goals and where she saw herself in five or ten years. Her response included a story about her teaching experience at an elementary school in a predominantly monolingual county in the US and demonstrated an understanding of linguistically responsive teaching (Lucas & Villegas, 2010).

“I’m not quite sure [where my future leads]. But I would definitely want to use my skills and teach. I want to focus on culture in some work and I’m interested in working with refugees in some way. I’m fine with language teaching right now. I want to have my certification, but in the future, I might use the teaching background to complement work [...] on some sustainability project where I may be helping to build the school in addition to teaching. So, I’m looking at organizations that have as part of it, English classes and cultural immersion programs.”

When she was a student, I didn’t recall her mentioning her internship at a local public school, so I asked her about this experience, “When you were teaching ESL at Briar Elementary School, did you talk about cultural issues at all? Did that come up in the lessons?”

“It did come up... it came up naturally a lot of the time because there were so many different cultures in that classroom, but a lot of the issues that I have learned about and saw first hand is that a lot of kids have situations back home where their parents, the ones that speak English now, don’t want to speak their home [first] language with their kids.”
I nodded knowingly as she continued, switching back and forth talking about language choices, “And then there’s the opposite, where kids don’t speak English at home. I found a lot of kids that are dealing with that situation, and you know, when you’re six, (laughs), you don’t really know how to take it. When your parents are telling you one things and the teacher another. I had students who didn’t want to tell other kids that they knew other languages. And then they would be frustrated that they couldn’t speak and express themselves in English. I had to tell them that it’s ok, and get them to be proud of their language without stepping over their parents and what they are saying at home. So, you want to do it as naturally as possible so they don’t find themselves in the middle.”

For me, it was encouraging to see how a young monolingual developing teacher expressed the experience of seeing how language is negotiated, consciously and unconsciously, and how language is integral to identity, one’s shared identity and private home identity. She clearly had a critical approach in viewing the conflicting dynamics related to language as well as the more overt conflicts that arise in an elementary classroom, such as her handling “when one kid was making fun of another kid.”

Jennifer recounts the situation as, “One thing that worked... I came to the table and sat down and asked ‘What’s going on guys?’” and describes her engaging in a teachable moment that hopefully transcended the immediate rift between children and extended the idea of inclusivity and respect in an accessible way.

“You know twice as many words since you know Spanish...” Jennifer said to reassure and encourage the emerging bilingual child.
I responded to Jennifer’s story with praise, and explained to her how I often encounter the opposite in ESOL teacher training. I was probably preaching to the choir, or teaching to the exemplar, but I wanted to reiterate the need for teachers need to understand the importance of critical multiculturalism and critical pedagogy in their classrooms and the effect these concepts have beyond the classroom walls (de Jong & Harper, 2005).

“I wasn’t sure what you were going to ask me..... but now I see what you’re looking at...” Jennifer tells me at the end of our conversation about the Briar Elementary internship. This was followed by, “Definitely, continue to contact me” to further the conversation (and continue my research study) when she returns from her four-month teaching position in Thailand.

“Good luck with all the packing and bon voyage!”

I was super pleased with the interview I had with Jennifer and I couldn’t help but be amused at her curiosity-turned-to-discovery in her phrase, “Now I see what you’re looking at ...” (in your study or in these interviews). The Skype-based interview with her evolved and shape-shifted in real time, so our interactions were very much a conversation, with me doing most of the listening and Jennifer speaking at a comparatively quick pace.

On the other hand, with Todd, the email communication that supplanted an in-depth, engaging conversation, had a very different dynamic. Also, because of my own perceived lack of guidance and regret at the recent discovery of examples of terse communications while I was his instructor, I found myself crafting long, detailed, guiding questions for him to ponder before his eventual emailed responses. Todd was still
juggling multiple roles, but now abroad. I knew that his busy schedule would limit the
time for a sustained back-and-forth chat-like email chain. No, it’s better to give him lots
of questions and allow him to process the responses over time.

I had considered suspending the idea of “Todd” and not including him in this
dissertation study. The enthusiasm I attributed to him leads me to believe he wanted to
share his ideas and his voice. The following responses, however, only came, after two
reminders and questions about participating in the study.

In my email to Todd, I gave him a quote and asked for his interpretation. I didn’t
include that the quote-question was from a poem (by Adrienne Rich); I wanted to give
as much freedom in their response as possible. Among a list of other questions, I wrote:

_How do you relate to/interpret the expression: The story of our lives becomes our lives?_ 

Todd’s response was not what I expected even though it was similar to
statements he had made in earlier posts about himself during the Technology course.

He addressed, in one way or another, the various questions I had asked and wrote:

_I spent a year teaching in [a large city] after spending 8 years teaching in
South America and West Africa/Middle East. Arriving in [the US], I was
surrounded by Latinos, Arabs, and Africans. Every day in New York, I
could speak Spanish, French, and Arabic. So I was able to relate to my
students from Haiti, Ivory Coast, Yemen, Mexico, and Europe. Teaching
around the world has made me a more empathetic person, which I think is
vital to being an effective teacher. ESL teachers who have never taught
abroad, in my opinion, can NEVER be an effective ESL in the United
States. Why? Because they have no idea what is like to be a stranger in a
strange land surrounded by a foreign language. In order to understand our
ELL’s we need to know what it is like to feel like them. Which means, we
must know what it is like to live in a country that is not our own (Todd,
email communication, 2017)._ 

_Nieto (2009) agrees, and states that merely attaining an understanding of “other”
cultures is insufficient and suggests that teachers should be multicultural and_
multilingual. She explains how this knowledge supports the pedagogical skill of being able to draw from one’s own identities and linguistic and cultural diversity in order to connect with students and proposes more incentives to teach or support future teachers in their efforts to overcome any lack of additional language or intercultural exposure.

In the language teacher education classrooms, I come across monolinguals who may find it difficult to realize the extent of scaffolding needed for English language learners. In past semesters, I have either walked into a classroom and introduced the lesson in French, or I have invited an Arabic-speaking colleague to enter the classroom and start a presentation in Arabic. If my teacher-students are monolinguals, they are often struck with fear and anxiety, which is exactly the point. The “other” language demonstration is a quick way to place a monolingual in the shoes of a struggling student who is lost while trying to navigate a new language in addition to a new class, a new school, and, often a new community and country. These are the issues (and feelings) that future teachers in the K-12 system need to understand. The demonstration is fleeting, though, and I do not know if my students were able to internalize that feeling and keep it with them as a reminder, or how long those future teachers will understand how easily a student becomes frustrated when they do not understand.

Other ways I try to teach or remind students how it feels to be in a classroom speaking an “other” language is to try to draw from the knowledge and experience of all students as a way to expand (inter)cultural competency. For example, inviting students to discuss their language-learning experiences or their cultural backgrounds, such as Raul’s story of cultural identity confusion. The DS project did make the stories of individual students more memorable, and thus, in this respect, the DS project was a
success and can be used in various ways to transfer one lesson via a vicariously-felt personal narrative to another person.

The potential for a DS project to move another student in the class, or, since the DS is an easily shared personal narrative via the Internet, the potential for the DS to be “transformative” for anyone, shouldn’t be dismissed. As I referenced in the Literature Review, a multitude of researchers have been and continue to explore the affordances of DS. And yet, while I can envision a personal narrative project, such as a language autobiography, as “transformative,” I did enter into this study with an optimistic, yet realistic, vision that the potentially-transformative activity that involves a communicative process and creates a space for reflection, would not be a one-size-“transformative”-for-all. Questions trying to explain—or worse, measure- the effect of an experience endure the same faults as attempting to generalize unique findings; however, this doesn’t mean that individuals cannot see, relate, understand, empathize, and, in essence have a transfer of knowledge and understanding. These are “transferable implications for teacher identities” (Canagarajah, 2012) for emerging teachers, current teachers, and those who navigate the in-between and the peripheries of language education and multicultural education.

Ritchie and Wilson (2000) mention initial resistance from pre-service teachers and describe the importance of collaborative groups for furthering reflexivity on teaching and professional development. In their use of narrative as a potential for change and development, the authors stress that this potential for change regarding the teachers’ perceptions about language learning practices and the formation of personal and professional subjectivities do not come about through teaching particular methods.
Rather, “teachers gain critical perspective on how their identities have been constructed by/in the culture” (p. 180) through the use of new self-reflexive methods, such as the shaping and sharing of cultural narratives.

**Raul: El Americano, El Gringo, and Snow White**

“I would probably say [that I went to Puerto Rico] if not every other summer, something to that effect, [to] spend time with my family [there]. Probably the shortest duration was three weeks, but usually all summer,” Raul explained in response to my question asking about how he learned Spanish.

“How did you feel when you went to Puerto Rico?” I ask. His DS story centered on his cultural experiences with family and others in Puerto Rico, so unsurprisingly, his re-telling of his feelings during family visit interactions expressed the same concepts and confusions resulting from his shifting insider-outsider experiences. What was new and intriguing for me, as a language educator, was his detailed description of his Spanish language learning process.

“In some ways I felt like an outsider to my family and they even considered me ‘El Americano, El Gringo,’ coming from the United States. And so that was kind of weird; but being around them over a period of time, you start to speak the way they speak. You start to act the way they do toward things. You start to assimilate back into this culture, because you know that’s where your roots come from. My grandparents and my aunts did a fabulous job of teaching me Spanish, but not by textbook, but through life experience. They would talk to me and at first I wouldn’t understand; and then after a while, it was a process of negotiating meaning and I would start to
understand what they were saying. And then I’d be able to pick it up; I would mimic, and then I would have an understanding of what those things meant.”

I notice how we both slipped into a teacher-mode when discussing the language learning process. When Raul mentions “textbook,” this seemed to trigger the keywords and jargon, like “negotiating meaning,” heavily used in language education. My follow-up question about (language) corrections makes evident the fact that we are two language educators inevitably aware of concepts in language pedagogy. Engaged by this personal narrative about naturalistic, informal language acquisition, I ask, “Would they correct you in a way that was encouraging?”

“They would definitely correct, like in the way sometimes I would use words I perhaps picked up from the Mexicans that I that I met in the Northwest; they [the family in Puerto Rico] would be able to correct and say ‘That's not the way we say that here.’ Which, again, was a nice way of showing me part of my culture. As you know, from Puerto Rico the words aren’t always the same as other Latin American countries,” he nods with me and our discussion becomes side-tracked into turn-taking exchange of personal anecdotes regarding expressions in different varieties in language(s), including our sometimes-embarrassing experiences of making cultural linguistic “mistakes” when in cross-cultural conversations.

Raul summarizes the effect of learning about language varieties through personal experiences in the location of that target language, and states, “So then I would learn these words [from Mexicans in the Northeast US], but when I go back to Puerto Rico to try to use these words, they would go, ‘Well, that doesn’t quite mean the
same thing’ or ‘We use this word’ or ‘We don’t pronounce it that way.’ It was interesting; it helped me to see my culture in a different way."

In language teacher education contexts, attention to the cultural and linguistic ideas of PST is as important as the attention to the linguistic diversity of their future students, which is normally addressed in explicit ways, via the course curriculum. A culturally-responsive approach that focuses on the PSTs is more akin to modeling the pedagogy I would encourage my students to use in their language teaching. For example, precisely, this study stems from using a student-centered approach; the autobiographical/autoethnographic digital stories promote a principle aspect of inclusive and critical pedagogy where students have cultural assets rather than linguistic deficits (Bartolomé, 2009; Nieto, 2009; Vavrus, 2002; Yi, 2014) and where performance and multimodality allow for more diverse reflections. While the DS may have been the initial focus of this study, and I still wanted to ask Raul about his year-old project, I was learning much more about Raul now than he could possibly fit into a 3-5 minute DS video.

I envied Raul’s motivation to learn his family’s language and wondered what could have been a factor influencing his drive to learn Spanish. Raul continues his story:

“You know for me, it was different because I didn’t wear my Culture on my skin whereas my brothers and sisters did. I was kind of like the Snow White of the family, where I was a lot more pale, light complected, where as my brothers and sisters were always a little bit darker. I guess I always felt like where as they didn’t have to speak the language for their culture to be recognized, I needed to know more about the language
to fully immerse myself into the culture and language to be recognized as ‘one of…’ So I guess I always tried a little bit harder.”

His candor made me feel as if I had known him and his family since childhood. More accurately, I wanted to know more.

“Did your brother or sister speak Spanish? Did they also pick it up?” My own older brother had always spoken Spanish better than I did, even before I became fluent in French. Now, my excuse is that I have French on the tip of my tongue and Spanish often requires quite an effort to make its way out of my mouth. Raul seems much more at ease switching from language to language.

“No, they weren’t interested. They didn’t have an interest and I know they looked at it as a negative because, again, they got the brunt of some racism that I did not. Living in the Northwest, it was very apparent that my older brother who was more of a chocolate brown with a thick ol’ mustache, you know, he stuck out from the regular Caucasians and so they would point that out. They would sometimes say things that were not so nice, so to add a language on top of that, I suppose---I’m putting words in my brother’s mouth now-- but I’m assuming he probably didn’t want that negative attention.”

The depth and openness of his response made me feel privileged to have had him as a student and now, a participant. I wondered how much of his reflections on his identity explorations and his language-learning journey have been explored during his time in France, or, perhaps during his master’s program in language education.

“Did your brother go to Puerto Rico in the summers too?”
“No, he did not. I’m the only one that asked.”

“Oh, it was your choice?” I asked, surprised that the family would have different summer plans, but then I recalled there was a fairly large age difference between the siblings.

“Yes, I was the one who asked.”

I returned to my earlier thought about the language educator way in which he shared his story. Being a language teacher, having a background in linguistics, multicultural studies, and language policy is, of course, part of who he is now. And, inevitably, who he is now affects and shapes how he re-stories his past. Additionally, Raul is aware of my own background as a language educator and an instructor for pre-service teachers. While my role as researcher is most likely less obtrusive than in more formal interviews where interlocutors do not know each other personally, I cannot forget that in any exchange, the relationship between speakers will affect the discussion. Storytelling, either in the informal recounting of one’s past, or in the more procedural and edited creation of a digital story, is fundamentally relational (Frank, 2000); stories are told to someone, somewhere. This also holds true in this re-storying process, e.g. my intention to present my interview-conversations as research. Thus, the ethical responsibility to reflect on and often include this relational contextualization between researcher and participants also extends to a reflexivity of the relation between the audience and author.

I ask Raul about how his more recent education shapes the way he sees his past: “[You’re telling me] The reason why you went out of your way to learn Spanish; it seems you’re reflecting on that now, as of language instructor, as someone who is very
well-educated in language theory and in the politics of language. So the way you see it now may or may not be different ---it probably is different-- than what you thought about it back then.” I pause before attempting to delve into the vast, multi-dimensional, and ambiguous question about how we see ourselves over time. “Do you think you are kind of conjuring up your younger self? Was it just fun to know another language or learn another language or did you really feel this identity, this search for identity and connection to Puerto Rican culture?”

“I think a lot of what you're saying, it happened to me on a subconscious level as a child that I didn't really know what I was doing but I know that I wanted it. So, I know that I wanted to be able to speak Spanish. I know that I wanted to see, out of all my brothers and sisters I'm the only one that at eleven years old, had a very strong desire to learn as many languages as possible.” He continues to explain this intrinsic desire for language-learning. “So for me, it came naturally. And then to know that I came from a culture that speaks a language other than English, I had to know that language. There was no if ands or buts about it! I just had to figure out how that was going to happen. So, I don't know that I looked at it in the way you described, I just knew that I needed to know that language and I had a perfect opportunity to do so because of my background and so I just made sure that that happened. Same things with French. At eleven years old, I also started to learn French and I was very curious about a bunch of different languages.”

I remain silent, allowing Raul to unpack these thoughts and reflections that didn’t surface during the course, as I had optimistically hoped when I planned the DS project about cultural issues. Either due to the short intensive nature of the course where Raul
created and shared the DS, or due to the nuanced, possibly-intimate, nature of reflexivity on personal experiences, it was difficult to explore the different ways in which students presented their past experiences and how the stories presented as a DS may differ from past re-storying opportunities.

Raul understands that his language learning motivation has deep roots and explains, “So, I think that in my case, there were a couple things: Had I not had that natural inclination or desire to learn languages we may be having a completely different conversation. I may be more like my brothers and sisters. I may have shied away from it; I may have never learned it. I think that for me, it was definitely a desire. Maybe my fairer skin. I think that did have something to do with it as well, although I didn't know that at the time. Like I said, that's a good reflection as an adult looking back on it. I just know that I wanted to be more like my family.”

A small sigh followed his last comment, signaling that perhaps this was his final thought about his language learning journey. I inform him, “That [association of language with Puerto Rican identity and family ties] did come out a bit in your digital story.”

At the core of the DS project, was my attempt to invite students to discuss their language-learning experiences or their cultural backgrounds or their experiences with intercultural communication during the course in order to multiply the experiential teachable moments from one student to many students as they vicariously learn via their shared narratives. Raul’s personal narrative project did receive multiple rounds of feedback where students welcomed diverse outcomes and engaged in reflexive
conversation about cultural issues; however, Raul’s creation of a digital story now served as an elicitation tool, leading Raul to contribute deeper, more personal stories.

Jennifer: Thailand

“Oh! There’s a lot I could possibly talk about with my experience in Thailand.”

Jennifer is animated even though I can only see her via a Skype screen communication. Many miles separated us, but the combination of time—almost two years since the intensive summer course—and intensity of experiences since our last interview created a different type of distance that I hoped could be bridged through our informal conversation-style communications.

“When we last spoke, you were a day or two away from leaving for Thailand. It’s been about six months and so much has happened. How have you been?”

Jennifer elongates the vowels in her response, “Gooooood. Running around!”

She laughs and seems to settle into her seat, probably aware we will be chatting for a while. I hope she sees our interviews not as “work,” but as a time to sit and reflect. Also, Jennifer seems to enjoy talking at length, which, combined with her anthropological ethnographer background, makes her an enjoyable and insightful interviewee. I remind myself to try and remain on topic.

“The last time we spoke you talked about the digital storytelling project that you did in the technology and FLE and ESOL class in the summer of 2015, which I know seems like ages ago. You’ve had some experiences since then, of course, so go ahead and tell me about your experience in Thailand, mostly focusing on the teaching of English and what kinds of strategies and projects you did, and perhaps also describing
the setting and maybe the technology available to you there." In hindsight, my question seems overwhelming, especially at the start of our conversation, yet Jennifer seemed to understand the pedagogical research purpose of our Skype meeting.

Because I had last spoken to her just before her departure for Thailand, I was curious to know if my questions, which reminded her of the DS project and using personal narratives in language education, would influence her teaching. Jennifer had shared in our first interview that she had no idea in what type of environment she would be placed when teaching in Thailand. Because of this, she had doubts about using a digital narrative option while teaching abroad. During the following interview, we cover a wide range of topics, each worthy of its own independent investigation and analysis. The topics most pertinent to this research, however, revealed connections with her use of personal narratives in the language-teaching context and her use of multimodal storytelling to support communication and build rapport with her students learning English as a foreign language in Thailand. Additionally, there were multiple instances of cross-cultural communicative competency and evidence of her sustained reflexivity on these cultural issues.

“I was there for 4 months but only teaching in the school for 3 months because the 1st month I had to get my certificate and take like a Thai language course, kind of. I got my placement in a province called [North Thai], in the main town, also called [North Thai].”

Jennifer jumps right into a description of the cultural context of her time in Thailand, “...which is near the main border town between Myanmar and Thailand. So it’s a huge hub for culture right there and that’s why I wanted to go to that area especially.
Because of the culture that’s in the north. It’s a lot different than in the south, like being a teacher in Bangkok, let’s say, because in my town there were only about 8 foreigners.” She must have seen my surprised reaction on the screen, and she repeats, “In the whole town. Yeah.”

The other eight foreigners were also teachers and represented various Anglophone countries. Jennifer describes how pleased she was with the secondary school where she taught. Since I am unfamiliar with the system in Thailand, she explains how the levels are divided. “So that means it was ages twelve to eighteen.” She pauses before saying, “And I taught all those levels.” Pride beams from her voice as she articulates each word: and I taught all those levels.

When I respond “Wow”, she laughs modestly and continues, "Yup, I had about 18-22 classes per week. All those are different classes.”

“So, .... 18 to 22 classes per week.” I’m sure she heard the confusion in my voice as I internalize what this means. As I am repeating her words, she also repeats herself and in unison, we say, “PER WEEK.”

She explains in detail how all the classes are organized and how many students she had. Just her description of her schedule seemed tiring, but she continued to explain the esteemed reputation of the public school and the various English programs, including supplemental private courses, for which the school was known.

We continue to discuss the nuances of the Thai system, as revealed in Jennifer’s singular example where there is no such thing as a “typical day.” Classes are surprisingly cancelled, tardiness is the norm, and the numerous holidays and festivals continuously shift the school schedule, but Jennifer laughs this off and says, “They are
really big on their festivals and their out of school experiences [...] . Everything is kinda last minute there, so you just have to go with it!"

I allow myself to be the student in our conversation, learning more about the unique details in the field of Language Teaching in diverse global contexts; however, once I gain an understanding of the context, I remain eager to know how Jennifer might have used personal narratives in this environment.

Jennifer had mentioned miscommunication in her storytelling about relations with her Thai co-teachers in Thailand. Before recounting her story, she released a long, “Ummm” and then paused.

Jennifer soon continued to speak in her quick manner, “An example where the Thai teacher would step in was like, a girl for example, all of a sudden a twelve year old girl started crying in class. And I couldn’t... I couldn’t get her tell me what was wrong without disrupting the entire class. And it was becoming a scene and I was in the middle of handing out papers, too. So I called my co-teacher who was sitting in the corner. ‘Can you finish handing out these papers?’ and I took the girl out of the class and talked to her and tried to understand what was going on and get her to like calm down. So something like that, I couldn’t really understand the situation, so I needed [the co-teacher] to take over so I could like handle that, you know?"

Her way of storytelling involves her audience, an audience of one in this case, connecting via Skype, and also reveals the ways in which Jennifer exudes empathy. Her treatment of the distressed student seems to be another example of how she connects, regardless of cultural differences, and humanizes the student who may have just been one face out of fifty.
Curious about the unfolding drama, I said, “And, may I ask, what was the situation? Why was she upset or crying?”

“You know, I never really could find out. Ummm. Unfortunately, in Thai culture, it’s a lot different than us. They keep all their emotions inside and they do not share problems. She just wouldn’t speak and I couldn’t tell if it was language or if it was the culture, which is something interesting, but after like 3 minutes, I just kinda hugged her and gave her that kind of consoling and then you know...”

I nod in agreement, not sharing the thoughts that sprang into my mind of hidden emotions. Silently, I listen as Jennifer concludes, “Back to class and she was ok. And later that day, I found a flower and picked it and went to her class and gave it to her when I had an off period. She smiled and you could tell she was happier. But umm... Sometimes you just don’t know what happens.”

Personal Narratives as Content Based Teaching

Jennifer, despite not having a classroom with technology or other basic tools, such as pens, markers, etc., decided to have students create their own narratives and create a book. In her training, she had made a book of her story, which included images of herself as a child, her family, and other photographs from her personal albums. Her “book” served as an example for students, and soon, they were off...

“Could you perhaps describe any times that you used the idea of personal narrative or storytelling in your teaching?” I asked after she had briefly held up the book in our Skype conversation (Fig. 3.4 and 4.17).
“Yeah so that's this book. It has a part with questions that I wanted them to fill out was something that I also answered. I started off with, ‘Hi my name is teacher Jenny’ and I write on the board and have everyone say it. And then I have I am from the United States and this is my town,” She says as she shows me the book and continues to discuss how she used it in the EFL classes for varying levels of proficiency.

“It was just text writing. Most of my classes were minimal, minimal first well minimal language skills and also minimal resources.” Jennifer responds to my general questions about how she made the book, what she decided to include, and how the students reacted to it. She stops and says, “I created it---oh don't let me forget I have another digital story another digital story thing I created later this semester; I wanted to tell you—“

After Jennifer tells me all about her classes and the printshop in town, and the resources available in some classes, but not others, I almost forget that she was only
there a short time. “You've done so much that I keep reminding myself that you were only there for 3 months. So with being so busy not just having so many classes but so many different classes and different subjects because you had the health class and then more traditional English classes... did you have time for reflecting on what you were doing, just general teacher reflexivity?”

Jennifer explains how she’s a reflexive person in all areas, not just teaching since it “is a huge passion” of hers. Her major was cultural anthropology, so “navigating Thai culture in the school system was incredibly fun for [her] compared to other for teachers who hated it.”

She then describes a time when she cried in front of the class due to some dramatic event back home. She continued, “... which you just do not do in Thai culture. The whole lesson was how to solve conflicts and family, so I gave them a story of a conflict with me and my dad and you had to fill out answers at the end. What was the conflict? Who was right? Who was wrong how could you have solved it? and when I told my story I cried in it and they were all [shocked].”

Her example of how she navigated her own emotions and came “through” the story referred to narrative as a healing power. At the same time, her students also revealed sometimes very personal stories.

**Jennifer: Unfinished Stories and Further Research**

After reading some of the narratives I had written encompassing Jennifer’s stories and re-thinking my reactions and interpretations of her images and original DS story (Fig. 4.16) as it compares to or sits with her stories from Thailand, I realize that the
questions about “TEFL tourism” (Stainton, 2018) and the impact of short-term, or even long-term teaching abroad by teachers who have little in common with their students is an area that needs much more attention. While many of the critical theorists in education have worked with culturally-responsive pedagogy in diverse contexts (Delpit, 1995), I wonder how much Jennifer could have learned from the experience and how much she could have interacted with Thai teachers and people who are there full time, continuously.

![Fig. 4.18. Still Images. Jennifer's First DS from summer 2015 (Zanzibar).](image)

When I asked Jennifer about the idea of the “white savior” and the pitfalls of volunteer tourism, including short-term teaching (English) jobs, she responded with thoughtful consideration.

Asking the question was delicate because it was not specifically about Jennifer, but about her knowledge or awareness of it as well as the potential appearance of a young, female from the US traveling abroad to teach and experience a new culture. I believe what differentiates the “white savior” from teachers who are able to accept short-term positions in far-off places is the contributions that Jennifer is able to make towards the assumed goal of English language acquisition and social engagement.
Jennifer travels with experience, but also with expertise, which is often lacking in these teach-abroad programs. That said, questions of sustainability, issues of hierarchy in native speaker status, and cultural sensitivity need to be reflected upon and addressed. We know it is the role of the critical educator to problematize these social, economic, and political issues from multiple perspectives. I wonder if Jennifer had thought of these issues while abroad.

In the following entry from her email communications with me, I include the majority of her lengthy response in an effort to show how passionate she is about the topic and to demonstrate that she has spent a significant amount of time—not just in composing the email—to reflect on the power dynamics of teach abroad programs (and similar organizations and perspectives).

First, the following are excerpt's from Jennifer’s over-sixteen hundred word response (edited for space and/or redundancy):

In regards to your question, that’s a big one. And even though I have heard and read many conversations about this topic, I have been putting off really delving into it with someone because many people who bring up the topic of the “white savior complex” are very passionate and argumentative in their ideas. So thank you, for giving me a reason to really write down my thoughts in regards to this!

To answer your question(s) there are a few different directions my mind goes so I hope to make my points clear and easy to follow. To answer your first question if I think others I have encountered could fit into the “white savior complex” or “colonialist” perspective, no. Not once in my line of work have I encountered a real person actually working/volunteering in the field that fits this “idea.” I have worked with a few hundred people [during projects in Africa, Nicaragua, Thailand, and at my university and Portland.]

The ideas and motives behind the “white savior,” I believe is absolutely wrong […] I have only ever seen it argued through the media (especially social media) and many of the times the people pointing fingers at “white saviors” have never actually worked in the field. […] As most, I am aware
that I can only contribute to a small chain of events that will hopefully grow to inspire, educate, and support the thriving and sustainable existence of others. No self-serving, no second agenda, no “privilege,” just humans helping humans because you can. [...]

Our culture, our religion, our ideas do not come before theirs. And I always experienced an equal amount of gratefulness we had for each other. Having the opportunity to share each others’ worlds and work together to create more opportunities for the children of OUR world. [My position is based on] what I have experienced and as I was trained in cultural anthropology, I believe I have a pretty good understanding of these types of situations, feelings, and differences.

But this brings me to a separate topic, something much more important than the “white savior complex.” It’s in regards to your second question, “Can volunteer tourism influence communities in a negative way?” And the answer is, yes, of course. The negative aspects are the organizations that have second agendas, that are trying to exploit people and make money, that don’t do the proper research on the history and culture of the area, that are charging volunteers an arm and a leg and pocketing the money rather than spreading it to the communities they are working with. [...]

These negative aspects can be avoided by doing your research as a volunteer when choosing what organization you want to go abroad with [or by] going into the field of non profits and policy change and trying to change these “second agendas,” but this is a huge battle to fight. [...] ....all we can do is educate. Educate and share experiences and hopefully they can experience the reality of the world in this way too one day.

[...]

Now there are a few smaller scale negative side affects that I have considered in my experiences. For example, I have fallen in love with many of the children I have met and I have witnessed them becoming attached to me as well. How does this affect a child? Having people come and love them and work with them for two or three weeks, and then leave. And then another batch of volunteers come […]. I think though that if the organization is doing things right, there are so many more benefits to volunteer tourism than negative. And I think the communities, people, children, families, and friends I have made and worked with would agree with me.

[...]

And I want to touch upon one last thing: I have been putting “white savior” in quotation marks because I think this is a very bad name for the complex it is trying to represent. The many people I have worked with (who are now being put into question of their moral values and possible
savior/imperialistic perspectives) are simply not all white. I have worked alongside teachers and volunteers who are [all diverse].

I hope I was able to express my opinions clearly and respectfully. As someone who works and care about this field and this world, these are all big questions to consider. I appreciate you taking the time to read my perspective on it and as always, let me know if there is anything more I can do to help. (Jennifer, email communications, 2018).

Jennifer and I disagree on a few points here, mainly the description of the moniker as representing someone morally lacking. Additionally, there are a few areas where more critical perspectives can be inserted. I hope this conversation will continue and I can explain how I view the “volunteer tourist” or teacher as essentially hoping to help and wanting to help, but simply not having the critical framework to understand the context, and, often, not having the skills or expertise to achieve what they set out to do (in any sustainable way).

From reading Jennifer’s passionate letter, this conversation will yield many new insights on all sides. In cases of “white savior complex,” much of the media discusses how tourists go abroad for photo opportunities and not to actually help. According to Bandyopadhyay and Patil (2017), young white women comprise the majority of volunteer tourism, including teaching abroad, and these volunteers travel “with a desire to change the world.” Critics point to the unequal power dynamics in many of the examples of “volunteer tourists” and assert that gender and race are too often ignored in studies, with postcolonial perspectives. This ‘white savior complex” is not confined to obscure sociological journals or highly theoretical academic treatments of tourism and the effects of economic globalism; no, for perhaps more than a decade, discussions have spilled over into popular, mainstream media (Gharib, 2017; and even satirical The
Onion, 2014). Just as Norton and Devin (2018) called for more research from and authored by non-native speakers of English, more research is needed from the perspective of the locations of these ELT placements, or “TEFL tourism.”

Thus, the story is not about the transformational personal or spiritual outcomes of the “haves” after they have briefly visited the “have-nots.” And more narratives from the various perspectives will contribute to the questions centered on the tourist volunteer (Is volunteer tourism about feeling good or actually doing good? And who defines or frames what is “good”?) . While this area of study, specifically focusing on the teaching of English abroad on short-term programs, Stainton (2018) states that this commodification of TEFL is unsustainable and detrimental to the field and mentions the problem of unqualified and/or inexperienced teachers (in the TEFL profession and/or in multicultural awareness and understanding), undocumented workers, and preponderance of short-term placements via agencies (versus longer-term employment). As far as I can tell, with the detailed information from Jennifer and the albeit incomplete information from Todd, in both Jennifer’s (short-term) and Todd’s (long-term) cases, these issues were not applicable. Much more should research should be done (and valued/promoted) from the perspectives of non-native speakers of English, student perspectives, and especially, the perspectives from indigenous peoples, as suggested by Norton and Darvin (2018).

“Teach somewhere crazy like Mozambique or Madagascar”

Issues of critical multiculturalism include an understanding of context and an informed problematizing that reduces hierarchical frameworks and colonialist
perspectives in order to learn from and work with various people such as fellow teachers and students. One great regret is not being able to sustain the communication with Todd and give him an opportunity to expand and discuss or clarify some of his ideas.

Todd often wrote about being “a dynamic force in the classroom” and, when I asked the class to describe their technology experience or familiarity, he wrote,

I am not a tech expert. But I love teaching with technology. I taught for two years [in Morocco,] I had a computer, a projector, a big screen, and great speakers. Teaching with technology is amazing. With speakers, a screen, and a projector, I can teach for 10 straight hours. I can do anything and my students and I will have fun at the same time (Todd email communication, 2016).

His teacher-centered descriptions contrasted greatly with Jennifer’s way of speaking about the students she has met during her teaching abroad. I never got a chance to ask why Mozambique or Madagascar could be “somewhere crazy” because of our indefinitely stalled communication. Todd was very proud of his travels and his self-described teaching style. He had mentioned an inspirational book in one of our email communications:

I love to tell stories as an ESL teacher. I discovered a book [abroad], where I started my ESL teaching career, called "Teacherman" by Frank McCourt, the author of Angela's Ashes." In this book, he decribed his life of being a "cool" teacher in New York City. He connected with his students by telling them stories and making them laugh. So, I tell a lot of stories to my students to keep them entertained (Todd, email communication, 2016).

When I asked Todd to describe the Digital Storytelling assignment in his own words, he begins by admitting that he “failed at it miserably.” He described the challenging circumstances surrounding the intensive summer course that he had taken
as an online distance student, avoiding the question about details regarding the DS project.

I was trying to adapt to life in [the Northeast of the US] after spending 8 years abroad. I was teaching full-time at a university in the [Northeast]. I was living with 4 strangers. I had no computer because mine had recently broke and I couldn't afford a new one. I made a terrible first video because I was so stressed out and also depressed. [My neighborhood in the Northeast] is one of the saddest areas in the entire US. It’s extremely impoverished, obese, and dangerous. And what makes it worse, is that right next to [my neighborhood] you have [Central District], another rough area, right across the river from [Green Quarter], which is affluent to a disgusting degree. So living in [my neighborhood] and seeing the gross inequality of income in the US was very painful for me to witness.

I wasn't sure if Todd had read the instructions or seen any of the examples I had suggested from the website of the Story Center (DS website). Lambert suggests sharing various video examples prior to beginning the individuals story. I consider this exposure as part of the whole day process. At the time, over a year post-course, and most likely at a point in Todd’s life when he had only some recollection of the DS task, he responds positively to the experience. Perhaps he does remember more than I give him credit for; however, the link to the video was deactivated shortly after the course (I had done a screen capture of both videos prior to this), which means it was either deleted, or set to private. It’s possible that he re-watched it and maybe even shared the link with friends and family (as he suggested he would), but I did not get a chance to ask him these questions. When I did ask him to comment about what he remembered about the DS task, “in as much detail as possible,” he responded with the following:

I think that my pictures were really cool. Not many traveling ESL teachers start their careers in South America for $350 a month. So I like seeing the pictures of my first year in [South America]. I personally had a lot of fun making my video. It felt great to finally put something together that I can
remember for years. Making the video was a very fun experience. Even though I didn't do it "correctly" I did do it "creatively."

Thoughts on viewing it again? I am very proud of how far I have come since leaving America in 2006. I think [my DS] showed exactly who I am. I am a very genuine and eccentric person. My video revealed that perfectly. (Todd, email communication, 2017).

Todd continues to write his own narrative, as it were. He is proud of his adventurous nature and likes to share the stories of his travels. It's unclear if Todd re-watched the video since the YouTube address that was shared with the class was no longer active.

One of the assumptions I made regarding Todd's lack of communication with me in the past few months is that he is very busy. Based on the information I have, this is quite possible, and yet, it is unfortunate that our extending the dialogue did not continue further. Byram (2014) writes about intercultural citizenship as the continuation of intercultural competency (IC) and reviews the literature of language policy and practice from all over the world. As he describes one context, I see that it can be applied to most language teacher education contexts. He states, “Teachers lack time and supervision for didactic reflection and development, which leads to an uncritical attitude to new concepts in central guidelines” (p. 221). He also faults the continued gap between research and practice and laments that the “problem is not only in our field and that researchers must make efforts to bring their work to ‘users’ which is our case means the teachers and policy-makers” (p221). Byram concludes with “There is much to do
and the key is teacher education, initial and in-service” (p.222). On my screen, this sentence is highlighted and circled with a red oval.

This ongoing issue came to mind as I lost touch with Todd. I wonder if he is still teaching abroad and what his future plans may be. I have many questions to ask him, but recent attempts at communication were unfruitful.

**Memory and Meaning-Making**

Raul shared a story from his past about his drive or motivation for learning Spanish, the language of his parents and family in Puerto Rico. In our teacher-to-teacher conversation, he describes himself as a child eager to learn Spanish. He alludes to ethnic/race and identity issues before I bring up the re-storying process of his current storytelling. Raul is thoughtful in his response, saying, “I think a lot of what you’re saying, it happened to me on a subconscious level as a child that I didn’t really know what I was doing but I know that I wanted it...”.

When I asked him about this self-reflection, he reflexively spoke of the difference between what he may have thought then and what he thinks now, informed by pragmatic and theoretical frameworks of second language acquisition and sociolinguistics. He is reframing and re-storying the experiences of his past with his present perspectives. The conversation reminded me of a short scenario in Trahar’s (2009) work on narrative inquiry and autoethnography where she writes,

> As a very young child I was always writing stories. I cannot recall the content of those stories but I remember that Mrs. Jackson, my teacher, used to take them home to show her husband. The meaning that became part of my family narrative was that I was always writing stories, very creative stories. But is that the meaning that I am applying retrospectively? How can I know? (Trahar, 2009, n.p).
In my own introductory narrative of growing up in an environment laden with critical theory issues of problematizing the hierarchy of language, witnessing and representing immigrant experience, and instilling feminist perspectives, I, too, am re-storying this childhood with the current perspective of a critical educator and researcher. As Polkinghorne (1995) and Trahar (2009) and others remind readers, memory is selective and “it is often only retrospectively that we come to understand and give meaning to events” (Trahar, 2009, np). Our narratives rely on memory and shape-shift as time and/or experiences evolve and influence our perspectives.

For Raul, either because of our social interaction and meaning-making during the interview, or, more likely, because he is an informed (academically informed with theory), thoughtful thinker who had had multiple opportunities to self-reflexively inform and form his current/recent perspective, he is able to communicate the experiences that shaped his identity as a multilingual Puerto Rican American.
CHAPTER FIVE:
DISCUSSION

Reflections

At a plenary lecture at the Qualitative Report Conference in 2016, Johnny Saldaña’s asked: “If reflection doesn’t lead to action, what good is it?”

This has been lingering in my mind with regards to the teacher education courses I taught and, in particular, concerning this narrative inquiry study. I ask myself, what is the purpose of these stories? Are they doing what they are supposed to be doing?

In this chapter, I “extend the conversation” and discuss what contributions I hope this narrative inquiry makes, what the research means to me, and then I suggest areas where more conversations and deeper reflection needs to continue.

Extending the Conversation: Sharing Spaces, Sharing Stories

In the summer of 2017, I attended a conference on Visual Sociology in Montreal, Canada (IVSA) where I discussed the usefulness of data sketches as a multimodal analysis process. Being a frugal doctoral candidate, and also a traveler who looks forward to meeting new people from diverse backgrounds, I stayed in a hostel near the university that hosted the conference. This meant I would share a room with a handful of other travelers. I was happy to forego privacy and some comfort for proximity to the conference and social interaction; in the past, I had the fortuitous opportunity to meet
other conference attendees also staying at hostels, which led to long, engaging conversations on research, academia, travel, and, in the case of this visual-based conference, meet-ups for gallery visits and photo safaris.

It had been a little over a decade since I first visited the Francophone city of Montreal. It seemed much less Francophone this time.

“Oh, great! You speak French. I need the practice,” I said in French when I learned that the two twenty-something young ladies in my room were from France. I had spent the two days since my arrival surrounded by international scholars speaking English. When I had first arrived to the hostel, I introduced myself in French at the check-in counter, but the response was in English.

“English? Sorry, I don't speak French,” the young stylish girl replied with a slight accent. After the check-in formalities, the volunteer employee had explained that she was from Germany. I would later realize that nobody working at the hostel was actually from Montreal, or even Canada. Most of the young people had come from Europe to work abroad in the summer and were looking for more permanent jobs and apartments, but few, if any, spoke French. Thus, back in the shared room, this encounter with these French “roommates” was actually the first time I had the opportunity to speak French.

I exchanged pleasantries with the two French girls travelling together and said, “I haven’t been to Montreal in many years, but I don’t recall English being so prevalent.” I added that I was in Montreal for an academic conference and that I was, despite my “over-twenty-something” age, a student (again) as well as an educator.

“You’re a teacher? That’s nice. What are you presenting?” they asked. I assumed they were just appeasing me, an older lady who probably seemed eager to talk (in
French). Perhaps they were intrigued or amused at finding an American who can speak French. While the U.S. has many non-English languages spoken as mother tongues, we have a long road to overcome the real and perceived norm of monolingualism in Americans in the US. Since President Carter’s wise 1979 warning of a deterioration of the study/research of languages in the US, to the globalization that strengthens English as a lingua franca (Moeller & Abbott, 2018), to the current neoliberal nationalist backlash of globalism, Americans continue to perpetuate the monolingual status. Thus, in my own experience, people are often surprised at any attempt to engage in a language other than English. Just like the Spanish speakers complimenting my non-native Spanish fluency in Miami, I was used to receive “quel accent charmant” when speaking French in France.

“I teach future teachers. My students will be foreign language teachers or language teachers in classrooms for English as a second language. I am presenting on a project that my students did...” Both young ladies were preparing for bed and removing and re-arranging items from their bags, plugging in their cellphones to charge, and politely nodded. I tried to explain the research as briefly and as simply as I could, being careful to avoid teacher jargon or research terminology.

“That sounds very interesting... So, what did your students say in their digital stories?” one of them asked.

While I was enjoying the language practice and enjoying the conversation, I was surprised at their interest and their relevant questions that sustained the conversation for much longer than I had anticipated. I recall thinking, “If I can make this study interesting for these random young people, then surely the idea of storytelling as a
pedagogical tool for language pre-service teachers will work for an audience interested in language education.” More questions come from the two young French girls.

“So, they did a story about culture? Yes, Americans have so many mixed cultures and traditions. It’s not really an 'American culture' for anyone.” The friend nodded in agreement with her traveling companion and added, “Yes, we are staying in Louisiana for the year, so there is a lot of Cajun cultural traditions there. Maybe it’s different in other places, but I am in a city with lots of pride in that history.”

I must admit, I was quite taken aback at their interest in my study and their insightful contributions to the conversation. “In Louisiana for a year? What are you doing there?” I asked.

“We are French teachers. We work in a bilingual school and teach French language. It’s a special program that brings teachers from France because they do not have [good?] French teachers there,” she replied... And it all made more sense now.

These two young girls were exactly my target audience for the type of study and the narrative method of sharing the study! So, while I still do not know if my study or my stories will be as entertaining or engaging for non-educators or non-language teachers, at least I could take comfort in this impromptu test—in French—that the topic was of interest and, more importantly, of value to my target audience.

The conversation continued as I tried to gain knowledge about the type of bilingual school they were in and what they thought of the education system here. I asked them about their teacher-preparation in France and about their future plans. I gave them my contact information and hoped that they might be interested in further communications since bilingual education was an interest of mine. I didn’t ask for their
contact in hopes that they may initiate future contact with the eager older woman sleeping under them who had asked them all about their teaching jobs. The next day, or maybe the day after, we all went our separate ways; I immersed myself in the arts-based presentations at the conference, one of the French teachers went to visit Quebec City, the other returned to her (different) school in Louisiana. Richardson and St. Pierre (2008) wrote, “The more different voices are honored within our qualitative community, the stronger --and more interesting – that community will become” (p. 959). I reflected on the power stories have for connecting people, even ever so briefly. Can an encounter feel like a community? For the two days of sharing spaces and sharing our stories, me, sharing my research, and the two French teachers, sharing their perceptions of Dual Language programs in the US, I, and perhaps we, felt like part of a community.

**Research Contributions and Future Research**

It follows that each time I move forward again, I take with me an altered or deepened self-knowledge gained from my considerations of prior experiences. It is this critical negotiation that transforms reflection into reflexivity (Lyle, 2013, p. 21).

My curation of the stories in Chapter 4 is not linear, despite the text/dissertation-based arrangement. The stories are individual works, written and chosen to be placed into this narrative about reflexivity and critical pedagogy. The stories are not in chronological order, except for the first story that introduces the ideas and intentions I had for the Technology in the ESOL/FLE Classroom where my study began to take shape. Thus, the first story is at the start of the specific research process; however, the short
autoethnographic glimpse into my cultural and experiential upbringing may suggest that who I am as a person led me to become who I am as a researcher and teacher. Was this not the start of a life of asking questions and looking for answers? Was my critical lens not the force that compelled me to not accept that my pre-service teachers "were American and therefore didn't have a culture" or nonchalantly stated that they "didn't know any non-native speakers" or that pre-service teachers would "forget everything they learned before their internships"?

While many of the "lessons" about intercultural communication, critical pedagogy, and teacher reflexivity were written into the stories shared in Chapter 4 via my reflections or connections to other research, other important contributions to the field of language education can be found in the stories in less explicit forms. I found multiple and diverse ways that teachers are thinking about these critical issues in language education and are incorporating these ideas and practices into their classrooms.

The connections I make between the stories are about the continued search for ways to support (pre-service) teachers in their awareness and reflexivity about intercultural competence and culturally responsive pedagogies. Some of the stories were directly about the digital story project, other stories focused on specific topics or trends in language education, and some stories more directly answered the questions about the ways in which they reflected on their personal (cultural) journey to become teachers and the ways in which they used personal narratives in their current classroom contexts. I introduced three characters in this study and described their successful and not-so-successful digital story projects; however, the intensive class had many more success stories and narratives that revealed critical reflexivity within the visual
representations and creative choices of the students. I shared Raul's story of becoming bilingual as a counter-example to what normally happens in the linguistic choices or outcomes for immigrant families. Also, Jennifer's stories of teaching abroad opened my eyes to what I had known about since my own summer of teaching abroad in The Netherlands as an undergraduate, but had not yet critically examined since becoming a language educator. Finally, my experiences with Todd and the fourth participant (who I ultimately chose not to include) forced me to interrogate my role as a researcher and reflect on relational ethics in research as well as in teaching.

**Digital Stories, reflexivity, and critical incidents.** In presenting ideas about increasing reflexivity, Brunner (1994) wonders “if a habit of reflexivity is possible, and if it is, can we link it to practices that are grounded in narrative activity” (p. 16). Brunner connects theory to practice through a type of aesthetic story and describes the “imaginative potential of embodied narrative” (p. 27). Like Brunner (and Bochner, 2014; Clough, 2002; Ellis, 2007; Richardson, 1994; and other narrative researchers), I see a potential for narrative as a way to inform and support reflective practices through the narrative stories shared by students, other teachers, and multimodal stories such as DS. Through the social interaction during the conversational interviews, and through my writing process of re-storying these experiences, I have had numerous opportunities for reflexivity, which, I hope, is revealed in various ways in each of the narrative shorts. I hope that the reader will reflect on the stories and make their own connections and reflections.

In my dissertation proposal, I explained how I felt the need to introduce and implement the DS project into the Technology course as a way to address the lack of
critical reflexivity. The DS project would, as suggested by research and my own prior “DS light” forays in other ESOL courses I have taught, serve as an opportunity for PST to share and reflect upon stories. Optimistically, the DS would be a tool to enhance communication (multimodally, creatively, and socially), opening and supporting dialog on critical pedagogy. From an arts-based perspective, I hoped this study looking at DS could be a way to provide opportunities to see how creative projects can promote principles of inclusivity, cross-cultural communication, and understanding. What became more clear, however, is that the DS project was simply the first step and that while it can serve to support communication, the reflexivity came from the dialogues and interactions that students-teachers had with their peers or with me. The creation of the DS owes its strength and potential to the social process during feedback circles or in how the short video narrative is ultimately shared.

I am eager to explore the possibilities of DS further, and more specifically, the use of DS for critical autoethnographic narratives in a longer period of interaction with peers (as opposed to the intensive summer session). Other students in the class produced narratives of language identity journeys in cross-cultural, multi-national locations during their upbringing. One story merged code-switching (multilingual) and mode-switching (mixing arts-based images within the video) in a re-storying of the student’s early childhood as a Japanese-American self-described “outsider” in a monocultural (monolingual, rural) community and his return to Japan as an English-speaking child, and then the return to the US as a college student to study Japanese as a foreign language education. Yet another study offered potential insight into the use of photography and other visuals by a female Saudi Arabian student who carefully avoided
images of people, later reflecting on how she chose the representative, metaphorical images. In short, there is plenty to investigate within the creative arts-based, process-oriented, and reflexive DS projects. Scott (2018), sharing stories of embodied performance, writes, “Critical autoethnographic stories not only uncover marginalization, stigma, and prejudice in our stories, but also look toward means to resist them” (np). Sharing these stories and making meaning through symbiotic narratives that include the richness of the multimodal data (stories) as well as the opportunity to find and explore critical incidents individually or collaboratively (Boufoy-Bastick, 2004) allows for a digital storytelling project that is both reflective and reflexive.

Ultimately, however, my study became less focused on the DS project and product, and more about the experience of creating stories, which led to more stories. My follow-up, after my students were teachers themselves, gave me insights into the flexibility that the DS could have. More broadly, ideas about personal narrative emerged and the emphasis on the process over product, and the use of DS as an elicitation tool for further communication during interviews will inform future studies. In the dialogic interview process where participants remember, render, re-construct, and recount past experiences and ideas about language and culture, they also express ideas about their own values, assumptions, prejudices, and ideologies (Goodson & Gill, 2014; Luschen, 2014; Van Galen, 2014). I find this to be true in the communications and stories of Jennifer and Raul. Unsurprisingly, due to the limited “dialogic” process with Todd, his shared stories during the course as well as post-course (interviews) did not seem to convey the diverse issues that were a focus in this study.
The richness of the personal narratives, albeit short narratives abiding by the focused goal of the DS project (3-5 minutes), planted the seed for deeper communications. Of course, not all of the DS stories were as informative and (inter)cultural-focused as the exemplars I discuss in this study. Yet, each DS project had the potential for extending the conversation (serving as an elicitation tool). This was not a surprise, and even early in the study, during the post-project reflections from my summer course, students were already making connection between the DS project and exposure to other people’s (inter)cultural experiences, as seen in the written reflection comment,

What I found interesting about the DS project is that people in my group wrote about various kinds of different themes, and yet they all sums up to one concept [sic], which is their language/cultural orientation. I am astonished how differently people approached this concept (student reflection, summer 2015).

This comment accentuates the usefulness of more creative tasks for pre-service teachers. Many researchers note that arts-based methods, such as DS and narrative practices, can promote dialogue and foster critical consciousness through alternative, emotional and evocative stories that cultivate empathy (Gubrium & Harper 2013; Leavy, 2015). This study underscores the need to make the PST course content accessible as well as able to address the critical pedagogical needs of their future classes. With this study, readers can begin to think about how creative projects can promote the principles of inclusivity, cross-cultural communication and understanding, and flexibility for use in diverse contexts and for various objectives.
**Heritage Learners and Unique Case (Counter)Narratives.** The trend of second generation and "1.5 generation" children drifting away from speaking the mother tongue has been well-documented in a number of studies spanning decades (Cummins, 2001; Portes & Hao, 1998). By the third generation, only English is the norm for immigrant families. For this reason, I had to ask for clarification when one of my participants, Raul, explained his Spanish language learning narrative during a narrative inquiry study about cultural identity.

“Yes, I'm the only one of my siblings that can speak Spanish. I guess I was just very motivated to learn,” Raul explained after describing that his parents spoke to him and his siblings in English during their upbringing in a mostly-monolingual community in the northwest of the U.S.

The narrative from Raul, based mostly on the conversational interview, highlights the story of a multilingual language teacher who explores the reasons why his trajectory might serve as a counter-example to tendencies in the field of heritage language learning and language maintenance. My focus on Raul's story and his exploration of memories and his shared reflexivity on the recent and emerging realizations regarding language identity creates a natural, human, personal story that is accessible for language educators. Readers of this dissertation are invited into our conversation. As we dialogued, two language educators reflecting on a unique language learning background, Raul weaved second language acquisition theory throughout his journey from learner to teacher to research participant. In this way, it gives me the sense that we are co-teaching our intended audience of readers, educators.
**Shifting Profession(alism).** Though unrelated to my focus on narrative and DS, some critical reflexivity questions arose in Jennifer’s tales from teaching in Zanzibar and in Thailand. Jennifer’s stories revealed to me a need for more discussions on the realities of teaching abroad, specifically, short-term teaching. The lack of attention to (non-professional, often unskilled) market-based influences on the professional field of English Language Teaching (ELT) has not been a prominent topic. This avoidance reminds me of the recent, yet growing, acknowledgement of “gig economy” industries. We, the educators, researchers, education policy-makers, etc., are focused on professional development in a globalized world (English as a lingua franca, native and non-native language teaching, and other critical issues) or short term teach abroad programs for pre-service teachers; however, we seem to be ignoring the curious reality that short-term teaching abroad by untrained, non-teacher, travelers is explored in business (academic) journals rather than in education or language education journals.

![Jennifer in Zanzibar](image)

*Fig. 5. 1. Jennifer in Zanzibar*

Both Jennifer and Todd had a journey of short-term teaching abroad that ultimately led them to their self-described calling/profession. Using a problematizing, critical lens to look at the effects of this “gig abroad” experience, I would like to explore if their stories, which were transformative—at least professionally— are counter narratives
or if similar journeys abound in teacher training programs and professional communities of ELT.

**Representation, repertoire, and rapport.** Multiple students had commented about sharing the video to future students or family members. The power of audience brings enthusiasm as well as responsibility (Couldry, 2013; Frazel, 2011) and instilling consideration for audience is particularly important for teachers as it may relate to (differentiated) instructional methods in the classroom, collaborative teaching in the school community, and understanding online privacy issues and professional development (Shelby-Caffey, Ubeda, & Jenkins, 2014; Ohler, 2006).

For Raul, he shared his story of being bicultural and successfully learning Spanish with his students who are heritage language learners in a public high school that has a high number of Hispanic students and African American students and a minority white demographic. Raul commented how his students felt encouraged to know that he didn’t grow up knowing Spanish; rather, he chose to become bilingual (and then multilingual). His retelling of the students’ excitement (via a re-enactment of their questions: “You speak French toooootoo?”) about the fact that Raul didn’t just know Spanish, but he also studied and learned additional languages, was another example of how stories elicit more stories. From sharing the DS with his class, the students felt like they got to know him better (seeing his family pictures in the visuals of the story, and learning that he also spoke French). The ways in which sharing the DS can be used to build rapport is another area that can be explored, specifically, with regards to teachers sharing personal narratives with their language-learning students. The opportunities to share personal stories can be transformational in ways that we may never know;
however, this longitudinal study that spanned over two years, gave me a little insight into what small details remained as memorable, or, even influential to my former students. As teachers, like Raul with his high school students, and me with my preservice teachers, we usually have a semester, maybe a year with the majority of learners we encounter. Sometimes, we stay in contact; sometimes mentorships or friendships develop and extend into years. In the case of Raul and Jennifer, my contact with these former students has been a way to see what students do once they move on from the projects and courses we craft for students. I was able to see how students become teachers, and how teachers become inspirations, and how these inspirational examples have shaped this teacher-researcher into becoming a better reflexive and critical educator. This development must continue alongside and as a product of reflexivity. Richardson and St. Pierre (2008) question the assumption that “being” is better than “becoming.” Instead, Richardson embraces the idea of discovery, interrogation, and continuous reflection. Over the course of two years, these stories have led to more stories and I still have more stories to discover, interrogate, and reflect upon. While I have tried to accentuate the multiple perspectives and backgrounds of each character in the narrative stories in this work, further study about my own challenges in reflexivity should include my positioning as a native speaker of English and the way this has overshadowed, hidden, perhaps, my bilingual upbringing.

With the case of Todd, his stories, merged with details from multiple students, became a story that I questioned and hesitated to tell. My wish, or presumption, to extend the connection and thus extend the opportunities for reflexivity for Todd, is likely an action that will be repeated with various students throughout my future teaching.
While some attempts result in disappointment, this, too, is a potential learning experience for all sides. For this study, I reflected on the relational dynamics of instructor-student and the transactional factors ingrained in research with others. Freire (1998) states, “I teach because I search, because I question, and because I submit myself to questioning. I research because I notice things, take cognizance of them. And in so doing, I intervene” (p. 35). I think of this word “intervene” and think of how this dissertation began as a study reflecting on a course-based DS project and evolved into a longer reflection on learning through stories. I think of “intervene” as coming between past stories and present re-storying, between being a student and becoming a teacher, and between my past experiences with representations of C/culture in the classroom and my new understanding of how students are able to represent cultural identities and experiences in creative and individual ways. Freire continues his statement about research and teaching, “And intervening, I educate and educate myself. I do research so as to know what I do not yet know and to communicate and proclaim what I discover” (Freire, 1998, p. 35).

**Reflexivity and Action.** The call to action by Saldaña still lingers. To “intervene,” or to bring together reflection and action, to continue problematizing and seeking solutions, is at the core of critical perspectives. This is an ongoing challenge and duty.

As for my own reflexivity leading to action, I have often thought about arts-based research and practice and the need for advocating its growth and accessibility for diverse populations. This study began in a virtual space as well as a classroom, but what other workspaces can be used for sharing stories and learning? What other voices can contribute to language education in interdisciplinary ways and methods?
How should teachers navigate the teaching of language and intercultural competence through activist, non-neutral, politicized action in the current environment? Can teachers support action by students through the sharing of digital stories that humanize the characters/students who are immigrants?

Chapter Five Summary

“Theories or concerns.”

A type-written letter reveals the thoughts of a mother. Her daughter is around five years old and starting kindergarten at a small school in Florida, circa 1980. The mother carefully typed the letter to address the “serious matter” of her multilingual home.

These three weathered yellowing pages, affected by humidity and time, are likely the draft for a letter delivered to one of my first teachers. For almost four decades, three pages remained together, shuttled from one house to another, perhaps holding the place in a book, or mixed with stationary, or consciously kept for reasons now unknown. In the final shuffling of affairs—the haphazard kind, when a house must be emptied and sold, when that daughter is now an adult and attempting to complete her dissertation, when the material artifacts of a full life must find their way into boxes, to be dealt with later—I find these three pages of a letter.

The uppermost line on the first page reads “—Continuation, page 2.” The original first page is nowhere to be found. Page 2 contains:

“... what a pity for the children to not take the chances to learn another language now, at their best age to get into an extra system of Thought and Expression, to get an extra “set of eyes” toward the world and toward themselves.”
After having described my exposure to Spanish and some French at home, my mother wrote, “Julie is learning English and you are her only Language Teacher.”

I smile at seeing my mother’s purposeful use of capitalization for emphasis and to express her passion. Mother. Teacher. Throughout the letter (Fig. 5.2), these are capitalized.

Figure 5.2. Found Letter (by Laine G. Dell-Jones, circa 1980).

“Here is the Linguist and the Teacher in me, no, the Mother...”

She continues the letter by describing some of the challenges and misconceptions about multilingual children and asks for patience and support. She addresses the need to encourage reading, and alludes to her own non-nativeness in a parenthetical aside: “/
can see how difficult it is (and wonder how so many of us, foreigners, fall into learning English!).” The letter reveals what I already knew intuitively and without much explicit thought, until now, decades later, in my role as a language educator.

“Even though to learn to read a language with a rational and steady system could have been easier than to learn English, I did not try it with my children.”

Her actions regarding language choice were deliberate. The letter briefly explains the focus on exposure and attention to oral proficiency in Spanish and French, allowing for a concentration on literacy in English, guided by the recipient of this letter, Julie’s “only [English] Language teacher.”

The letter reminds me that that winter we would “plunge into the Spanish language” on a visit to Spain and I would miss a week of school, “five important days!” To balance my possible lack of proficiency in English upon arriving back to school after a vacation filled with Spanish language “in her ears,” my mother proposes a “chance for Julie to talk about her experience and show souvenirs and photographs” as a way to boost my (presumed diminished) confidence in English.

Finding this old letter, albeit incomplete, at the same time that I conclude my dissertation is fitting for a study on (language) teacher reflexivity and personal narratives. My intention with this narrative inquiry dissertation is to illuminate the issues of cultural communication, critical multiculturalism, cultural identity, and language-learning and language-teaching experiences through the stories. This study gave me the opportunity to re-visit my former students and to continue to see their development as educators and critical storytellers. Throughout this study, I reminded myself about the importance of contextualization, representation (in re-storying), and multiperspectivity.
The diverse narratives reinforce that each student and each educator is an individual with their own background, goals, biases, and interpretations of the stories in and of their lives.

Moving forward, I am sure to find more incomplete notes from my past and revealing artifacts that re-story and re-shape my understanding of my own cultural, linguistic, and educational/professional trajectory. I began this study with a description of my immigrant mother; with more insight and time, and inevitably, more reflexive practice, my Uruguayan Mother, Teacher, Linguist, Writer, Storyteller continues to guide me. In what is now yet another lesson, another demonstration of dedication, she concludes the letter draft to my former Teacher in her own handwriting with an open dialogue for “theories or concerns.”
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APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL

June 6, 2016

Julie Dell-Jones, M.S.
Teaching and Learning
4202 East Fowler Ave.
Tampa, FL 33620

RE: Expedited Approval for Initial Review
IRB#: Pro00026460
Title: Narratives on Digital Storytelling, Culturally-Responsive Pedagogy, and Reflexivity in Language Teacher Education

Study Approval Period: 6/6/2016 to 6/6/2017

Dear Ms. Dell-Jones:

On 6/6/2016, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed and APPROVED the above application and all documents contained within, including those outlined below.

Approved Item(s):
Protocol Document(s):
IRB protocol Digital Storytelling Narrative 2016.docx

Consent/Assent Document(s)*:
SB Adult MinRisk DellJones 2016.docx.pdf

*Please use only the official IRB stamped informed consent/assent document(s) found under the "Attachments" tab. Please note, these consent/assent document(s) are only valid during the approval period indicated at the top of the form(s).

It was the determination of the IRB that your study qualified for expedited review which includes activities that (1) present no more than minimal risk to human subjects, and (2) involve only procedures listed in one or more of the categories outlined below. The IRB may review research through the expedited review procedure authorized by 45CFR46.110. The research
proposed in this study is categorized under the following expedited review category:

(5) Research involving materials (data, documents, records, or specimens) that have been collected, or will be collected solely for nonresearch purposes (such as medical treatment or diagnosis).

(6) Collection of data from voice, video, digital, or image recordings made for research purposes.

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

As the principal investigator of this study, it is your responsibility to conduct this study in accordance with IRB policies and procedures and as approved by the IRB. Any changes to the approved research must be submitted to the IRB for review and approval via an amendment. Additionally, all unanticipated problems must be reported to the USF IRB within five (5) calendar days.

We appreciate your dedication to the ethical conduct of human subject research at the University of South Florida and your continued commitment to human research protections. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call 813-974-5638.

Sincerely,

John Schinka, Ph.D., Chairperson
USF Institutional Review Board
APPENDIX B: ADULT MINIMAL RISK CONSENT

Study ID: Pro00026460 Date Approved: 6/6/2016 Expiration Date: 6/6/2017

Informed Consent to Participate in Research Involving Minimal Risk

Pro # Pro 26460

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Research studies include only people who choose to take part. This document is called an informed consent form. Please read this information carefully and take your time making your decision. Ask the researcher or study staff to discuss this consent form with you, please ask him/her to explain any words or information you do not clearly understand.

We are asking you to take part in a research study called: Digital Storytelling Narratives

The person who is in charge of this research study is Julie Dell-Jones. This person is called the Principal Investigator. However, other research staff may be involved and can act on behalf of the person in charge. She is being guided in this research by Dr. W. Zhu.

The research will be conducted at the University of South Florida.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to:

- Explore how digital stories about culture and intercultural experiences can deepen reflexive practices in pre-service teachers.
- This study will serve as research for a doctoral dissertation for the Second Language Acquisition and Instructional Technology degree.

Why are you being asked to take part?

We are asking you to take part in this research study because you completed the DS project during the course: Technology in ESOL and FLE Classrooms in the summer of 2015.

Study Procedures:

- If you take part in this study, you will be asked to: Agree to share completed coursework as research data. This includes the digital narrative story project and communications related to the creation of the project (feedback, drafts, etc.).
- You may be asked to be available for a 45-60 minute interview and brief follow-up interviews or email communications.
- Interviews will commence as soon as conveniently possible in the summer or fall of 2016. Follow-up communication may be face-to-face or via email.
• Interview questions will ask about your reflections about the completed project and any experiences with DS/Stories in the education context since the course.
• For interviews, upon your consent, I will use audio-recording. You will be asked prior to confirming the interview and again just before the interview if audio-recording is consented. Only Julie Dell-Jones, researcher/interviewer will have access to the recording. The recording will be transcribed and the audio will be deleted approximately 6 months after the interview. The transcripts will remain available as data for Julie Dell-Jones for 5 years. Both audio-recording and transcripts will remain in the protected possession of Julie Dell-Jones.

Total Number of Participants
About 15 individuals will take part in this study at USF and allow their previous coursework to be used as data for the study. About 6 individuals will take part in the interview process.

Alternatives / Voluntary Participation / Withdrawal
You are free to decide to participate in this research or to withdraw at any time. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits that you are entitled to receive if you decide not to participate or to discontinue participation at any time. Your decision will not affect your student status, course grades, recommendations, or access to future courses or training opportunities.

Benefits
We are unsure if you will receive any benefits by taking part in this research study; however, potential benefits of participating in this research study may include increased awareness of reflexivity and specifically self-reflexivity as a pedagogical practice.

Risks or Discomfort
This research is considered to be minimal risk. That means that the risks associated with this study are the same as what you face every day. There are no known additional risks to those who take part in this study.

Compensation
You will receive no payment or other compensation for taking part in this study.

Costs
There will be no additional costs to you as a result of being in this study.

Conflict of Interest Statement
As the (former) instructor of the course and the researcher asking about the course, there may be a conflict of interest in terms of inhibitions for honest responses and descriptions of experiences. This should be minimized with the knowledge that the responses given in any interview will not affect the grade of the course since the grading has been completed prior to the research data collection. As an educator in reflexivity and self-reflexivity, I will be critical of my own role as a teacher-researcher and I welcome honest responses from former students.

Privacy and Confidentiality
Social Behavioral

Version # 1

Version Date: 6/2/2016

Page 2 of 3
We will keep your study records private and confidential. Certain people may need to see your study records. Anyone who looks at your records must keep them confidential. These individuals include:

- The research team, including the Principal Investigator and Dr. Wei Zhu.
- Certain government and university people who need to know more about the study, and individuals who provide oversight to ensure that we are doing the study in the right way.
- Any agency of the federal, state, or local government that regulates this research. [Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP)]
- The USF Institutional Review Board (IRB) and related staff who have oversight responsibilities for this study, including staff in USF Research Integrity and Compliance.

We may publish what we learn from this study. If we do, we will not include your name. We will not publish anything that would let people know who you are.

You can get the answers to your questions, concerns, or complaints

If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this study, or experience an unanticipated problem, call Julie Dell-Jones at [redacted].

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study, or have complaints, concerns or issues you want to discuss with someone outside the research, call the USF IRB at (813) 974-5638 or contact by email at RSCH-IRB@usf.edu.

Consent to Take Part in this Research Study

I freely give my consent to take part in this study. I understand that by signing this form I am agreeing to take part in research. I have received a copy of this form to take with me.

Signature of Person Taking Part in Study

Date

Printed Name of Person Taking Part in Study

Statement of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

I have carefully explained to the person taking part in the study what he or she can expect from their participation. I confirm that this research subject speaks the language that was used to explain this research and is receiving an informed consent form in their primary language. This research subject has provided legally effective informed consent.

Signature of Person obtaining Informed Consent

Date

Printed Name of Person Obtaining Informed Consent
APPENDIX C: COURSE SYLLABUS (EXCERPTS)

Summer B 2015
Instructor: Julie Dell-Jones
E-Mail: jdelljon@mail.usf.edu
Office: [Location]
Office Hours: flexible, by appointment. Skype or face-to-face

FLE 4290
Technology in the Foreign and Second Language Classroom

The College of Education is dedicated to the ideas of Collaboration, Academic Excellence, and Ethics/Diversity. These are key tenets in the Conceptual Framework of the College of Education. Competence in these ideals will provide candidates in educator programs with skills, knowledge, and dispositions to be successful in the schools of today and tomorrow.

Course Description:

This course prepares pre-service and in-service teachers to provide pedagogically sound and technologically enhanced instruction and assessment for foreign language education (FLE) and English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) in K-16 instructional situations. Students will develop technology skills and knowledge that reflect research and theory in Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and apply this to the FLE/ESOL contexts.

Goals and Objectives:

1. Demonstrate knowledge of second language acquisition (SLA) research and theory inherent in the PreK-12 Sunshine State Standards and Instructional Practices and Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Standards.
2. Use technology to facilitate communication in foreign and second languages.
3. Use technology to gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures.
4. Use technology to connect with other disciplines and acquire information.
5. Use technology to develop insight into the nature of language and culture through comparisons.
6. Use technology to experience multilingual communities at home and around the world.
7. Demonstrate operational familiarity with a wide variety of computer software and hardware in a foreign/second language classroom.
8. Demonstrate ability to critically reflect upon and analyze research and theory in FLE/ESOL education.
Content Outline:

1.1 Stages of language acquisition.
1.2 The role of input, interaction, and output in second language learning.
1.3 A student-centered approach to learning; cooperative learning; multi-sensory language learning styles and strategies.
1.4 The interrelationship between language and culture.
1.5 Applying skills for locating information on the Word Wide Web through search engines, databases, on-line journals, ERIC, LISTSERV's, and other teacher resources.

2.1 Use of word processing, presentation software, authoring software, synchronous and asynchronous telecommunications, webpage design tools, and search engines to engage students in conversation: expressing feelings and emotions, exchanging opinions, interpreting written and spoken language, and presenting information to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.
2.2 Evaluating and selecting software to stimulate conversation and the exchange of opinions, express feelings and emotions, interpret written and spoken language, and present information to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

3.1 Use of word processing, presentation software, authoring software, synchronous and asynchronous telecommunications, webpage design tools, and search engines to demonstrate relationships between practices, products and perspectives of the target culture.
3.2 Evaluating and selecting software that demonstrates an understanding of the relationships between practices, products and perspectives of the target culture.

4.1 Gardner's Multiple Intelligences and their impact on teaching and learning styles.
4.2 Use of word processing, presentation software, synchronous and asynchronous telecommunications, authoring software, webpage design tools, and search engines to establish interdisciplinary collaboration that presents students with distinct viewpoints only available through the second language and its cultures.
4.3 Evaluating and selecting software to enhance knowledge of other disciplines through the second language.

5.1 Use of word processing, presentation software, authoring software, asynchronous and synchronous telecommunications, webpage design tools, and search engines to compare the target culture to the students' own culture.
5.2 Evaluating and selecting software to create both cross-lingual and cross-cultural comparisons.

6.1 Use of word processing, presentation software, authoring software, asynchronous and synchronous telecommunications, webpage design tools, and search engines to extend language learning beyond the school setting.
6.2 Encourage life-long learning of language(s) for personal enjoyment and enrichment through technology.

7.1 Recognize the different components of the personal computer (PC and MAC) and their functions, including the CPU, harddrives, internal and external storage, memory, input and peripheral devices and monitors.
7.2 Learn the operation and application of digital cameras in the classroom.
7.3 Learn to scan images into the computer.
7.4 Enhance presentation/public-speaking skills incorporating LCD panels, projectors, and Smart systems.
7.5 Enhance presentation/public-speaking skills incorporating commonplace AV-media, such as
cassette recorders, CD players, VCR, camcorders, and overhead projection.
7.6 Illustrate the basic components of a Local Area Network (LAN).
7.7 Utilize various types of applications, such as word processing, presentation software and webpage design tools, as well as component software, such as clip art, AVI, MPEG, and WAV files.
7.8 Recognize the criteria for evaluating software for classroom use.
7.9 Evaluate software for use in Foreign Language (FL), English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction.
7.10 Utilize organizational software for classroom management.

Required Reading:
We will use a collection of instructor-made materials, e-texts and current journal articles available through the USF library or made available through Canvas. Detailed instructions will be provided for locating, downloading, or accessing the appropriate course material. A tentative schedule and reading list is at the end of this syllabus.

Course Policies:
Hardware requirements: Headphones and a microphone may be needed for virtual office visits or for recording audio to be used in multimodal tasks. You will be using a number of applications, software, and programs for various classroom activities. These will be further explained as the course progresses.
Technology requirements: Because this course will be conducted in full, or in some part, through virtual means, you must have regular and reliable access to the Internet. You will be responsible for capable uploading and downloading of documents in order to successfully complete required tasks.
Software requirements: Adobe Acrobat Reader, Microsoft Office (or similar), Microsoft PowerPoint, Apple QuickTime, iMovie or other means of creating multimodal presentations/videos, and a workable USF email account. Most or all of the software will be free or will have similar free options.
Policy on Incompletes: The eligibility of an INCOMPLETE ("I" grade) is at the DISCRETION OF THE INSTRUCTOR OF RECORD. Students may qualify for an “I” grade (Incomplete) only if they satisfy the following:
*Must have completed the majority of work. The instructor may use discretion in determining satisfactory progress based on attendance, small projects, student communications, etc. to determine eligibility for the “I” grade.
*Must have qualitatively satisfactory progress (a passing grade).
*Must have documentation supporting any extenuating circumstance which prevents student from finishing the course.
*Remember that an “I” has to be removed the following semester or it becomes an F.

Syllabus changes: Any necessary changes to the course syllabus will be posted in Canvas and/or announced through email of Canvas announcements.
Course Ground Rules: Students are expected to conduct themselves professionally in all learning situations. You will be engaged in discussions/reflections as a class, individually, and in small groups. We are all growing in our knowledge and our identities as teachers (yes, ALL of us are still growing) and we must all work to nurture that growth in ourselves and our colleagues. To that end, everyone is expected to be prepared (i.e. readings, assignments, etc), to share
thoughtfully and respond respectfully, and approach each new topic as a professional growth experience. Discussions of language, culture, and identity can evoke strong reactions. It is our responsibility as educators to examine and reflect upon our own reactions and to engage thoughtfully in debate and conversation. Our goal is always to be the best educator we can be and be open to new ways of thinking about teaching and learning. I will do my best to model what I believe to be good practices, including use of technological instruction options. If you have any needs in this area, please contact me or other support in order to find the appropriate solution. There are multiple technology help opportunities on campus, including iTeach Lounge (EDU), and Canvas Support in the Library. Please do not wait until it is too late to learn the necessary tools to fully participate in this course.

Evaluation of Student Outcomes:
All readings, activities, and assignments of this course are filled with numerous varied evaluation activities to support mastery of the knowledge and skills needed for effective integration of technology into teaching. Note: All assignments must be completed on time to receive full credit.

Grading Scale: The final grade will be based on the following 100 percent scale:
(a) Multi-Lesson Unit Plan (CT)* (30%)
(b) Language Lab or Tech-Infused Classroom Paper (20%)
(c) Tech-Based Literature Review (15%)
(d) Personal Practical Knowledge (PPK) on Tech Use (10%)
(e) LIST SERV Subscription and Participation (10%)
(f) Reflexive Digital Story + Discussion (15%)

*NCATE Core Task (CT) for course – submit to Chalk and Wire

The following assignments will be assessed by the corresponding Florida Educator Accomplished Practices and ESOL Standards.

(a). Multi-Lesson Unit Plan (CT)* (30%). You will work throughout the semester to compile a Multi-Lesson Unit Plan incorporating a number of technology-related or infused modifications. Look for all details within the “Assignments” section in BB. This assignment should be submitted to Chalk and Wire (see the C&W policy below).

(b). Language Lab or Tech-Infused Classroom Paper (20%). Propose an ideal language lab or tech-infused classroom based on the knowledge from this course or investigate an existing lab or classroom and critique its facility and provide recommendations for improvement. Look for all details within the Assignments link in BB.

(c). Tech-Based Literature Review (15%). Select five articles from online journals that focus on a specific classroom technology topic. For each article, submit the full APA reference and write a two to three paragraph summary following the guidelines in the Assignments link in BB.

(d). Personal Practical Knowledge (PPK) on Tech Use (10%). Write a three to five page paper on your own use of technology in your daily and academic life. Be sure to include a summary of what changes you implement based on the knowledge gained in this course. Look for all details within the Assignments link in BB.

(e). LIST SERV Subscription and Participation (10%). Subscribe to a LISTSERV, (such as FLTEACH, TESL-L) according to your area of specialization and show evidence that you have subscribed and actively participated. Look for all details within the Assignments link in BB.

(f). Reflexive Digital Story + Discussion (15%). Written reflections connecting course content, teaching philosophy/pedagogy reflections, and individual experiences will be used as a bridge to
create a multimodal autoethnographic digital story (DS) that demonstrates student reflexive practices and development. The creation of the DS includes multiple drafts that take peer (and instructor) feedback into consideration and combines audio, visuals, and word-based text into a cohesive, expressive, 5-minute sharable video.

**Grading Criteria:**

All course assignments, papers, and projects will need to meet the following criteria:

- Demonstration of understanding of the principles of the course through their appropriate application
- Creativity and/or critical thinking
- Thoroughness and accuracy
- Use of proper APA form for any citations

Final Grades will be assigned using the following standard based on the total of points accumulated for the projects and activities listed above.
APPENDIX D: RELATED READING FOR TECHNOLOGY IN FLE/ESOL COURSE

The following list includes study-related reading that directly or peripherally relate to Digital Storytelling and critical multiculturalism. I differentiate between: Course Readings (R), Suggested Reading (S), and Links (L)

Digital Story Related Readings


(L) This link if for the Center for Digital Storytelling, the organization (co)founded by Lambert. This site has examples of DS for you to see. (see minimum 3 stories) [http://storycenter.org/stories/](http://storycenter.org/stories/)

(L) This links to the USF iTeach Lounge blog site which has helpful hints about basic editing in iMovie, importing a video from a camera into iMovie, and more. (copy & paste link into URL) [https://iteachlounge.wordpress.com/](https://iteachlounge.wordpress.com/)

(L) A PDF of step-by-step instructions for creating videos in iMovie. Note the last section about “CAS” does not apply to our use. [https://www.msu.edu/course/tc/243/iMovie%20Tutorial.pdf](https://www.msu.edu/course/tc/243/iMovie%20Tutorial.pdf)

(L) Link for Windows (Live) Movie Maker (WMM). [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ZZij3NNyVg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ZZij3NNyVg)

(L) More on editing (wait for “storyboard”): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qY7dEJWMj54](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qY7dEJWMj54)

Critical Multiculturalism, (Inter)cultural- related Readings


APPENDIX E:
DIGITAL STORYTELLING OVERVIEW AND ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS

DIGITAL STORYTELLING in a few detailed STEPS

“We want stories. We love stories. Stories keep us alive. Stories that come from a place of deep insight and with a knowing wink to their audience, and stories that tease us into examining our own feelings and beliefs, and stories that guide us on our own path. But most importantly, stories told as stories, that honor the simple idea that we want to relive what the author experienced in time and space” (Lambert, 2013, p. 54).

During Module 2, you read about Digital Storytelling and the various ways it has been or can be used in the language-learning context. You may want to review/scan the comments posted by classmates about the various DS articles (the 3 different research articles describing DS projects). Some of the comments may be useful in creating your own narrative (story content) and digital story (multimodal product presenting your story content).

During Module 3, we begin the creative and collaborative process to author your own individual Digital Story. You will be using a digital video format to combine still or moving images, such as drawings, photographs, paintings, or digitally-produced art with an audio component, usually the voice of the narrator-author and other possible sound effects such as music. Technology help and instructions on how to share the video will be in Module 4. iTeach Lounge has Macbook laptops that can be used for iMovie. You do NOT need to purchase any video-making software.

The end product is a three to five minute dynamic and media-rich video that expresses ONE of the following story topics:

Option #1: Describe an intercultural encounter/experience that made an impression on you (either positive or negative). Explore how that experience has or may influence your role as a language instructor.
**Option #2: Explore your own cultural background and include how you define this concept. Does or How does language define or influence your concept of cultural background? How might this influence your role as a language instructor?**

For either option, you will write an autoethnographic narrative (approximately 400-500 words) that fits into a 3-5 minute video. After the initial writing, you will share the narrative in your small groups, or “Story Circles.” You will have more time to edit, add visual content, and share the in-progress video during a round 2 of Story Circle. After feedback from peers and instructor, you will create your DS video and then share the final product with the class at the end of the semester. These steps are described on the following timeline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHEDULE</th>
<th>Due:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2 (M2)</strong></td>
<td>7/13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Week 3** | Draft #1 due: FRI 7/17 |
| 7/13 | (f2f: bring something to class on Monday 7/13, even if it’s still just an idea or “rough” draft.) |
| Look for groups in Canvas and follow instructions for communicating within the Group “Wiki Pages” area. (I will make an announcement when the groups are formed). The DS is a personal narrative. It can be shared with just the class, or with a wider audience of your choice. It may also be a product that you may wish to include in a multimodal teaching portfolio. It may be useful to think about optional future audiences (beyond this course) as you create the video. Decide: will you use your name or image within the video, or maybe a different representation of self? You decide. I will accept DS in English as well as other languages. For other languages: please include a transcript in English; this can be either done as subtitles, or as a separate text document (which will be easier, and may be linked to the video in a variety of ways via Youtube or your own website/blog, etc.) Write a draft of text that will fit within a 3-5 minute video (this differs, but start with approximately 400-500 words and see how the timing unfolds. Remember, you will include pauses and you will have visual imagery as well. If you speak slowly, start with less words in your script). This draft will be shared with a small group, called a “Story Circle.” Within the Story Circle, via wiki pages, you will receive feedback. See the rubric |
for an idea about the technical feedback. Content-focused feedback should be constructive. Please take your time to critically (& thoughtfully) discuss the content and the narrative style, focus, etc. of the story.

| **The F2F students can use part of our Monday class for brainstorming ideas, or, for preliminary feedback on a rough draft. The Draft #1 will be due on Friday, July 17th.** |

| **Read and/or think about what technology you will (can) use.** Visuals can be moving (video) or still (slides, photos, drawings, maps, etc.). If needed, scan visual documents into a digital format (jpeg, png, etc.) The USF Library has an excellent book scanner that can be used for large 2-D items. |

| **Week 4**  
**7/20**  
* (re)Read group member comments, suggestions. Read instructor feedback.  
* Time your script to ensure it fits within 3-5 minutes (with a little bit of flexibility, but try for within 5 minutes). Make edits, as needed.  
* Gather images or short videos/clips and other resources into one digital folder. This will make the video creation easier.  
* Remember to have citations for all non-original images/text/sound. Check how to use APA citations with media. |

| **Write/Edit Draft #2** |

| **Monday 7/20, 5pm:**  
**Optional F2F meeting in Tech Lounge**  
* Review Technology Options (use what you know if you have familiarity with software that is similar to iMovie (Mac) or MovieMaker (Windows). You can see the technology explained in the Digital Storytelling “folder” in the Assignment Details Canvas Module.  
* Optional: I will demonstrate digital audio recording in a face-to-face meeting; or, for technology help at other times, visit Tech Lounge (room). See their website for times/days. |

| **Audio/Visual Video Tech Help** |

| **Week 5**  
**7/27**  
**DS Draft #2** should reflect a Story of approximately 3-5 minutes and should have most or all of the digital components.  
* The file with the visuals and the script and/or audio will be shared in the small group. If you have the components in a video already, please share the video. If you have alternate images or questions relating to possible content, include this in your Story Circle group (ex: you have a 4 minute video and you wonder if you should add 2 images you have scanned). |

| **DS Draft #2 due: 7/27**  
(video draft or components of video) |

| **This week, you will be working on the DS video, combining all the multimedia digital components into the video. Hopefully, you have received constructive feedback from instructor and peers. By this time, your Story Circle is already familiar with your topic and Story. The feedback on Draft #2 will include comments about the choice of visuals, the technical aspects** |
of the video or images, the flow of the Story, etc. See the rubric for support in how to evaluate and provide quality feedback.

* Time your script/video again. Make edits, as needed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share Draft #2 with group &amp; Discuss visuals with group.</th>
<th>DS Draft #2 Feedback due: 7/31</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Reflect on the feedback from instructor and Story Circle. Write reflections about the DS process and reflections on giving and receiving feedback. * Use this final weekend for making any edits before sharing the DS with the whole class.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Create the final DS and upload the video to a sharable space such as Canvas or a link to the video on the web (Youtube can be public or semi-private; other options include personal blog sites.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Week 6 8/3**

Upload final version of Digital Storytelling project. You will also submit a folder with the components of the DS, a translation document (if the video is not in English).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I look forward to seeing the final projects and seeing the whole-class discussion/feedback about the Digital Stories.</th>
<th>DS final version Due: 8/3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final Feedback &amp; Reflections: 8/7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table A.2. Digital Storytelling Peer Feedback Guide/Rubric:

<p>| Language Control: | 1. Displays use of a variety of language structures required for task (i.e. past tense, future); grammar errors frequent enough to hinder comprehension | 2. Adequate control of a variety of language structures; diversity in sentence structures, word choice is grammatically correct, but could be more precise. | 3. Control of a variety of language structures (standard tenses; verb agreements; etc.). Diversity and creativity in word choices. May have 1-2 errors in word choice or grammar. | 4. Control, ease, and comfort using a variety of language structures. Word choice is precise and creative. Sentences are diverse and contain various clauses, lengths, and retain overall balance. |
| Sound and effects: | No sound, audio, music, or transitions are used in the presentation | Music overpowers the speaker, transitions make the audience dizzy | Music somewhat overpowers the speaker, transitions somewhat make the audience dizzy | Level of music does not overpower the speaker in the story and transitions do not make the audience dizzy |
| Technology preparedness: | Student does not ensure that technology works (i.e. working out issues, testing technology ahead of time, arriving early to set up) | Student somewhat ensures technology works (i.e. working out issues, testing technology ahead of time, arriving early to set up) | Student somewhat ensures technology works (i.e. working out issues, testing technology ahead of time, arriving early to set up) | Student is proactive in ensuring technology works (i.e. working out issues, testing technology ahead of time, arriving early to set up) |
| Level of discourse: | Use of complete sentences, some repetitive, few cohesive devices | Emerging variety of complete sentences, some cohesive devices | Variety of complete sentences and of cohesive devices | Variety of complete sentences and of cohesive devices, emerging paragraph-length discourse |
| Task completion: | Minimal completion of the task, content frequently undeveloped and/or repetitive | Partial completion of the task, content somewhat adequate and mostly appropriate, basic ideas expressed but with little elaboration or detail | Completion of the task, content appropriate, ideas adequately developed with some elaboration and detail | Superior completion of the task, content rich ideas developed with elaboration and detail |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Awareness of Audience:</th>
<th>Use of circumlocution is present</th>
<th>Limited awareness of audience is present in the story</th>
<th>Some awareness of audience is present in the story</th>
<th>Strong awareness of audience is present in the story (i.e. circumlocution/picture s used when specific words may not be known to audience)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensibility</td>
<td>Content barely comprehensible, requiring frequent interpretation, pronunciation may frequently interfere with communication</td>
<td>Content mostly comprehensible, requiring interpretation, pronunciation may occasionally interfere with communication</td>
<td>Content comprehensible, requiring little interpretation, pronunciation does not interfere with communication</td>
<td>Content readily comprehensible, requires no interpretation, pronunciation enhances communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX G: GUIDING QUESTIONS VIA EMAIL (to Todd)

QUESTIONS:
General “profile questions” about storytelling experiences:
  a) What other storytelling experience do you have (as storyteller)?
  b) What other forms of communication (creative/visual/etc.) do you use?
  c) Where are you now/What are you doing now (since the 2015 summer class)?
     Internship? Teaching? Coursework? Abroad--through a program/personal network/job
     posting?
  d) What past teaching experiences do you have (formal/classroom)?
  e) In whatever detail you are most comfortable with, what is your cultural background 
     (self-described/self-defined)?

Recalling the Digital Storytelling Project:
  1) Describe the Digital Storytelling assignment in your own words. (as much as 
     possible, I know it’s been a year!) ... Can you recall the general instructions or technical 
     description or content-focus? Can you recall/describe the story you shared?

  2) Describe your own experience with the DS project.
     a) Finding things out? Where did the technical information come from? Where 
        did content information come from? (content= YOUR story). So, how did you pick the 
        particular story you wanted to share? (Did you want to share it, or did you think the story 
        was what the instructor wanted? Did you have other ideas before you decided to tell 
        your particular story about teaching?)
        b) Why did you chose the topic you did?

  3) Exchanging and sharing information.
     a) Do you recall any feedback from classmates? Describe...
     b) Recalling the shared stories from your classmates, are you remember any 
        stories? Able to describe them?? (be honest here.... If you didn't see them, let me know 
        and tell me why. Of course, this has no effect on already posted grades)

  4) Suggestion: re-watch the video before answering these, if possible.

During the viewing of the video, tell me about your reaction to the video. [writing it down 
   during or after watching].
   a) What worked or didn’t; what did you like; what might you change if you had to 
      redo it?
   b) any other thoughts about the video-making process?
c) any thoughts about viewing the video now, a year later?

5) (How) did the digital story accurately reflect your experience? 
   (even though you were confined by space, time, class time, changes for personal reasons, etc.?)
   How did the story depict the narrator (yourself)?

6) (How) does the story shape you into a (language) teacher?

7) What other cultural stories did you consider (if any)?
   a) How do you view the idea of cultural narratives as part of a teacher education course and/or a language course?

**Looking forward, general guiding questions:**
   a) What goals do you have (teaching? ESOL/FLE teacher?) Has this changed since the 2015 summer?

   b) If you are teaching now, what are your teaching goals?

   c) If you are teaching, have you incorporated storytelling or digital storytelling into any class-related work (either to introduce yourself or as a class assignment)?

   d) If you are teaching, how have culture-related issues surfaced in the classroom? (EFL-student culture? culture of target language? --American? British? etc.)

**Please write any/all thoughts on:**
   (How) has your individual (culture-related) story entered into your teaching? (in coursework, planning, or classroom). If not yet, (how) do you envision this?
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Julie Dell-Jones studies the experiences of language learners and language teachers, focusing on issues of cross-cultural communication, migrant integration, and language-identity connections. Julie is a dedicated educator and advocate for all students, but particularly English language learners. She has taught for almost a decade at the high school level in the diverse linguistic landscape of South Florida. She has taught French, English as a second language, and undergraduate and graduate courses in ESOL teacher education in Florida. Julie earned her Master of Science in TESOL and FLE from Florida International University, where she also earned her Bachelor in Fine Arts (Photography), and a Bachelor of Science in Sociology and Anthropology. During her doctoral studies in Second Language Acquisition and Instructional Technology, Julie has been active in various professional/academic interdisciplinary organizations and has presented research and led workshops at local, national, and international conferences. With her interdisciplinary arts-based background, Julie plans to continue to pursue education research using qualitative methods and promote creative and reflexive practices in teacher education.