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EMERGING ADULTHOOD, CROSS-CULTURAL ADAPTATION, AND THE ENVIRONMENT: YOUNG HISPANICS IN OKLAHOMA AND NEW MEXICO

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A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to Jan Hesser Mitchell, my dissertation “first mate,” whose advice, guidance, support, and encouragement sustained my through the dissertation process. I also dedicate this dissertation to my maternal grandmother, Virginia Ruth, who showed me by example what true perseverance is.

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ABSTRACT

In this dissertation I examine the cross-cultural adaptation of Hispanic emerging adults in two distinct environments—the metropolitan areas of Albuquerque, New Mexico and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. These two research sites were selected because the former offers a unique history of Hispanic influence and the latter recently has found its Hispanic population on the rise. This work is primarily based on face-to-face-interviews and focus group interviews with twelve Hispanic emerging adults, ages 18 to 23. Hispanic emerging adults in this study present a wide-ranging ethnic identity orientation from cultural fusion to ethnic identity achievement. This varied ethnic identity orientation is not unusual, as emerging adulthood is a distinct period of life described as the age of identity explorations (Arnett, 2004). The language use practices of the emerging adults in this study also vary. The New Mexico participants are English monolingual and the participants from Oklahoma are generally bilingual. The New Mexican emerging adults did not appear to reveal any loss of culture, self, or pride as previous scholarship indicates. The Oklahoma emerging adults engage in code switching and appear to implement a convergence speaker strategy in interactions with others.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

A variety of metaphors have been applied to describe the cultural composition of the United States from the notion of a “melting pot” wherein all ethnic groups blend into one “American” culture to the idea of a salad bowl in which the different ethnic groups are combined together yet do not lose their individual distinctiveness. Indeed, as the nation’s ethnic minority populace continues to increase in large numbers these metaphors undertake profound significance. According to the U.S. Census (Bernstein, 2004), within the last decade the Black, American Indian, and Asian populations all grew faster than the population as a whole. Moreover, the Hispanic population currently is the largest racial and ethnic group in the United States. Although the designations *Hispanic* and *Latino* are often used interchangeably to describe those of various Latin American origins (del Pinal & Singer, 1997; Gonzalez, 1992; Pew Hispanic Center/Kaiser Family Foundation, 2002), the majority of articles researched for this study employ the word Hispanic. Hence, for the purpose of consistency this manuscript will use the term Hispanic.

Hispanics are not only the largest racial and ethnic group in the United States, but also the highest proportion in the state of New Mexico (Guzmán, 2001). The Hispanic population of New Mexico has been a feature of the ethnic composition of that state for over 500 years. Accordingly, over several decades there has been a plethora of varied studies regarding the Hispanic culture in New Mexico (Carlson, 1979; Cohen, 2002; Doan & Stephan, 2006; Forrest, 1998; Getz, 1997; Gonzalez,

1967; Gonzales, 1997; Howard, Samet, Buechley, Schrag, & Key, 1983; Lopez, 1974; Nostrand, 1992; Reichman, 2006; Rinderle & Montoya, 2008; Roberts, 2001; Samet, Coultas, Howard, Skipper, & Hanis, 1988; Sorge, Newsom, & Hagerty, 2000; Zamora, 2009). Additional research focusing on New Mexico has had a comparative ethnic bent, concentrating on differences between Hispanics and Native Americans (Ferraro & Cummings, 2007), between Hispanics and Anglos (Greenberg, Wiggins, Kutvirt, & Samet, 1987; Lopez, 1993), and between the Hispanic, Native American and Anglo cultures (Edington & Hays, 1978; Shen, Sanchez, & Huang, 1984). Yet, it appears that only two studies have compared Hispanics in New Mexico with Hispanics in other states, notably southwestern states (Cantor et al., 2005; Smith, Mercy, & Warren, 1985). The current study is intended to redress this scholarly omission.

As New Mexico has found its Hispanic population rising, so has Oklahoma, where Hispanics are the fastest-growing ethnic group in that state (Doucette, 2002; Murphy, 2003). Although there are numerous studies pertaining to Hispanics in New Mexico, there is a paucity of research regarding Hispanics in Oklahoma. The extant literature is a variegated mix that includes two studies on Oklahoma's universal Pre-K program (Gormley, 2008; Gormley, Gayer, Phillips, & Dawson, 2005), an analysis of the exposure of Black and Hispanic children to urban ghettos (St. John & Miller, 1995), research on the racial and ethnic comparison of blood donations (Glynn, et al., 2006), an exploration of Hispanic beliefs and perceptions of intimate partner violence (Klevens, et al., 2007), an examination of the associations among relationship power, sexual decision-making dominance, and condom use among women at risk for

HIV/STDs (Harvey, Bird, Galavotti, Duncan, & Greenberg, 2002), an assessment of ceramic ware collected from the Hispanic community in Oklahoma City to determine lead content and to quantify the amount of lead leached into foods cooked in those vessels (Lynch, Elledge, & Peters, 2008), as well as a study that looked at the development of an immigrant network in a rural town in northeastern Oklahoma (Garcia, 2005). Owing to the scarcity of research regarding Hispanics in Oklahoma, the current study is intended to generate further knowledge about this ethnic group given that it is the fastest growing segment of the state's population (Juozapavicius, 2009).

This upsurge in ethnic minority populations has enduring implications for the United States as a whole and for different ethnic groups in particular; this is especially true for Hispanics given that this ethnic group is not only a very large population, but predominately youthful as well (Chapa & Valencia, 1993; del Pinal & Singer, 1997; Fry & Lowell, 2002; Hernández, Siles, & Rochín, 2000; Ramirez & de la Cruz, 2003; Villarruel & Montero-Sieburth, 2000). Unquestionably, the issues facing Hispanic youth in the United States are disheartening: high dropout rates, bleak employment prospects, poverty, and low access to health care (Rodriquez & Morrobel, 2004). So, it is not surprising that research on Hispanic adolescents and young adults has focused primarily on the relationship between cross-cultural adaptation and negative psychological and social integration, such as delinquent behavior (Vega, Gil Warheit, Zimmerman, & Apospori, 1993), drug use (Barrett, Joe, & Simpson, 1991), depression (Cuéllar & Roberts, 1997), and sexual behavior (Ford & Norris, 1993; Fraser, Piacentini, Van Rossem, Hien, & Rotheram-Borus, 1998). Moreover, additional

studies have examined such issues as comfort with cultural identity (Montgomery, 1992b) or feelings of “insiderness” versus “outsiderness” (Mainous, 1989). As evidenced by the aforementioned research, there are a myriad of challenges involved in the process of cross-cultural adaptation; yet the consequences of successful cross-cultural adaptation can foster personal growth, such as achievement motivation, interpersonal and cultural competencies, as well as positive identity formation (Buriel, Perez, De Ment, Chavez, & Moran, 1998; Kim, 1978; Perez & Padilla, 2000; Valentine, 2001).

Interactions with others and the surrounding environment can have profound effects, both psychologically and socially as individuals universally are the end results of various socio-cultural circumstances (Eccles, Templeton, Barber, & Stone, 2003; Garza & Gallegos, 1985). Accordingly, the environment places unique demands on Hispanic youth who grow up in geographical regions where their ethnic group represents either a very large or a very small segment of the total population.

The challenges and opportunities that accompany cross-cultural adaptation do not operate in a vacuum, but revolve around contextual factors. Even though some scholars have encouraged the incorporation of contextual factors (i.e. cultural, socialization, and situational factors) as an approach to expand the understanding of Hispanic cross-cultural adaptation (Cabassa, 2003; Garza & Gallegos, 1985; Negy & Woods, 1992), few studies have examined the role of environmental factors. The environment plays a key part in cross-cultural adaptation because “people in every society are the end product of different socio-cultural influences resulting from interactions with family, peers, and other aspects of the external world” (Garza &

Gallegos, 1995, p. 376). Therefore, it is essential to examine the extent to which the environment supplements a comprehensive understanding of the acculturation process as well as the aspects that influence cross-cultural adaptation (Cabassa, 2003).

Accordingly, with emerging adulthood as a recent innovative area of research and given that population projections suggest Hispanics will comprise a larger and larger segment of the emerging adult populace (Chapa & Valencia, 1993), it is fitting to couple these two flourishing developments. Moreover, it is academically valuable to engage in a comparison/contrast of two distinct environmental settings that have primarily been overlooked in previous research.

The Concept of Emerging Adulthood

Emerging adult is a term coined by Arnett (2000) to describe the development period from the late teens through the twenties, focusing on ages 18-25. It is a distinct period of life marked by five distinguishing features:

1) It is the age of *identity explorations*, of trying out various possibilities, especially in love and work.

2) It is the age of *instability.*

3) It is the most *self-focused* age of life.

4) It is the age of *feeling in-between*, in transition, neither adolescent nor adult.

5) It is the age of *possibilities*, when hopes flourish, when people have an unparallel opportunity to transform their lives (Arnett, 2004, p. 8; see also Arnett, 2006).

Emerging adulthood therefore becomes a crucial time in life because "taken together, the experiences of the child and of the adolescent are the mold from which the adult emerges" (Elliott & Feldman, 1990, p. 6).

Arnett (2004) maintains that the term *emerging adult* is preferable over the terms *late adolescence*, *young adulthood*, *transition to adulthood*, or *youth*. He explains that emerging adulthood is different from late adolescence because most emerging adults have moved out of their parents' residence, have reached full reproductive maturity, are enrolled in college, and have the legal status of adults. Moreover, the term young adulthood is inadequate, according to Arnett, to describe young people in their late teen and mid-twenties because they see themselves as between adolescence and adulthood, not yet reaching adulthood. Thus, *emerging* is "a better descriptive term for the exploratory, unstable, fluid quality of the period" (Arnett, 2004, p. 18). Also, Arnett claims that portraying the ages of 18-25 as a transition to adulthood limits the awareness and understanding of this period of life by focusing "on what young people in that age period are *becoming*, at the cost of neglecting what they *are*" (Arnett, 2004, p. 19). He points out that every period of life is a transitional period including emerging adulthood, which he argues should be studied as a separate period of life. Arnett additionally notes that youth is another inadequate term because the historical custom of that word has been to describe either childhood in general or the stage of adolescence.

Previously, this transitional period of life was granted modest consideration by scholars (Arnett, 2006); nevertheless, this oversight is presently being remedied. Since Arnett first proposed the term emerging adulthood back in 2000, scholars have

examined this distinct period of life through a variety of research topics, such as personality (Shiner, Masten, & Tellegen, 2002), the influence of culture (Nelson, Badger, & Wu, 2004), personal goals (Salmela-Aro, Aunola, & Nurmi, 2007), the role of religion (Barry & Nelson, 2005), body image and disordered eating (Boyatzis & McConnell, 2006), relational maintenance behaviors (Myers & Glover, 2007), depression (Kuwabara, Van Voorhees, Gollan, & Alexander, 2007), sibling relationships (Milevsky, Smoot, Leh, & Ruppe, 2005), and the tasks that face individuals as they pass through adolescence and the early years of adulthood (Eccles, Templeton, Barber, & Stone, 2003). Moreover, in October 2009, the 4th Conference on Emerging Adulthood was held in Atlanta, Georgia where several paper symposium topics included: "Close relationships and well-being among emerging adults in different cultural contexts," "New measures for examining emerging adult body image, sexuality, romantic relationships, and gender norms," "Public perceptions versus the real qualities of emerging adults: Results from community samples," and "Friendship experiences and happiness among emerging adults in different cultural contexts" (Society for the Study of Emerging Adulthood, 2009). In addition, the book *Emerging Adults in America: Coming of Age in the 21st Century* (Arnett & Tanner, 2006), which focuses on the theoretical foundations, individual characteristics, and contexts of emerging adulthood, developed from the first conference held in November 2003 at Harvard University.

This study examines the cross-cultural adaptation among Hispanic emerging adults in two distinct environments—the metropolitan areas of Albuquerque, New Mexico and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. These two research sites were selected

because the former offers a unique history of Hispanic influence and the latter recently has found its Hispanic population on the rise. The research project focuses on four areas: (1) the cross-cultural adaptation experiences of Hispanic emerging adults in the metropolitan Albuquerque area; (2) the cross-cultural adaptation experiences of Hispanic emerging adults in the metropolitan Oklahoma City area; (3) a comparison/contrast of the two locales; and (4) how these two settings shape the adaptation of Hispanic emerging adults.

To obtain this information I sought to ascertain how Hispanic emerging adults in Albuquerque and Oklahoma City describe their interactions with the larger society and how these emerging adults describe the ways in which the larger society interacts with them. These two major questions then led me to ask the following research questions:

Research Questions

RQ 1: How do Hispanic emerging adults in Albuquerque and Oklahoma City perceive and express their ethnic identities with others?

RQ 2: What role does ethnic identity play in how emerging adults in Albuquerque and Oklahoma City communicate with others?

RQ 3: To what extent are the English and Spanish languages used in interactions with others?

RQ4: What are the perceptions of Hispanic emerging adults in Albuquerque and Oklahoma City as regards to how accommodating or disobliging the larger society is to Hispanics?

RQ5: How do Hispanic emerging adults in Albuquerque and Oklahoma City perceive Hispanic ethnic group strength in their respective environments?

To assist in answering these questions, this dissertation is divided into the subsequent chapters. The second chapter reviews literature on cross-cultural adaptation theory and also literature on research regarding the cross-cultural adaptation of Hispanic youth and emerging adults. The third chapter presents first an overview of the Hispanic population in the United States and then specifically offers an account of the Hispanic presence in New Mexico and Oklahoma, respectively. The fourth chapter describes the research methods and procedures employed for this project. The fifth chapter commences with an overview of identity research followed by a review of the research literature on Hispanic youth and emerging adult ethnic identity. Chapter five then advances the case studies of two Hispanic emerging adults—one in Oklahoma and one in New Mexico—and how they consider their ethnic identities. The sixth chapter provides a summary of the literature regarding language use among Hispanics and then examines language use amid Hispanic emerging adults in Oklahoma and New Mexico. The seventh chapter first draws final conclusions from this project's investigation then discusses the limitations, strengths, and areas for future research.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

The following chapter provides a review of pertinent literature on the cross-cultural adaptation of Hispanic youth and emerging adults. Specifically, this section first discusses two widely-recognized theories within the domain of cross-cultural adaptation. Second, this section reviews the previous research on Hispanic youth and emerging adult cross-cultural adaptation, principally highlighting the oversight in some of the literature regarding the role of the environmental upon the adaptation process.

Research on Hispanic cross-cultural adaptation has examined a variety of issues related to adaptation, such as language brokering, self esteem, minority status, and ethnic identity (Acoach, Webb, Smith, & Amason, 2002; Buriel et al., 1998; Canales, 1983; Casas & Pytluk, 1995; Niemann, Romero, Arredondo, & Rodriguez, 1999; Portes & MacLeod, 1996; Rumbaut, 1994; Saldaña, 1994; Tse, 1995; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004; Valentine, 2001; Weisskirch & Alva, 2002), nevertheless several of the studies lack an investigation as to the role of the environmental in Hispanic cross-cultural adaptation.

Accordingly, some scholars argue that research on Hispanics—especially scholarship pertaining to Hispanic youth—should entail identifying the unique contextual aspects of cross-cultural adaptation (Villarruel & Montero-Sieburth, 2000; see also Rodriquez & Morrobel, 2004; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2001, 2004). By investigating the cross-cultural adaptation of Hispanic emerging adults in two research sites that represent significant differences in the environmental conditions, the present

study is an effort to broaden the contextual understanding of Hispanic cross-cultural adaptation. The next section will first discuss two theories regarding cross-cultural adaptation and then examine previous research related to the cross-cultural adaptation of Hispanic youth and emerging adults.

The significant relationship between ethnic minorities and the environmental conditions of the larger society are addressed in two, somewhat different but, widely recognized models within the domain of cross-cultural adaptation: Kim's (1988, 2001) theory of cross-cultural communication and Berry's (1980, 1990) cross-cultural psychology theory. Moreover, both theories have been employed as frameworks for examining various ethnic groups, including Koreans (Y.-S. Kim, 2001), Haitians (Walker, 1999), Vietnamese (Pham & Harris, 2001), Native Americans (Kim, Lujan, & Dixon, 1998), and Hispanics (Allen, Amason, & Holmes, 1998; Johnson, 1996).

Berry's Acculturation Theory

Berry's (1980, 1990) theory describes the process of cross-cultural adaptation over time and explains two elements of the process: 1) the structure of cross-cultural adaptation and 2) the key factors influencing the degree to which individuals adapt. The domain of the theory is at the intrapersonal level with a cross-cultural psychological focus that considers the adaptive experiences of individuals who encounter significant changes in the domestic sociocultural environment either through voluntary contact—such as ethnic groups, immigrants, and sojourners—or through involuntary contact—such as native peoples and refugees.

Accordingly, cross-cultural adaptation is examined from a psychological standpoint identifying four types of adaptation: two positive and two negative. The

positive (or moving toward adaptation) factors include assimilation and integration. Assimilation is relinquishing cultural identity and joining the dominant society, whereas integration is retaining cultural identity and joining the dominant society. The two negative aspects of adaptation are separation and marginalization. Separation is the self-imposed withdrawal from the dominant society; marginalization is being out of cultural and psychological contact with either the traditional culture or the dominant society.

Moreover, Berry (1980) views acculturation as a three-phase process comprised of contact, conflict, and adaptation. Acculturating cultural groups establish physical or symbolic contact with the mainstream culture through trade, invasion, enslavement, migration, or telecommunications. From this contact, the group encounters conflict because of a reluctance to abandon venerated aspects of their culture, and, therefore, to reduce the conflict the acculturating group adapts to the mainstream culture.

A core construct of Berry's (1980, 1990) theory is acculturation attitude, which can be formed based on two simultaneous issues. The first issue is posed by the question, "Is it considered to be of value to maintain cultural identity and characteristics?" and the second issue is posed by the question, "Is it considered to be of value to maintain relationships with other groups?"

The answers to these two issues then lead to another theoretical core construct—the four varieties of adaptation. If a person answers "yes" to Issue 1 and "no" to Issue 2, then the Assimilation (rejecting one's own cultural values and identity and accepting the host cultural values) path is chosen; if a person answers "yes" to

Issue 1 and “yes” to Issue 2, then Integration (accepting both one’s own cultural values and host cultural values) is selected. If one answers “yes” to Issue 1 and “no” to Issue 2, Separation (accepting one’s own cultural values and identity and rejecting host cultural values) is opted for; and if one answers “no” to both Issues 1 and 2 , Marginalization (rejection of both cultures’ values and identities) is preferred.

From these chosen paths, Berry (1990) posits, comes acculturative stress “in which the stressors are identified as having their source in the process of acculturation” (p. 246). For example, stressed individuals are those who feel marginalized alongside those who follow the separation mode; individuals who pursue assimilation and those who engage in integration have intermediate and nominal stress levels, respectively (Berry, 1990). Moreover, the acculturation experience, according to Berry (1980, 1990), varies based on psychological characteristics; some people perceive the acculturative changes as opportunities and, for others, the changes are distressful occurrences.

Additionally, host society influences, such as “the availability of a network of social and cultural groups that provide support” or “a greater tolerance for or acceptance of cultural diversity” (Berry, 1990, p. 249), can also affect acculturative stress. Besides the psychological characteristics of an individual and the nature of the larger society, Berry (1990) notes several other factors that moderate the relationship between acculturation and stress. These factors include the type of acculturating group, modes of acculturation, and the demographic and social characteristics of an individual.

Kim’s Theory of Cross-Cultural Adaptation

Kim's (1988, 2001) theory is an integrative, multidimensional, and comprehensive model in which the key elements of adaptation are highlighted. The model looks at the mutable aspects of adaptation from a cultural-intercultural (or ethnic-interethnic) continuum. Within her theory, Kim presents two distinct models: a process model and a structural model.

Kim's Process Model

The metatheoretical perspective of Kim's theory is a general systems approach in which individuals or "strangers" are considered "open systems" (the term stranger is used as an inclusive term that integrates other more specific terms such as immigrants, refugees, and sojourners). According to Kim's theory, the nature of humans is as adaptive living entities in which adaptation is a fundamental life goal. Within this adaptation, a stranger goes through a stress-adaptation-growth dynamic. As a result, the interplay of the dimensions of acculturation and deculturation generate a state of uncertainty, confusion, and anxiety reflected as stress. These stress reactions occur when strangers' internal conditions are inadequate to function effectively in the host environment. Nevertheless, over time, strangers soon respond to the host environment by adjusting these internal conditions to correspond to external realities by the adaptive activities of assimilation and accommodation. Consequent to the stress and adaptation responses is an internal transformation of growth wherein the stress-adaptation-growth dynamic occurs in a continual "draw-back-to-leap" pattern. Each stressful response is heeded with a "draw back," which stimulates adaptive energy to assist in "leaping forward."

Kim's Structural Model

From the progression of internal change, strangers undergo what Kim calls an "intercultural transformation." Within this transformation are three aspects. The first is functional fitness or the capability to easily accomplish daily activities and being at ease within the host environment. The second is psychological health linked directly to the ability to communicate and functional fitness in the host environment. And, the third aspect is intercultural identity in which a more flexible definition of self emerges from the development of functional fitness and psychological health.

Kim's theory also recognizes the internal conditions or predisposition of strangers prior to resettlement to the host society. Within the dimension of predisposition are three constructs: 1) preparedness for life in the host environment, 2) ethnic proximity to the dominant ethnicity of the host environment, and 3) personality—one's openness, strength, and "positivity" or a perpetually upbeat frame of mind that allows for new learning.

Kim's underlying assumption is that adaptation to one's social environment occurs through communication. As a result, the host environment influences the adaptation process through strangers' participation in the social communication activities of the host society. Therefore, the dimensions of host communication competence (cognitive, affective, and operational competencies), host social (interpersonal and mass) communication, and ethnic social (interpersonal and mass) communication are considered.

The three dimensions of host communication competence are intrinsically interdependent and serve "as an instrumental, interpretive, and expressive means of

coming to terms with the environment" (Kim, 2001, p. 73). In sum, the cognitive, affective, and operational facets of host communication competence act in concert enabling individuals experiencing cross-cultural adaptation to successfully navigate the intricacies of the host environment.

Although host communication competence serves as a primary force that grants entrance to and mastery of the host environment, Kim (2001) nonetheless points out that the conditions of the host environment also shape cross-cultural adaptation. Specifically, three environmental conditions are identified in Kim's structural model that affect a stranger's adaptation process: 1) host receptivity which "refers to the degree to which a given environment is structurally and psychologically accessible and open to strangers" (Kim, 1995, p. 184); 2) host conformity pressure which "refers to the extent to which the environment challenges strangers to adopt the normative patterns of the host culture and its communication system" (Kim, 1988, p. 66); and 3) ethnic group strength or the degree to which group members offer a strong informational, emotional, and material support system within the host environment. Thus, according to Kim (2001), the interdependence between communication activities and cross-cultural adaptation cannot be adequately understood without considering environmental conditions.

A Comparison of the Two Theories

Both Kim and Berry's theories underscore the influence of the larger society in cross-cultural adaptation. Berry (1990), for example, contends that acculturative stress can be reduced "if both participation in the larger society and maintenance of one's heritage are welcomed by policy and practice in the larger acculturative arena" (p.

252). Also, Kim (2001) observes that "the environment serves as the cultural and sociopolitical context" that guides the adaptation process (p.78). The two theories are somewhat complementary, but do diverge in one respect: the interplay between individuals and the environment. Although Berry's model discusses environmental conditions that moderate cross-cultural adaptation—such as the nature of the larger society (e.g. culturally plural societies)—nonetheless, the model lacks a descriptive explanation as to how or in what specific ways the nature of the larger society influences the interactions between individuals and their respective environments. Moreover, the theory does not address the reciprocal connection or influence between ethnic groups and the host society. In their critique of Berry's model, Negy and Woods (1992) echo this view when cautioning that theories of cross-cultural adaptation "must acknowledge that two groups coming into contact with one another are mutually influential although not necessarily to the same degree" (p. 226). Additionally, Berry's theory has been criticized because each part of his theoretical model functionally fits within the other parts, similar to the pieces of a Lego set, thus excluding the diversity of variables (Pick, 1997). Scholars also find fault with Berry's theory because it appears to neglect ethnic identity formation (Schönpflug, 1997).

Whereas Berry's theory does not address the mutual influence between an individual and the environment, Kim's theory does recognize this reciprocity by linking the factors of communication with the three environment factors of host receptivity, host conformity pressure, and ethnic group strength. Nevertheless, Kim's theory has been critiqued for advocating "for the political passivity of immigrants and the incapacity of the host culture to learn from them" (Young, 1996, p. 61).

Moreover, Kim's concept of "intercultural personhood" has also been criticized (Kramer, 2003). In order to achieve "intercultural personhood," Kim (2001) contends that a person must grow through the learning process of "deculturation" and "enculturation" simultaneously. In other words, to attain this form of meta-identity one must, at the same time, unlearn the old ways of the immigrant culture and learn the ways of the host culture. Kramer (2003) argues that this concept espouses that "the dream of total adaptation means not adapting to any culture but abandoning all cultural dimensions of life….The meta-identity is utterly abstract. It is reductionism to functionality" (p. 8).

Berry's (1980, 1990) and Kim's (1988, 2001) theories are two widely recognized models with the domain of cross-cultural adaptation that underscore the influence of the larger society. Yet, Berry's model lacks a descriptive explanation as to how or in what specific ways the nature of the larger society influences the interactions between individuals and their respective environments. Moreover, Kim's model places the onus of cross-cultural adaptation solely upon the individual and does not acknowledge the capacity of the larger society to learn from those individuals experiencing the cross-cultural adaptation process.

Previous Research Concerning Hispanic Cross-Cultural Adaptation

Cross-cultural adaptation, in general, has been measured from both a unidimensional and bidimensional perspective. The unidimensional model is conceptualized linearly from "immersion in the culture of origin to immersion in the host culture" (Cabassa, 2003, p. 132); the bidimensional model is conceptualized as "two distinct independent dimensions, adherence to the dominant culture and

maintenance of the culture of origin" (Cabassa, 2003, p. 128). Because the Hispanic populace is the fastest growing and youngest population in the United States (Bernstein & Bergman, 2003), a variety of studies have examined the cross-cultural adaptation of this burgeoning ethnic group, utilizing either the unidimensional or bidimensional perspective.

Unidimensional models focusing on Hispanic cross-cultural adaptation, although usually employing a single measure such as language use (e.g., Epstein, Botvi, Dusenbury, & Diaz, 1996), have also used various measures encompassing language use and preference, ethnic identity and classification, cultural heritage and ethnic behaviors, as well as ethnic interaction (e.g., Cuéllar, Harris, & Jasso, 1980). Constructs examined in bidimensional models pertaining to Hispanics have included cultural orientation and comfort with cultural identity (Montgomery, 1992b), feelings of insiderness/outsiderness (Mainous, 1989), language use, linguistic proficiency, and language-based media preferences (Marín & Gamba, 1996). Researchers have also studied the cross-cultural adaptation of Hispanics from an interethnic viewpoint (e.g., Barlow, Taylor, & Lambert, 2000; Chavez, Moran, Reid, & Lopez, 1997; Keefe, 1992; Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997; Sodowsky, Lai, & Plake, 1991; Valenzuela & Dornbusch, 1996), and other research has taken an intraethnic approach (e.g., Dorrington, 1995; Gil & Vega, 1996; Szalay & Inn, 1988; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2001).

Although environmental conditions of the larger society play a predominant role in cross-cultural adaptation, some research studies on Hispanic cross-cultural

adaptation appear to overlook the extent to which the environment affects the adaptation process. The next section highlights this oversight.

Psychological Health

Cross-cultural adaptation studies have extensively investigated the psychological health of Hispanic youth covering a wide variety of topics, including delinquent behavior (Vega et al., 1993), self-esteem (Canales, 1983; Gil, Vega, & Dimas, 1994; Valentine, 2001), sexual behavior and substance use (Fraser et al., 1998), minority status (Saldaña, 1994), health locus of control (Guinn, 1998), perceived comfortableness with adaptation status (Montgomery, 1992b), and depression (Cuéllar & Roberts, 1997).

A number of studies examining the relationship between cross-cultural adaptation and psychological health tend to emphasize intrapersonal and interpersonal factors without taking into account environmental conditions. For instance, the factors investigated to measure perceived comfortableness of adaptation status (Montgomery, 1992b) included: host communication competence (e.g. comfort with English language media, comfort with thinking and speaking English, and Anglo-American traditions), ethnic social communication (e.g. comfort with Spanish language media, comfort with thinking and speaking in Spanish, and Mexican traditions), and intercultural identity (e.g. preference for ethnic identity and self-rated identity). Although the findings demonstrate that later generation Hispanic adolescents and young adults were comfortable with their adaptation status, there is no indication from the literature as to whether the environment had an impact on the perceived comfortableness of adaptation status.

Nevertheless, a study by Saldaña (1994) does attempt to address the influence of environmental conditions. In this study, the level of cross-cultural adaptation along with ethnicity and social class serve as risk indices that predispose Hispanic students at predominately Anglo-American campuses for higher levels of minority status stresses. Minority stress factors included: academic concerns (e.g. attitudes/treatment of faculty toward students of my ethnic group, pressure that what "I" do is representative of my ethnic group's abilities, behavior, etc.), ethnic-nonethnic group concerns (e.g. Anglo-oriented campus, having always to be aware of what Anglo people might do, this campus being an unfriendly place), and discrimination concerns (e.g. being treated rudely or unfairly because of my ethnicity, being discriminated against). Although some factors measure cross-cultural adaptation, such as ethnic loyalty, the study does not address the influence of the larger society. Yet, the minority student stress factors in the study do come closer to addressing this issue, but only within the confines of being a minority student at an Anglo-dominated campus.

Additionally, studies regarding the cross-cultural adaptation of Hispanics have investigated the association between adaptive stress and various factors, such as somatization patterns (Montgomery, 1992a), loss of social support, self-esteem and identity (Smart & Smart, 1995), gender and ethnic differences (Salgado de Snyder, Cervantes, & Padilla, 1990), as well as parent/adolescent adaptation conflicts (Gil & Vega, 1996). Moreover, some findings as to Hispanic adaptive stress indicated that individuals who were more cross-culturally adapted encountered less stress. For example, Gil et al. (1994) found that bicultural adolescents were better able to handle adaptive strains because of their ability to navigate within the larger society.

Valentine (2001) found Hispanic American young adults perceive greater self-esteem the more acquainted they are with Anglo American behaviors and values. Negy and Woods (1992) concur with Valentine's findings that self-esteem may interact with adaptation "as it intuitively makes sense that a healthy level of self-confidence would assist individuals in taking risks, such as initiating contact with members outside their ethnic group" (p. 243).

In an attempt to understand the cross-cultural adaptation process of Hispanic youth, some studies exploring adaptive stress and psychological health do consider the role of environmental conditions. However, they lack a comprehensive awareness of environmental conditions, such as the openness of the larger society, by posing a single question (e.g. Gil et al., 1994; Vega et al., 1993).

Communication Competence

Hispanic cross-cultural adaptation studies have also investigated the concept of communication competence from the perspective of language brokering—the complex process of translating and interpreting children do for their monolingual parents. Language brokering assists Hispanic children and adolescents by accelerating cognitive development and increasing exposure to the host environment (Buriel et al., 1998; Dorrington, 1995).

Although younger Hispanic children, who are developing cognitive and linguistic skills, are uncomfortable with language brokering (Weisskirch & Alva, 2002), older Hispanic adolescents find advantages from language brokering in terms of self-confidence in academic performance through contact with the shared patterns and beliefs system of the larger society while maintaining a link to their native culture

(Acoach et al., 2002). In fact, a considerable body of research on Hispanic language brokering (e.g., Buriel & De Ment, 1993; Buriel et al., 1998; McQuillan & Tse, 1995; Shannon, 1990; Tse, 1995; Vasquez, Pease-Alvarez, & Shannon, 1994) indicates that greater communication competence enhances cognitive and socio-emotional development.

Language brokering is an excellent example of how environmental conditions affect cross-cultural adaptation. Children as language brokers or "cultural brokers" (Buriel & De Ment, 1993) are involved in tasks from the mundane, such as arranging medical appointments, to the more serious, such as dealing with the legal system (Olsen & Chen, 1988). As a result, language brokers learn how to interact with medical professionals or how to advocate capably for their parents, thus acquiring skills in communication competence that immensely aid them in navigating the intricacies of their environment which, in turn, facilitate an intercultural transformation.

In addition, language-use research with regard to Hispanics considered the role the environment plays in cross-cultural adaption by focusing on the lasting linguistic influence of the dominant society. Valdés (2000) found that English influence on Mexican American Spanish modifies the latter by semantic extension, borrowing, and code switching. Semantic extension, which Valdés considers a subtle form of English influence, is when all the words are in Spanish but the words have undergone a semantic transformation toward English. For example, in Spanish the word for doghouse is *perrera*. The semantic transformation of the word would be to refer to perrera as a dog pound. Borrowing, according to Valdés, is a more obvious form of

English influence. Borrowing is when an individual encounters novel concepts and for which they have no available vocabulary. The third English influence Valdés argues is code switching or the alternation of words, phrases, clauses or sentences between two languages.

Other researchers investigated the linguistic practice of borrowing and code switching among Hispanic bilinguals in the United States (e.g. D'Introno, 1996; Smead & Clegg, 1996; Toribio & Rubin, 1996). Recently, Toribio (2002) found that code-switching differed among Hispanics depending upon the speaker's linguistic and communicative competence. Moreover, she determined some Hispanic speakers do not in engage in code-switching, others renounce its use, and still others are prevented from practicing it based on the stereotype that only uneducated people use it. Other research ascertained that the use of bilingual discourse markers demonstrated both code-switching and borrowing (Torres, 2002). Torres maintains that because speakers have varying language proficiencies the phenomena of code-switching and borrowing should be regarded as a continuum rather than different processes.

In addition to research about Mexican American Spanish (Pease-Alvarez, 2002), other studies have investigated the language of Cuban Americans (Otheguy, García, & Roca, 2000), the linguistic tradition of Central Americans (Lipski, 2000), as well as the linguistic repercussions of colonialism on Puerto Ricans in the United States (Zentella, 2000).

Mass Communication

Scholarship related to the Hispanic population and mass communication has encompassed a extensive gamut from an overview of the Hispanic media scene geared

toward marketing to this ethnic sub-group (Valdés, 2002) to specific aspects of Hispanic mass media, such as the viewing of Spanish-language television programming (Barrera & Bielby, 2001).

Scholars, such as Subervi-Velez (1986), have provided a comprehensive overview of Hispanics and mass media indicating that: 1) Hispanics have a lower exposure to print media than Anglo Americans, 2) younger age and higher education are factors associated with greater exposure and/or preference for English-language media, and 3) English-speaking competency is positively related to greater preference for or exposure to Anglo American media (p. 78). Additional research on Hispanic mass communication has investigated various topics such as media advocacy (Wilkinson, 2002), the Internet as a means for Hispanic communication, empowerment, and expressive space (Pineda, 2000), and the politicization and general treatment of language by Spanish television networks (Davila, 2000). Pineda (2000) indicates there is a technology spurt within the Hispanic populace coupled to the youth which will have social and cultural implications for the United States. Moreover, scholars also have investigated the relationship between Hispanics and television viewing. Barrera and Bielby (2001) found that *telenovelas*, Spanish-language limited-run serial melodramas, among U.S. Hispanics fosters the recreation and maintenance of a formidable bond to their cultural heritage. In contrast, other research demonstrates exposure to English-language programming has a positive, direct effect on cross-cultural adaption (Johnson, 1996; Stilling, 1997).

Racial Phenotype

The role of the environment also plays a part in the relationship between Hispanic cross-cultural adaptation and phenotype or an individual's actual physical characteristics (Smart & Smart, 1995). Accordingly, studies examining skin color demonstrate how environmental conditions of the larger society affect the economic and social aspects of Hispanic cross-cultural adaptation. For example, Telles and Murguia (1990) verified that Mexican American males with dark and Native American skin color obtained substantially lower wages than those with lighter and more European skin color. Additionally, Vázquez, García-Vázquez, Bauman, and Sierra (1997) found that Mexican American young adults with darker skin color are less cross-culturally adapted than those with lighter skin color, indicating that phenotype may influence motivation to adapt. In view that lighter skin color is a prevailing ethnic characteristic of Anglo Americans, it is not unexpected that Hispanics who have a darker phenotype would have difficulty adapting and earn lower wages. Thus, the cross-cultural adaptation of Hispanics depends, to some degree, on how discriminatory the larger society is toward people on the basis of skin color (Smart & Smart, 1995).

Ethnic Group Strength

To a lesser extent, Hispanic cross-cultural adaptation studies also examined ethnic group strength. For example, the strength of ethnic identity was associated with higher perceived group vitality for Mexican Americans in Phoenix, Arizona (Gao, Schmidt & Gudykunst, 1994). Moreover, Niemann et al. (1999) found among predominantly low-acculturated, first- and second-generation respondents that being

Mexican was a source of pride, facilitated a sense of belonging, and was important to pass this pride on to children. Additionally, Niemann et al. investigated the role of the environment in terms of the nature of the larger society. Respondents reported discrimination while shopping—females being treated rudely or not being helped by store personnel and males being followed under the assumption of being thieves. Also, the respondents were aware of Anglo-American discrimination reporting that "they experienced some of the discrimination because they had not yet 'proven' themselves as members of U.S. society" (p. 57).

The current chapter discussed two widely-recognized theories within the domain of cross-cultural adaptation: Berry's (1980, 1990) acculturation theory and Kim's (1988, 2001) theory of cross-cultural adaptation. Also, the chapter presented previous research concerning Hispanic cross-cultural adaptation focusing on the topics of psychological health, communication competence, mass communication, racial phenotype, and ethnic group strength. The next chapter begins with an overview of the Hispanic population in the United States and then specifically presents the accounts of the Hispanic presence in New Mexico and Oklahoma, respectively.

CHAPTER 3

Contextual Analysis

To be Latino in the U.S. is rather to participate in a unique process of cultural syncretism that may become a transformative template for the whole society.
—Mike Davis, *Magical Urbanism*

The Hispanic population is currently the largest racial and ethnic group in the United States. Because Hispanics are a relatively youthful population, they will have an impact on the nation's demography, educational system, and labor force (del Pinal & Singer, 1997; Hernández, Siles, & Rochín, 2000; Suro & Passel, 2003). To better understand the context behind these impending political, social, and economic ramifications, this chapter first presents an overview of the Hispanic population of the United States. Secondly, this section considers the Hispanic populations in New Mexico and Oklahoma, respectively. Lastly, this section explains the reasons for investigating Hispanic emerging adults from these two distinct environments.

The Hispanic Population in the United States

According to the U.S. Census, in July 2002, the U.S. population was composed of 38.8 million Hispanics, representing over 13% of the total population; an increase of almost 10% since April 2000 (Bernstein & Bergman, 2003). As a result, Hispanics became the largest ethnic minority in the United States, surpassing previous census projections by three years (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000a). Moreover, by July 2003, the Hispanic population was close to 40 million—a growth rate nearly four times that of the total population (Bernstein, 2004).

The greatest numbers of Hispanics live in the western and southern regions of the United States; Mexicans represent the largest group followed by individuals from

Central and South America (Marotta & Garcia, 2003; Ramirez & de la Cruz, 2003; Therrien & Ramirez, 2000). Moreover, Hispanics are a very urbanized ethnic group (Marger, 2000; Ramirez & de la Cruz, 2003; Therrien & Ramirez, 2000) with only 9% living in rural areas (Marotta & Garcia, 2003). As a result, large urban areas, such as Los Angeles, New York, Miami, and Chicago may greatly increase in size, creating a strain on resources in those highly populated areas.

From 1990 to 2000, the U.S. Hispanic population grew 58%, whereas the total U.S. population increased only 13% (Marotta & Garcia, 2003). By the year 2050, Hispanics are projected to increase to 98 million—almost a quarter of the population, and by the year 2070 those numbers will rise to 132 million totaling almost a third of the populace (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000b). Much of the projected increases in the number of Hispanics in the U.S. is because it is a very young population: over 50% of U. S. Hispanics are between the ages of 15 and 44 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003a). According to Marotta & Garcia (2003), the average age for Hispanics "is younger than that of the total U.S. population for men and women" (p. 19). Moreover, information from the 2000 census indicates that almost 36% of Hispanics were younger than 18 years of age compared with nearly 24% of non-Hispanic Whites (Therrien & Ramirez, 2000). By the year 2020, Hispanic youth will reach 19 million in which they will comprise 25% of the youth in the United States (Chapa & Valencia, 1993).

The rise in the Hispanic population will likely influence national responses to social issues associated with education. For instance, even though deficiency in English language skills is the principal hallmark of Hispanic dropouts (Fry, 2003), animosity and opposition toward bilingual education continues (Ovando, 2003) and,

presumably, will intensify. Furthermore, economic issues related to the U.S. Hispanic population will be a major factor in this new century. According to one projection, Hispanic buying power will have increased from 5.2% of all U.S. buying power ($222 billion) in 1990 to 9.6% ($1,014.2 billion) in 2008, a gain of 357% (Humphreys, 2003). Likewise, another estimate projects U.S. Hispanic purchasing power will reach $1 trillion by 2010 (HispanTelligence, 2004). Additionally, as a result of higher fertility rates, increased migration, and a younger population, Hispanics will account for nearly 24 million of the labor force by 2012 (Toossi, 2004); and by 2050, almost 25% of the "working-age population" will be Hispanic (President's Advisory Commission, 2003). Moreover, Robert Suro, director of the Pew Hispanic Center, stated that in the next 25 years, 14 million new U. S. workers will be native-born Hispanics (President's Advisory Commission, 2003).

Because a third of the Hispanic population is under age 18 (Ramirez & de la Cruz, 2003), this growing ethnic group has the capability of exerting significant political power in the future (del Pinal & Singer, 1997; Grow, 2004). Currently, many national politicians are cognizant of this fact, and actively campaigned in various Hispanic areas of the United States. In the 2000 presidential election, the Hispanic vote accounted for nearly 7% of the national turnout—up from 4% in 1996—and was the swing vote in several key races around the country. This percentage gain, in part, can be attributed to Hispanic teens reaching the voting age (Cué, 2001). Four years later, the Hispanic electorate, increasing by 27%, represented almost 8 million voters who cast ballots in the 2004 presidential election (National Council of La Raza, 2004). In 2008, an estimated 9.7 million Hispanics voted in the presidential election, thus

increasing their share of the national vote to 9% (Lopez, 2008; National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund, 2008b). As the number of voting-age Hispanics increases, the political clout of this rapidly-growing ethnic group will likely broaden in areas where they constitute a substantial segment of the electorate.

Hispanics "are a growing presence in the nation's schools, work places, and electorate" (del Pinal & Singer, 1997, p. 43), and census projections demonstrate they will become an even greater presence. Accordingly, this has been the situation in such divergent states as New Mexico and Oklahoma.

Two Environments for Hispanics: New Mexico and Oklahoma

Hispanics in New Mexico

The Hispanic influence in New Mexico dates back to the 16th century when in July 1598 Spaniard Don Juan de Oñate founded the first permanent Spanish settlement, known as San Juan de los Caballeros, north of present-day Española. The Spaniards later established a second settlement, San Gabriel, and San Francisco, the first non-Indian town in New Mexico (Peck, 1998; Roberts & Roberts, 1986). In November 1609 the Spanish Crown declared New Mexico a royal colony, thus resulting in direct control by paying all colonial expenses and managing the colony's future direction. A year later, the oldest capital city in present-day United States, Santa Fe, was established by Don Pedro de Peralta, New Mexico's first royal governor (Roberts & Roberts, 1986).

By the early 1700s, the Spanish had established four towns that were the centers of population: Santa Fe, El Paso, La Cañada, and Albuquerque. As a result, by

1800, New Mexico became the Spaniards most populous external province (Roberts & Roberts, 1986). New Mexico remained a Spanish possession until 1821 when the colony became a part of the newly independent country of Mexico. In 1848, after the Mexican-American War, New Mexico became part of the United States. The Treaty of Guadalupe allowed the Hispanos living in the newly acquired United States territory guaranteed citizenship if they chose to remain; many did remain and became United States citizens (Marger, 2000; Roberts & Roberts, 1986).

New Mexico's Hispanic influence continues today, particularly in the state's largest city, Albuquerque, where almost half of the city's residents are Hispanic ("The top ten cities for Hispanics", 2009). Within the Albuquerque metropolitan area, there are six Spanish-language radio stations, four Spanish-language TV stations, and two weekly Spanish-language newspapers, each with a circulation of approximately 10,000 (Hispanic Market Weekly, 2007). The Hispanic proportion of Albuquerque TV market comprises more than 34%, with a little over 21% of the TV households identified as "Spanish-Dominant" (Nielsen Media Research, 2005). Moreover, in 2003, Albuquerque was named the sixth best city for Hispanics partly because of its strong Hispanic representation in local government, its favorable business climate for Hispanics, and for being the home of the National Hispanic Cultural Center of New Mexico—the largest in the United States (Varoqua, 2003).

The Hispanic influence in New Mexico can also be felt politically. For example, the state constitution requires that teachers be proficient in both Spanish and English ("Prominent New Mexicans," 1997). Moreover, as of January 2007, 657 Hispanics held elected office at both the local and state level (National Association of

Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund, 2008c). Currently, there are several Hispanics in prominent positions in New Mexico state government. Hispanic officeholders include: the Secretaries of Agriculture, Economic Development, Health, Public Education, State, Transportation, and Veteran Services, the Speaker of the House, the House Majority Floor Leader, the Senate Majority Floor Leader, the Senate Majority Whip, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. In addition, New Mexico's current governor is the first Hispanic governor in the nation since 1986 and the fifth Hispanic to lead the state since 1917 (Fecteau, 2002). Also, Hispanics comprise 41% of the state's 112-member legislature; a 9% increase since 1997 (National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund, 2008c; Robertson, 1997).

New Mexico's Hispanic influence is evident in the public schools as well. During the 2007-2008 school year, the percentage of Hispanics attending New Mexico public schools increased to 55.53%—up from 54% in 2005, yet the Anglo population decreased to 29.54%—down from 31.1% in the 2005-2006 school year (New Mexico Public Education Department, 2006; New Mexico Public Education Department, 2008). Moreover, in 2007, 85% of New Mexico's high school graduates were Hispanic, whereas in 1990 they comprised 39% of high school graduates. While Hispanic high school graduates in New Mexico grew by over 2,300 students from 1990 to 2007, Anglo high school graduates decreased by726 students, almost a 10% decline. (New Mexico Public Education Department, 2005; New Mexico Public Education Department, 2007).

As regards to higher education in New Mexico, however, the numbers vary. For example, in the fall of 2007 the total enrollment of Hispanics at major public colleges and universities around the Albuquerque metropolitan area was almost 37% and for Anglos it was 41% (New Mexico Higher Education Department, 2008). Nevertheless, the University of New Mexico at Albuquerque was ranked 23rd on *Hispanic Magazine*'*s* list of top 25 colleges and universities for Latinos in 2004. According to the magazine, half of the university's undergraduates were minorities, the university ranked 13th in awarding bachelor's degrees to Hispanics, and had the most racially diverse law school in the nation (García, 2004). Additionally, last year almost 42% of enrolled students at the state's second largest post-secondary institution were Hispanic compared with an Anglo enrollment of slightly over 35% (Central New Mexico Community College, 2009)

The Hispanic population in New Mexico grew substantially so that now the state claims the highest proportion of Hispanics in any state in the U.S. (Guzmán, 2001). It is also one of three states where ethnic minorities constitute the majority (Bernstein, 2003). In 2000, the percentage of the total U.S. Spanish-speaking population was almost 11%; for New Mexico, the percentage was much higher at close to 29% (Marotta & Garcia, 2003). Furthermore, the total Hispanic population in the western United States—which includes New Mexico—is 43%, accounting for 18% of the total population in that region (Marotta & Garcia, 2003). In 1990, New Mexico's Hispanic population constituted a little over 38% of the state's residents (U.S. Census Bureau, 1993) and by 2000 it had risen to 43% (Bernstein, 2003).

According to U.S census projections, New Mexico will be the second fastest-growing state by the year 2025 (Campbell, 1997).

As illustrated in the preceding section, for many years there has been a significant Hispanic presence in New Mexico. However, that has not been the case for the state of Oklahoma until very recently.

Hispanics in Oklahoma

In comparison to New Mexico, Oklahoma's Hispanic influence has been small; yet both states have a connection with Spanish conquistadors. In 1541, Spanish explorer Francisco Vásquez de Coronado and his soldiers became the first Europeans to arrive in Oklahoma. Don Juan de Oñate, traveling from New Mexico to Gran Quivira, crossed the Canadian River in Oklahoma in 1601 (Smith, 1980).

In the mid-1800s, the panhandle section of Oklahoma was considered a part of the Republic of Mexico until after the Mexican American War in 1848 (Smith, 1980). Consequently, the Hispanic population in Oklahoma has been and continues to be predominately Mexican. The first Mexican immigrants to Oklahoma were young Mexican boys captured by the Comanche Indians during their raids into Mexico (Smith, 1980). Only after Oklahoma became the 46th state in 1907 did the large migration of Mexicans to Oklahoma occur. A little over 100 Mexicans lived in Oklahoma in 1900 and by 1910 the Mexican population had grown to over 26,000 residents. Ten years later the Mexican population had increased more than 250% (Smith, 1980).

Many of these early 20th century Mexican immigrants to Oklahoma came from the central states of Mexico and found employment in such areas as railroads, mines,

agriculture, ranching, packinghouses, oil fields, and quarries (Brown, 1993; Smith, 1980). The Mexican population in Oklahoma in the early part of the 20th century experienced isolation from the community at large because of the lack of English skills, which was the chief reason for loss of gainful employment. Additionally, this populace had low literacy in their native language due to the scarcity of Spanish-language newspapers or other publications (Smith, 1980).

At the beginning of the second half of the 20th century, the Hispanic population in Oklahoma had increased to over 3,000 first- and second-generation Mexicans (Smith, 1980), and by 1990, the state had more than 63,000 persons of Mexican origin (Horner, 2000). Growing by 114% since 1990 (Lindley, 2001), Oklahoma's Hispanic population is the fastest-growing ethnic group in the state (Doucette, 2002; Murphy, 2003), and in almost 10 years their numbers have continued to grow to an estimated 278,620 Hispanic residents—a 55% increase from 2000, comprising almost 8% of the state's total population (Juozapavicius, 2009). Similarly, the number of people in Oklahoma speaking Spanish at home more than doubled in the last decade (U.S. Census Bureau, 1990; U. S. Census Bureau, 2003b). At present, almost 4.4% of the state's residents speak Spanish at home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003b).

Oklahoma's Hispanic population is predominantly concentrated in the Oklahoma City and Tulsa metropolitan areas; however, the largest proportion of Hispanic residents are in the remote northwestern and southwestern parts of the state (Doucette, 2002; Juozapavicius, 2009; Lindley, 2001). Within the Oklahoma City metropolitan area, Hispanics, who comprise almost 7% of the populace (U.S. Census

Bureau, 2000c), are estimated to represent $1.5 billion in annual buying power (Viva Oklahoma!, 2004). Also, the Hispanic population in Oklahoma County—where Oklahoma City is located—has increased 133% since 1990 (Lindley, 2001). Furthermore, the total Hispanic population in the southern United States—which includes Oklahoma—is 33%, accounting for almost 12% of the total population in that region (Marotta & Garcia, 2003).

Recognizing the rising influence of the Hispanic population in Oklahoma, the Oklahoma History Center in Oklahoma City opened the exhibit *Oklahoma: Tierra De Mi Familia* (Oklahoma: Land of My Family) in November 2008. According to the Center, "The interactive exhibit will use interviews, artifacts, documents, photographs, film, and music to explore both the impact of Latinos on the state of Oklahoma and the impact of the state of Oklahoma on the lives of Latinos" (Oklahoma History Center, 2008).

Although Hispanics in Oklahoma are expanding in numbers, overall their political influence in the state is negligible as there are no Hispanics in most city governments and only one Hispanic in the state legislature (National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund, 2008b; Owen, 2002). Nonetheless, the state's Hispanic presence is being noticed, especially within the educational system. Nationally, the Hispanic population is young, and Oklahoma's mirrors the national trend with a median age of close to 23 (Murphy, 2003). The state of Oklahoma reported that 2002, public school enrollment of Hispanic students increased 8.5% while the number of White students decreased 1.4 % (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2002). In 2009, the state announced that public school

enrollment of Hispanic students represented 11% of the total student population while the number of White students since 1990 diminished by nearly 61,000 (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2009). Moreover, within the preceding decade the Hispanic student population in Oklahoma City's public schools grew 150% (Watson, 2002), and, now Hispanics represent 41% of Oklahoma City's public school students, currently making it the state's largest school district (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2009).

An escalation in Hispanic enrollment is also transpiring on the campuses of Oklahoma's public colleges and universities. Even though only 4,000 Hispanic students accounted for Oklahoma college and university enrollments in 1990 (O'Leary Morgan, Morgan, & Quitno, 1992), there was a 76% growth between 1980 and 1990 (Hobbs, 1994). In that same decade, Hispanic male enrollments at Oklahoma public institutions of higher education increased by over 50%, and female Hispanic enrollments rose more than 100% (Hobbs, 1994). Moreover, from 1997 to 2006, Hispanics students attending the state's public colleges and universities swelled by 62% (Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, 2006).

As the Hispanic population in and around Oklahoma City has grown, various services fostering the Hispanic lifestyle have also emerged. The metropolitan area now boasts the second Hispanic contract postal unit in the state, a professional mariachi band, and grocery stores supplying traditional Hispanic products (Cannon, 2003a; Cannon, 2003b; Owen, 2002; Palmer, 2009; Robinson, 2004a). With regard to Spanish-language mass media outlets within the metropolitan area, there are three radio stations (two FM and one AM), two Spanish-language TV stations, and two

newspapers—*El Latino American*, a Spanish-English newspaper with a circulation of 12,000, as well as *Nuestra Comunidad*, referred to as "Oklahoma's local Hispanic newspaper," with a circulation of around 7,000 (Murphy, 2003; personal communication, F. R. Cevallos, July 31, 2004; personal communication, N. Struby, September 3, 2004).

Additionally, given that the Hispanic community in general has strong religious convictions, it is not surprising that churches around Oklahoma—and the Oklahoma City metropolitan area in particular—are accommodating the religious practices of this expanding ethnic population. For instance, St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Norman, which began conducting mass in Spanish 10 years ago with an initial attendance of about 60 worshipers, now has close to 300 attending weekly (Hall, 2003). Also, Norman's *Primera Iglesia Buatista Hispana* (First Hispanic Baptist Church), which conducts bilingual services, has been in the same location for 20 years with members from a variety of countries, including Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela (Jackson, 2000). Moreover, in Oklahoma City, the Little Flower Catholic Church draws over 3,000 worshipers from a wide area to one of its five weekend services conducted in Spanish (Lindley, 2001). Thus, the Hispanic presence in Oklahoma not only impacts the state geographically, educationally and economically, but spiritually as well.

Nevertheless, with immense repercussions from the social, political, and economic issues relative to the inevitable increases in the Hispanic populace, there is a continual threat of resurgent nativism among Whites in the United States (Huntington,

2004; Swain, 2002; Swain & Nieli, 2003). Montero-Sieburth and Meléndez (2007) explain the dynamics of this new nativism:

> In contrast to the old nativism of the turn of the century, the new nativism is based on a new racial construct where immigration has become synonymous with the growing presence of Latinos and undocumented immigrants from Mexico, an ethnic group regarded as a different race, and perhaps more notably, cementing racial diversity in the country (p. 4)

Inevitably there has been some backlash concerning the large numbers of Hispanics in Oklahoma, thus making the state exposed to this phenomenon. In March 2004, a state representative from Oklahoma City, during a debate on a bill to establish a state Latino Affairs Commission, remarked, "We do have a lot of Mexicans and Hispanics that want to come here and live, and frankly, I think we're getting too many" (Robinson & Snyder, 2004, p. 7A). The lawmaker later commented that he had meant to say the state was getting too many illegal immigrants; nevertheless, his remarks angered the state's Hispanic leaders. Even though a bill creating a state Latino Affairs Commission was defeated (Snyder, 2004), the state legislature previously had accommodated Oklahoma's growing Hispanic population by passing legislation permitting driver's license tests to be administered in Spanish (Owen, 2002). Nonetheless, a Hispanic Oklahoma City resident who relocated from San Antonio, Texas acknowledges the metropolitan area's lack of ethnic group strength: "Everywhere you turned there was action (in San Antonio), there was development. Here I find so much indifference, even among Latinos who tell me something is wrong. But nobody wants to do anything" (Owen, 2002, p. 4-A).

The politicization of this new nativism recently has been in the forefront of Oklahoma public policy through the passage of House bill 1804 in November 2007, which made it illegal to harbor, conceal or transport illegal immigrants and barring immigrants from getting driver's licenses and public services (Olivarez, 2007). Two years later the Oklahoma legislature passed a measure approving a ballot question to make English the official language of the state (McNutt, 2009).

It is important to examine these two settings because both environments are encountering increases in their respective Hispanic emerging adult populations. Hispanics, by and large, have resided in western and southern states, such as California, Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico. Nonetheless, Hispanics are currently residing in states that previously have not had a significant presence, such as North Carolina, Nebraska, Arkansas, Minnesota, Georgia (Marrota & Garcia, 2003), and now Oklahoma. Anecdotal evidence indicates that Oklahoma City is encountering an increase in its Hispanic population because individuals are fleeing from violently hostile places as Juarez, Mexico. It is worthy then to investigate the similarities and differences between areas that historically have had a Hispanic presence and areas that are newly experiencing dramatic increases in their Hispanic populations in order to understand the extent to which environmental settings affect the cross-cultural adaptation of Hispanic emerging adults.

It is also important to study these two distinct settings from the perspective of emerging adult theory. As a result of emerging adulthood representing the era of identity explorations, self-focus, and of possibilities (Arnett, 2006), the cultural and political landscapes of these two settings will certainly transform as a consequence of

the budding populations of Hispanic emerging adults. As emerging adulthood is the age of identity explorations, decisions on the values and beliefs of emerging adults can have an effect on their worldview (Arnett, 2000; 2006). Thus, from their sheer numbers, Hispanic emerging adults will significantly impact the cultural and political domains of their environments.

An additional reason for investigating these two areas is to augment the comparison and contrast research that is a component of cross-cultural adaption studies. It appears that only two studies have compared Hispanics in New Mexico with Hispanics in other states, notably southwestern states (Cantor et al., 2005; Smith, Mercy, & Warren, 1985). Therefore, this study will add to the research by comparing and contrasting New Mexico with a southwestern state that previously has not had a significant Hispanic presence. Moreover, current research on Hispanics in Oklahoma is sparse. The communication perspective of the present study will add a fresh dimension to the existing research on Hispanics in Oklahoma which have previously examined sociological, educational, or health-related issues (Garcia, 2005; Glynn, et al., 2006; Gormley, 2008; Gormley, Gayer, Phillips, & Dawson, 2005; Harvey, Bird, Galavotti, Duncan, & Greenberg, 2002; Klevens, et al., 2007; Lynch, Elledge, & Peters, 2008; and St. John & Miller, 1995).

This chapter gave an overview of the Hispanic population of the United States demonstrating that this populace is rapidly growing in numbers and is also an extremely young ethnic group. Secondly, the chapter described the historical presence of Hispanics in New Mexico and Oklahoma. Finally, this section presented the

reasons for investigating Hispanic emerging adults from these two divergent settings.

The next chapter describes the research methods and procedures used for this study.

CHAPTER 4

Methods

My primary research method included face-to-face interviews of Hispanic emerging adults who resided in the Albuquerque, New Mexico and the Oklahoma City, Oklahoma metropolitan areas. In this chapter I provide information on the background behind this study and its methods and procedures including participant demographics, site information, recruitment procedures, and interview questions.

Research Sites: Oklahoma City and Albuquerque Metropolitan Areas

The Oklahoma City metropolitan area is currently witnessing its Hispanic presence expand, and the Albuquerque metropolitan area has had a long history of Hispanic presence. Researching the varied experiences of Hispanic emerging adults residing in these two distinct metropolitan areas provided me the ability to investigate the interplay between emerging adulthood, cross-cultural adaptation, and the environment.

Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2007), the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area was ranked 46th of 100 metropolitan areas in terms of numerical gain between 2000 and 2006 with a 7% increase in its population. This metropolitan area with 1,206,142 inhabitants encompasses the seven counties of Canadian, Cleveland, Grady, Lincoln, Logan, McClain, and Oklahoma. The area's principal city, Oklahoma City, is the state's largest city and is located in Oklahoma County. It is estimated that more than nine percent of the people in the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area are Hispanic with approximately over 89,000 residing in Oklahoma County. Moreover, the

majority of the counties that comprise the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area have fewer than 100 Hispanic-owned businesses, except for Oklahoma County with 2.7%. (The preceding information about the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Area was taken from the State and County QuickFacts section of the U.S Census Bureau's website.)

The Albuquerque Metropolitan Area

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2007), the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area was ranked 44th of 100 metropolitan areas in terms of numerical gain between 2000 and 2006 with a gain of almost 12 % in its population. The Albuquerque Metropolitan Area has 845,913 inhabitants and includes the four counties of Bernalillo, Sandoval, Torrance, and Valencia. The area's principal city, Albuquerque, is the state's largest city and is located in Bernalillo County. The total number of residents in the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area that are of Hispanic descent is estimated to be 337,675 or approximately 45% of the total population of that area. Of the four counties that comprise the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area, Valencia County has the highest percentage of Hispanics at 55.8%. In addition, the percentage of Hispanic-owned firms is close to 22%. (The preceding information about the Albuquerque Metropolitan Area was taken from the State and County QuickFacts section of the U.S Census Bureau's website.)

Participants

The present study involved 12 Hispanic emerging adults residing in the Albuquerque and Oklahoma City metropolitan areas. Eight participants were from the Oklahoma City area and four were from the Albuquerque area. The Oklahoma City participants included four females and four males ranging in age from 19 to 22. Of the

eight participants three were born in Mexico and one was born in Colombia. The rest of the participants were born in the United States with two born in Oklahoma City, one born in Chicago, and one born in Los Angeles. Four were first generation (foreign born), three were second generation (no U. S.-born parents), and one was 2.5 generation (one US.-born parent and one foreign-born parent). The Oklahoma City participants were students at two different institutions of higher education in the Oklahoma City metropolitan area. At the one Oklahoma institution the largest percentage of ethnic minority students are Hispanic and at the other institution the Hispanic student population is the lowest. The four New Mexico participants, (3 males and 1 female), were of either Spanish or Mexican descent and ranged in age from 18 to 23. Three of the participants consider their culture of origin as Hispanic, and one considers his culture of origin as Spanish. The participants' generational status ranged from 2.5 to 5th generation.

Recruitment

The Oklahoma City and Albuquerque participants were university and college students and were recruited by contacting their respective institution's Student Affairs office. I was then given the name of an individual as my resource contact. I called each resource contact and explained that I was seeking Hispanic students between the ages of 18-25 and the purpose of my research study was, per wording of my informed consent form, "to better understand how communication plays a part in cross-cultural adaptation or the journey of personal change in which people who are socialized in one culture adjust to another culture." After deciding on a time and date that was mutually convenient, I met with the participants. The Oklahoma City interviews were

conducted in the large lobby area of a building on campus and in a large, empty classroom. The Albuquerque interviews were conducted in a small conference room behind the main office of a department within Student Affairs.

Emerging adults attending college were purposively selected because as students their current status affords them the opportunity to be articulate thinkers and more self-focused about their lives. Owing to this introspective nature, the participants, while few, could shed light on their perceptions of their surrounding environment, providing a rich source of information. Moreover, they were able to express themselves well providing a richer innate knowledge of their experiences. Through the interviews the participants became aware of who they are and deeper insight about themselves than they had before. In communicating with me several of the participants stated that the topics discussed made them think about themselves and their surroundings in addition to providing them an occasion to generate a deeper level of who they are.

Interview Protocol

The interviews, which were conducted in November and December 2008 and January 2009, involved both face-to-face interviews and focus group interviews. The research project utilized semi-structured, open-ended interviews, which are "arranged with the intention of taking each respondent through the same sequence and asking each respondent the same questions" (Patton, 1990, p. 280). Accordingly, the researcher is able to reduce interviewer effects and can establish consistency across each interview when the same general questions are asked of each participant, thus making analysis less onerous and more reliable (Bernard, 1999). The open-ended and

informal nature of the interviews allowed the participants to answer questions in their own words and also provided them the flexibility to include information that was not directly inquired. This type of interview format also let me respond to various issues broached by the participants that I had not contemplated in my own assessments about the cross-cultural adaptation of Hispanic emerging adults in New Mexico and Oklahoma.

The researcher, an Anglo male, conducted the interviews following Kvale‘s (1996) nine types of question: a) introducing questions, b) follow-up questions, c) probing questions, d) specifying questions, e) direct questions, f) indirect questions, g) structuring questions, h) silence, and i) interpreting questions. Based on the ethnicity-of-interviewer effects (Reese, Danielson, Shoemaker, Chang, & Hsu, 1986), some may cast doubt on the authenticity of the participants' answers to an Anglo male interviewer; however, this potential consequence can be sufficiently offset by an Anglo interviewer who exhibits an accepting demeanor and extensive knowledge and appreciation of the Hispanic culture. In fact, this limitation is somewhat offset because I have personally been involved with the Hispanic culture for many years and understand Hispanic cultural norms:(a) the cultural script of *simpatia* (friendliness), in which one conducts oneself in an amicable, interested, caring way; (b) importance of trust and *respecto* (respect); (c) familism, or the centrality of family; (d) need for *la platica* (small talk) before initiating formal transaction; (e) preference for close physical contact; and (f) the use of Spanish (Marín & Marín, 1991; Sue & Sue, 1990).

Even though "conducting focus groups with members of minority groups presents a formidable task for the white focus group moderator" (Fern, 2001, p. 87), a

skilled moderator is capable of establishing a climate of trust and safety for minority group members by being supportive, cordial, interested, nonargumentative, courteous, understanding, and sympathetic (Lofland & Lofland, 1995). As a consequence, more information that is pertinent to the research may be acquired when minority group participants feel comfortable sharing personal experiences in focus groups (Fern, 2001). Additionally, because the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis and because the researcher possesses certain characteristics, such as being responsive to the context, adapting techniques to the situation, and exploring anomalous responses (Merriam, 1998), it is essential that the researcher moderate the focus group. Nevertheless, some may argue that an Hispanic moderator would be best for interviewing Hispanics, but using someone, regardless of ethnicity, who the lacks theoretical knowledge, experience, and background necessary to understand the phenomena being studied could jeopardize the integrity of the research goal.

Interview Questions

Prior to conducting the interviews I had a self-identified Hispanic assess the interview questions for accuracy and clarity. The interview questions involved seven main topics with probing questions (see Appendix A: Interview Protocol). The interview questions refer back to the research questions to speak to the literature by asking a set of questions. Although the questions, which seek to answer the research questions and address current literature, appear highly structured this configuration promotes a springboard to probe further. The first section concerned the participant's personal history such as age, culture or origin, birthplace, parent's country of birth,

highest level of education completed, and occupation. The second interview section involved questions regarding the participant's interpersonal communication. Questions included the kinds of friends the participant has, if the friends are from the same ethnic group, how often the participant spoke in Spanish with friends and family, and if the participant had close personal friends that looked like the Anglo researcher. These questions relate to previous literature (e.g. Rumbaut, 1994; Toribio, 2002; Torres, 2002; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004; Valdes, 2000). The third section asked questions about the participant's use of either Spanish-language or English-language mass communication, such as television, radio, newspapers or magazines, and which form was used most and the major reasons why it was used most. The mass communication questions relate to previous literature (e.g. Barrera & Bielby, 2001; Johnson, 1996; Marín & Gamba, 1996; Pineda, 2000; Stilling, 1997; Subervi-Velez, 1986).

The fourth section related to questions about ethnic group strength. The questions asked if the participant's ethnic group is highly respected, and if Spanish language mass media is well respected where the participant lives. Other questions inquired if where the participant lives, his or her ethnic group has control over economic and business matter and whether the ethnic group has political power. Additional questions asked if where the participant lives, ethnic group members are proud of their cultural history and achievements, the reasons why members of the ethnic group are not proud of their cultural history and achievements, the ways Hispanics in the participant's state maintain unity as an ethnic group, and how strongly the participant identifies him- or herself by his or her ethnicity. These

questions relate to previous literature (e.g. Eschbach & Gómez, 1998; Gao, Schmidt, & Gudykunst, 1994; Gonzalez, 2009; Niemann et al., 1999; Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997; Portes & MacLeod, 1996).

The next interview sections involved questions regarding the participant's interaction with the larger society. Questions involved the participant's opinion as to the primary culture in their respective state, if the participant was disliked or treated unfairly because of his or her ethnicity. Other questions concerned if people in the participant's respective state saw a difference between Hispanics and recent Hispanic immigrants, are accepting of cultural differences, have positive attitudes towards Hispanics, try hard to understand Hispanics who have limited English skills, believe Hispanics should use English as soon as possible, dislike Hispanics who speak English with a Spanish accent, and are appreciative of the Hispanic culture. These questions relate to previous literature (e.g. Montero-Sieburth & Meléndez, 2007; Niemann et al., 1999; Saldaña, 1994).

The face-to-face interview with Salvador lasted approximately 50 minutes and the focus group interviews lasted from around an hour and a half to almost two hours. During the interviews I took notes in a field journal and used a digital recording device with an omnidirectional boundary microphone.

Analysis

Each interview was transcribed verbatim. After the interviews were transcribed, totaling 93 double-spaced pages, I checked all the transcripts by listening to each audio recording and reading each transcript, checking for accuracy and, if necessary, making corrections. To establish trustworthiness or credibility (Guba &

Lincoln, 1981) in my study, I listened multiple times to each audio recording and reviewed my transcriptions multiple times. Moreover, at the completion of the study I member checked by going back to those researched, and asked if I was accurate regarding my observations and interpretations. In analyzing the participant interviews I looked across the cases for emergent themes and patterns. The trustworthiness of my study was also born out by the divergence from my initial expectations (Ratcliff, 2002). For example, my data pushed me from my initial assumptions that emerging adults in Albuquerque would be fluent in Spanish. In addition, the trustworthiness of the study was formed from convergence with other sources of data in using comparisons with literature regarding Hispanic cross-cultural adaptation (Ratcliff, 2002), and also from the extensive quotations from the interview transcripts.

This study is an interpretive research endeavor that is concerned with "the ways individuals understand and act in specific social contexts than with finding general laws or all-encompassing explanations" (Feinberg & Soltis, 2009, p. 79). Thus from this interpretive point of view emergent themes are developed which, according to Lawrence-Lightfoot (1997) is an iterative and generative process in which "the themes emerge from the data and they give the data shape and form" (p. 185). The emergent themes were generated from a record of observations, writing field notes, tape recording interviews, and gathering documents. Elements from these records were named or "coded." Codes are a heuristic tool to facilitate discovery and further investigate the data (Siedel, 1998). These codes signified a myriad of variation of experiences that ultimately led to two important themes—ethnic identity orientation and language use—that together answered the research questions: How do Hispanic

emerging adults in Albuquerque and Oklahoma City perceive and express their identities with others? What role does ethnic identity play in how emerging adults in Albuquerque and Oklahoma City communicate with others? To what extent are the English and Spanish languages used in interactions with others? What are the perceptions of Hispanic emerging adults in Albuquerque and Oklahoma City as regards to how accommodating or disobliging the larger society is to Hispanics? And how do Hispanic emerging adults in Albuquerque and Oklahoma City perceive Hispanic ethnic group strength in their respective environments? In looking for answers to the research questions I noticed certain dialogue and named them or coded them. These codes signified to go deeper into the interviews because of the emergent themes that surfaced.

The next process was to separate my interview data into various elements. The separating or disassembling of research material is part of the analysis process because by "facts broken down into manageable pieces, the researcher sorts and sifts them, searching for types, classes, sequences, processes, patterns, or wholes. The aim of this process is to assemble or reconstruct the data in a meaningful or comprehensible fashion" (Jorgensen, 1989, p. 107). In an attempt to make sense out of the interviews, I looked for patterns and relationships both within the interviews, and across the interviews, and strived to make general discoveries about Hispanic emerging adults in the two distinct metropolitan environments of Oklahoma City and Albuquerque (Siedel, 1998). Thus, the above-mentioned hermeneutical process fosters researcher reflexivity or the symbolic interactionism of Mead's (1934) notion of the symbolic self of "me" and "I." As Davies (2008) contends,

> Mead's conception helps ethnographers to overcome the objection that they cannot possibly have access to the selves of people from other radically different cultural backgrounds. If the self is continually under construction, then ethnographers' experiences when they participate in social interaction in another society clearly alter their own selves in accordance with the cultural expectations of others. So the reflexive bent of such experimental ethnographies seems justified on good realist and pragmatic grounds, so long as they do not lose sight of their responsibility to seek explanatory abstraction and not primarily report on individual experience (p. 26).

Also, the current study provides transferability (Guba & Lincoln, 1981) or the applicability of the results to other similar settings. The final chapter of the study deals with transferability based on a rich contextual theoretical discussion of the findings.

In summary, this chapter discussed my research methods of face-to-face interviews and focus group interviews of Hispanic emerging adults living in different environments. The present study is qualitative interpretative study of which the next two chapters are illustrative. The subsequent two chapters discuss the literature regarding ethnic identity and language use pertaining to the Hispanic population in addition to presenting findings associated with these two subject matters derived from emerging adults in the Albuquerque and Oklahoma City metropolitan areas.

CHAPTER 5

Ethnic Identity

A person's identity is made of larger-than-life abstractions, less a shared set of beliefs and values than the collective strategies by which people organize and make sense of their experience, a complex yet tightly integrated construction in a state of perpetual flux.
-Ilan Stavans, *The Hispanic Condition*

Because of population increases of ethnic minorities in the United States (Bernstein, 2004) research on ethnic identity has received growing attention within the past decade (Cislo, 2008; Dubow, Pargament, Boxer, Tarakeshwar, 2000; Guzman, Santiago-Rivera, & Hasse, 2005; Kiang & Fuligni, 2009; McMahon & Watts, 2002; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001; Quintana, 2007; Romanucci-Ross, De Vos, & Tsuda, 2006; Saylor & Aries, 1999; Sellers & Shelton, 2003; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2004), and correspondingly, so has research on emerging adults and identity (Arnett, 1998; Arnett, 2000; Arnett, 2003; Arnett, 2004, Arnett & Brody, 2008; Côté, 2006; Johnson et al., 2007; Jordyn & Bird, 2003; Phinney, 2006; Sinclair & Milner, 2005; Siran et al., 2008; Syed & Azmitia, 2008).

As previously mentioned, emerging adulthood is an exploratory, unstable, fluid period (Arnett, 2004) and, as a result, "it is the age of identity explorations." (p. 7, Arnett, 2006). Identity exploration in the areas of love, work, and worldviews is one of the central features of emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2000). In addition to these domains, minority group members must cope with issues related to their racial heritage and ethnic background. A variety of factors, such as educational experience, socioeconomic status, ethnic background, generation of immigration, phenotype, familial relations, and community context, contribute to ethnic identity exploration for

ethnic and racial minorities residing in the United States (Phinney, 2006). Accordingly, for Hispanic emerging adults these factors may attach a more salient facet to the process of identity exploration in emerging adulthood. Thus, examining ethnic identity exploration among Hispanic emerging adults from two distinct settings that are environmentally and historically different may well provide further insight regarding the concept of ethnic identity.

This chapter presents an overview of identity research and Hispanic ethnic identity research. Second, the chapter offers a discussion of Hispanic ethnic identity from the perspectives of two emerging adults in Oklahoma and New Mexico, respectively.

Identity Research

Researchers have investigated the concept of identity from the personal, self-perceived aspect, such as the formation of individual identity (Erikson, 1959) to the social or group aspect, as investigated by George Herbert Mead (1934) and Erving Goffman (1959). Mead's concept of the symbolic self as "I" and "me" is connected to the study of identity given that those two components relate to self-concept. Mead views the combination of "I" and "me" as an on-going process of the self. When in interaction with others, this idea of self creates a "generalized other" which represents the attitude of the surrounding community. From this perspective, it could be argued that one's ethnic identity is derived from social interaction and modified through interpretation.

Goffman's (1959) notion of self-presentation also relates to the study of identity because, according to Goffman, how one organizes or makes sense of what is

going on becomes ones' definition of the situation. Defining a situation requires getting information from others and about others and, in turn, giving information about oneself to others. From Goffman's perspective, identity can be viewed as impression management. Thus, one's identity develops into what one wishes to present to others. In other words, one's ethnic identity can become the lone aspect of defining a situation.

Another perspective to the study of identity is Tajfel and Turner's (1986) social identity theory which states that one's identity and self-concept are connected with group membership. This theory maintains that group membership creates ingroup/self-categorization which favors the ingroup at the expense of the outgroup. When an individual belongs to a group, a sense of identity is likely to form, in part, from that group. Moreover, this sense of identity is bolstered by making comparisons with outgroups. This ingroup discrimination is composed of four elements: a) categorization—putting people into categories, b) identification—associating with certain groups (ingroups) which enhances one's self-esteem, c) comparison—comparing favorably one's ingroup to outgroup(s), and d) psychological distinctiveness—desiring one's ingroup identity to be both distinct from and positively compared with outgroups. This perspective undergirds the view of intense pride and reverence in one's racial identity.

Pertaining to social identity theory is Deaux's (1993) conceptualization of identity as comprising both internal (personal) and external (social) components. She defines personal identity as "those traits and behaviors (e.g., kind or responsible) that the person finds self-descriptive, characteristics that are typically linked to one or

more of the identity categories" and "social identities are those roles (e.g., parent) or membership categories (e.g., Latino or Latina) that a person claims as representative" (p. 6). Moreover, Deaux deems personal and social identity as fundamentally interrelated: "Personal identity is defined, at least in part, by group memberships, and social categories are infused with personal meaning" (p. 5).

Hispanic Ethnic Identity Research

As alluded to earlier, ethnic identity has received much consideration in the last decade, and concomitantly so has research examining Hispanic ethnic identity. Results from Hispanic ethnic identity studies indicate the following: Ethnic identity was a significant predictor of self-esteem among Hispanic secondary students (Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997), but not among Nicaraguan young adults living in Miami (Cislo, 2008); highly bicultural Hispanic young adults demonstrated flexibility with language use and were equally comfortable with Spanish or English (Félix-Ortega, Newcomb, & Myers, 1994); Hispanic high school students who speak only English and attend schools with few other Hispanics reported Hispanic identity inconsistently (Eschbach & Gómez, 1998); second-generation Hispanic immigrant adolescents who learned English—including those who retained fluency in Spanish—and became acclimated with American culture were less likely to identify themselves as Hispanic and more likely to call themselves American (Portes & MacLeod, 1996); and later generation Hispanic adolescents exhibited a predominantly Anglo American cultural orientation (Perez & Padilla, 2000).

Moreover, Gonzalez (2009) investigated ethnic identity within the school context and ascertained that Mexican American youth experienced a revived devotion

to their ethnicity when participating in events perceived as negating stereotypes, such as a school-sponsored retreat that fostered cultural understanding, and had tangible experiences, such as translating, in which bilingual skills were perceived as an asset. In addition, Umaña-Taylor and Fine (2004) examined the influence of ecological factors on adolescent ethnic identity achievement and noted ethnic identity, in part, was influenced by the ethnic composition of the adolescents' schools.

The abovementioned research indicates that racial/ethnic identity in Hispanics is not fundamentally an inert process, but one that is fluid and partly varies depending on nationality, generational status, and acculturation, among others.

Other than Umaña-Taylor and Fine's (2004) ecological research, studies on Hispanic ethnic identity seem to overlook the role of environmental conditions affecting the development of ethnic identity or intercultural identity. For example, Rumbaut (1994) found differences in patterns of ethnic self-identification among teenage children of immigrants. His findings indicate that an Hispanic self-identity is to a great extent made by females who possess certain characteristics, such as being foreign-born, having poor English skills but very good Spanish skills, and having parents identify themselves in panethnic terms, among other attributes. The Cuban and Mexican teenagers did not favor an Hispanic self-identity, whereas the Colombians, Nicaraguans, and other Latin Americans did. Moreover, being born in the United States, a naturalized U.S. citizenship, and a preference for and fluent use of English with close friends were factors that increased the proclivity for an assimilative self-definition. Additionally, perceptions of discrimination were also found to affect

the ethnic self-identity, with those having experienced discrimination less likely to identify themselves as Americans.

However, the participants' perceived nature of the mainstream culture is absent in the data collected. Although, Rumbaut (1994) acknowledges that the process of "becoming American" is "shaped within a much larger historical context of which the participants may be no more conscious than fish are of water" (p. 790), nonetheless, there is little explanation as to whether the influence of the larger society—in terms of openness—played a significant role in the differences in ethnic self-identification patterns. The study recognizes that certain factors such as preference for English add to an assimilative self-identification. Yet, there is no explanation as to whether this preference was linked to the larger society being unreceptive toward the use of Spanish.

The previous section provided an overview of the literature on identity and Hispanic youth and emerging adult ethnic identity. The next section describes the case study of two Hispanic emerging adults and how they view their ethnic identity.

Salvador—Oklahoma

Salvador is a 22 year-old Hispanic college student living in the Oklahoma City metropolitan area. He is a second-generation Hispanic born in Los Angeles, and his father was born in Mexico and his mother was born in Costa Rica. Salvador's parents met in Costa Rica when his father was looking for a place to attend school. His father found it too difficult to get a visa to the United States, so he went to Costa Rica and Salvador's mother worked at the university. Salvador's family ended up in Oklahoma because the man who helped them move to the United States was a missionary in

Costa Rica and he was from Oklahoma. According to Salvador the man said, "You know L.A. is not good place to raise a family. Why don't you consider coming out to Oklahoma? They came out, they saw it. They liked the pace of life and everything. So they moved here." Salvador does not have any other relatives in Oklahoma besides his parents and his sibling.

Salvador identifies himself as "just Latin American" because of his Mexican and Costa Rican roots. Salvador mentioned that people, even among some Hispanics, usually think is he from India "or from one of the Middle Eastern countries." He explained an occasion when a person was surprised by his ethnicity.

> Salvador: One of my really good friends now—I met her a couple of years ago here and we were in the cafeteria and there's another friend of mine who's Hispanic who came and sat with us. He said something to me in Spanish and I replied and she said, "Oh, you speak Spanish?" and I said, "Yeah." "Oh, where did you learn it?" And I said, "From my parents." And she said, "Your parents speak Spanish?" And I'm like, "Yeah. They're from—my dad's from Mexico and my mom's from Costa Rica. And she's like, "you're Hispanic?" She was just so surprised [Laughs].

In this case Salvador's friend, whom he had known for several years, was not aware of the nature of his "ethnic" roots. When another friend conversed with him in Spanish, it was at that moment that this other friend discovered this side of his identity.

He continued:

> Salvador: I don't think I ever say, "Hello, I'm Salvador, I'm Hispanic. But I usually introduce myself as Salvador and people usually ask me where I'm

from or where my family's from.

Salvador's abovementioned response and his previous answer—"so I would say that I am just Latin American"— regarding his culture of origin, prompted me to further ask how Salvador would ethnically label himself.

> David: So do you usually say you're Hispanic or do you then qualify that…I mean what you said is that you introduce yourself by your name and then if people want to ask more, like if someone were to say, "Are you Hispanic?" would you say, "yes" to that question?
>
> Salvador: Yes.
>
> David: So like when you meet a stranger—in terms of how strongly you identify by your ethnicity—you just give your name, and then if people look at you and say…like if someone said, "Are you from India?" You would then say, "no,"…how would you finish that?
>
> Salvador: I would say, "No." Well, it depends on who's asking me. Like, there's a big Indian student population here and just me always getting asked that, I kind of started researching Indian culture and stuff like that, so I now can say I know about Indian movies—not a lot, I know some, to where I can strike up a conversation with them. "No, I was born here. My dad's from Mexico and my mom's from Costa Rica."

Salvador explains that it depends on who is asking as to how much information he reveals about himself. Because of being mistaken as East Indian Salvador has taken upon himself to learn more about the East Indian culture.

I found Salvador's responses regarding his ethnicity to be intriguing because he does not seem to present his ethnicity forcefully. Because he gets mistaken a great deal for being East Indian a natural inclination would be to be offended by that inaccuracy and, as a result of this mistaken identity, to become more conscious of the portrayal of his ethnicity. In other words, I would assume that because of his mistaken ethnic identity he would have attempted, in some demonstrable way, to depict his ethnicity perhaps through clothing. But instead it seems that he has taken an opposite approach—that of learning more about the East Indian culture, a culture that he is mistaken for embodying.

An additional thought is that because of Salvador's twofold ethnicity—Costa Rican and Mexican—he cannot fully embrace one ethnicity without excluding the other. Salvador identifies himself as "Latin American" because of his Mexican and Costa Rican roots. The Mexican culture (e.g. its food, customs, and traditions) are different from the Costa Rican culture. In what ways would Salvador portray himself as "Latin American"? If he were to wear huaraches (traditional Mexican sandals), a sarape (a long brightly colored shawl worn by Mexican men), and a sombrero (a straw hat with a tall crown and broad brim) he would be representing his Mexican heritage, but if he wore a chonete (Costa Rica's traditional hat) he would represent his Costa Rican heritage. What if he were to wear a sarape and a chonete? Would the blending of these two clothing items identify him as "Latin American" or simply identify him as a man wearing brightly colored shawl and a bucket hat? In identifying himself as "just Latin American," Salvador is able to represent his dual ethnic heritage without compromising one ethnic culture over the other.

In regards to Hispanic ethnicity, perceptions of discrimination and prejudice occur (Gil et al., 1994; Saldaña, 1994; Vega et al., 1993). Some Hispanics feel that teachers show favoritism toward Anglo students and others have been treated badly by store clerks because of their ethnicity or are followed when they enter a store because the clerks presume they are potential shoplifters (Keefe, 1992; Niemann, Romero, Arredondo, & Rodriguez, 1999). In light of this, I asked Salvador if he has ever been treated unfairly because of his ethnicity, and he responded in the affirmative. I asked him if he could think of some examples.

> Salvador: Sure. Just a couple of years ago we were on our way to Mexico in December for Christmas. We went down for 10 days…to spend Christmas down there and the guy at the ticket counter at the airport was just…[Laughs] I don't know whether he was having a bad day or what, but he was convinced that my passport was like there was something wrong with it or something. He was calling the airlines, he was calling the Mexican consulate in Dallas…I don't have nothing to do with the government of Mexico, you know….He assumed. He assumed that I was from Mexico, but I could have been from anywhere else.

The example that Salvador gives regarding being treated unfairly because of his ethnicity is an interesting one. Salvador states that the man at the airport ticket counter assumed he was from Mexico. Earlier in our interview Salvador stated that many people mistake him for being East Indian, but in this instance he is mistaken for being Mexican. It is interesting to note that Salvador says, "He assumed I was from Mexico, but I could have been from anywhere else." Also, this example that Salvador

gives is one that is not necessarily an example that definitively demonstrates discrimination or prejudice per se because we do not know if the motive of the airline clerk was simply due to the fact that he believed there was something amiss with Salvador's passport rather than simply because of Salvador's ethnicity.

Ethnic group identity is a prevalent factor when examining ethnicity and identity. Being proud of one's ethnic cultural history and achievements and maintaining unity as an ethnic group are some examples of ethnic group identity. I asked Salvador a few questions related to ethnic identity.

> David: Now do you think, where you live, are members of your ethnic group proud of their cultural history and achievements, such as, like, participating in cultural festivals or expressing appreciation of famous Hispanics?
>
> Salvador: Yes. One thing that I find…I think there is that appreciation. There's not so much appreciation in the sense that Hispanics that have, I don't know, like a César Chávez or something like that where he wasn't that well known in Mexico, but here in the United States…there's even schools in California named after him and stuff like that. I don't think a lot of immigrants would know who César Chávez is. So there isn't as much appreciation, I don't think. Maybe there's appreciation for Benito Juarez, who's kind of considered the father of Mexico.

Salvador states that Hispanics express appreciation for their famous compatriots, but that there is a difference within his ethnic group of which famous individual, such as César Chávez or Benito Juarez, is appreciated. In mentioning that his ethnic group is proud of their cultural history and achievements, Salvador suggests

the names of César Chávez, a leading Mexican American activist and head of the farm-labor movement and Benito Juarez, a beloved president of Mexico. The former was an Hispanic shaped in the United States and the latter an Amerindian shaped in Mexico.

César Chávez was a Mexican American labor leader and civil right activist who started the National Farm Workers Association, later the United Farm Workers. Benito Juarez, a Zapotec Amerindian, is considered one of Mexico's greatest and most beloved leaders. He was the first indigenous national to become president of Mexico, serving for five terms beginning in 1858 and ending in 1871. He has sometimes been referred to as "Mexico's Lincoln."

César Chávez's work on behalf of migrant farm workers occurred mainly in California, Arizona, and Texas. Because Salvador was born in California he knows who César Chávez is and has an appreciation for his efforts. Some Hispanic immigrants may not know and appreciate César Chávez because of geography. For example, a Mexican immigrant living in Oklahoma would not necessarily have an appreciation for César Chávez as would a Mexican immigrant farm worker living in California. However, both immigrants would likely have an appreciation for Benito Juarez.

I asked Salvador if he had any other examples of his ethnic group being proud of their cultural history and achievements. Salvador responded that other examples would be festivals and also "keeping our language. Retaining our language." I later asked Salvador what he thought are the reasons why members of his ethnic group might not be proud of their cultural history or achievement.

Salvador: I think a lot of times people equate our culture to poverty and to ignorance and I don't think…but that in itself is ignorance because there's just been so many achievements and so many things accomplished and so many intelligent people from our culture and from our background. But I think a lot of times just even the language and just the culture is equivalent to poverty and to ignorance.

Salvador mentions that poverty and ignorance are aspects as to why some members of his ethnic group might not be proud of their cultural history or achievements. In his response it appears that when he is discussing his culture being equated to poverty and to ignorance it is not only the mainstream culture that has this specific view, but members of his own culture retain this same view. He states that having this attitude is ignorance in itself because there are "so many intelligent people from our culture." The notion that the Hispanic culture is composed of poverty and ignorance is a stereotype perpetuated by the mainstream culture. From Salvador's response this stereotype also emerges within his own culture thus demonstrating the forceful influence the larger society has over his own culture's perception of itself.

Maintaining unity as an ethnic group is another way to nourish ethnic identity. The environmental conditions of the larger society can either sustain or hinder ethnic group strength. Given the recent anti-immigrant conditions around the Oklahoma City metropolitan area, such as House Bill 1804, the state's new strict immigration law that passed in 2007, I was curious as to what Salvador thought were some of the ways Hispanics in Oklahoma maintain unity as an ethnic group.

Salvador: I think attending church. And I think that the general thing

> throughout the United States is they say that Sunday mornings are the most segregated still in the United States. [Laughs] So I think church is definitely part of it. And also going to businesses. Like, you know, if everyone goes and buys their food at one of the ethnic markets. You see your friends, you see your cousins and stuff like that at the store. Politically, I don't think there's a lot of unity here in Oklahoma among the Hispanic community. Except when there was a couple of rallies at the Capitol and things like that against 1804, but besides that I don't think there's a thing like really organized…I mean, I guess, maybe church might be the most organized thing…but besides that I don't think there's really anything.

Salvador's perception of Hispanics in Oklahoma maintaining unity as an ethnic group is negligible. He believes that unity is shown through attending church and buying food at ethnic markets. Although the recent anti-immigrant legislation has unified Hispanics in Oklahoma, in Salvador's opinion Hispanics in Oklahoma are not very well organized. From his standpoint, the Church "might be the most organized thing." In the Oklahoma City metropolitan area, the Hispanic culture is generally found within the southeast section of the city called the Capitol Hill area. Around the Capitol Hill area the clout of the church is formidable. For example, every year the Little Flower Catholic Church youth group carries on the Easter season custom of *Via Cruces* or Way of the Cross, a tradition within the Hispanic community (Hinton, 2009). By maintaining Via Cruces the Church is able to offer Hispanic youth in Oklahoma the same traditions that their parents had. This is a compelling way to maintain ethnic unity and thus nourishing a durable Hispanic ethnic identity.

Salvador and his ethnic identity

Salvador's awareness of his ethnic identity in some ways has been shaped by others. Although he labels himself as "Latin American" due to his Costa Rican and Mexican heritage, many, including a number of Hispanics, view him as East Indian or Middle Eastern. Because of being constantly asked if he is from India, Salvador began researching the Indian culture, such as viewing Indian films, which led him to converse with Indian students about their culture. Thus, Salvador's racial composition to others is one of being Indian. In line with Goffman (1959), Salvador's self-presentation would then be one of portraying the role of an Indian—his "front" is Indian, although he is Latin American. Goffman contends that an individual's front can be categorized into setting (surroundings, style, class), appearance (clothing, age, gender, race), and manner (how one reacts). According to Goffman, "the expressiveness of the individual appears to involve two radically different kinds of sign activity: the expression that he gives, and the expression that he gives off" (p.2). So, even though Salvador's ethnic identity is Hispanic, Goffman would allege that the expression Salvador gives and the expression he gives off is not Hispanic. That then begs the question, is Salvador attempting to downplay his Hispanic ethnicity? I don't believe so; instead, I believe his blended ethnicity permits him to have a stronger appreciation for other cultures. The combination of his parental heritage, the fusion of two countries and two cultures—Mexico and Costa Rica—facilitates a better awareness of other cultures.

Thus, Salvador's ethnic identity or self-concept, per se, is not necessarily predicated upon group membership. His identity in general is not reinforced through

generating comparisons with outgroups. As a result, he would not automatically place people into categories. This may be due to the fact that others, including Hispanics, have placed him in the category of having East Indian heritage. Also, it would appear that he would not overtly compare his ingroup to outgroups or wish his ingroup identity to be both dissimilar from and affirmatively compared with outgroups.

The preceding section considered the ethnic identity of an emerging adult in Oklahoma. The next section discusses the ethnic identity of a New Mexican emerging adult.

Eliazar—New Mexico

Eliazar, a 19 year-old student attending college in Albuquerque, was born and raised in Española, New Mexico. It seems that he is a fifth generation Hispanic. His mother was born in Santa Fe and his father was born in Colorado. He mentioned that a grandmother was born in Santa Fe and a grandfather was born in Cuyamungue, which is between Española and Santa Fe.

Eliazar identifies his culture of origin as Spanish. When asked how strongly he identifies himself by his ethnicity, he responded:

> Eliazar: Umm…well, I do…like, I guess if someone were to call me a Mexican from Mexico I'd probably get offended and I would be like "No, I'm Hispanic from Northern New Mexico. I'm from New Mexico; I didn't cross the border, the border crossed over to me." You know, that's my argument, you know, I say I'm from New Mexico, I'm New Mexican…not…I don't even say I'm American, I say I'm New Mexican…if I'm introducing myself to someone, like, if they ask me, like, what ethnicity I come from I say "I'm New

Mexican."

Eliazar indicates that regarding his ethnicity he is New Mexican and would be offended if he were called Mexican because he is an Hispanic from Northern New Mexico or an *Hispano*. He also states that the border crossed over to him and not the other way around. In raising the topic of the border, Eliazar's comment indicates that he considers himself to have always been from this country even when it was under the authority of Spain and not recognized as the United States of America. He expresses that he does not declare himself American, but declares himself New Mexican. This indication of his ethnicity is an example of a non-assimilative ethnic identity.

Nostrand (1992) explains the characteristics of a Hispano:

> Racially, he is by and large mestizo, different from Mexican Americans only because of a greater nomad Indian admixture. Politically, he is an American, and has been since the mid-nineteenth century, a claim only the descendants of the old-stock populations can make. Six or seven generations of Anglicization have made him bicultural and bilingual, like most other Mexican Americans. Yet culturally he is set apart from Mexican American by peculiar preserved and indigenous Spanish attributes—attributes that are different only in subtle ways much like the subtle differences that separate New Englanders or Southerners or Mormons from mainstream Anglo-American society. Finally, in ethnicity the Hispano is different because he identifies with his Spanishness (p. 24).

Even though New Mexico is the state with the highest proportion of Hispanics in the United States (Guzmán, 2001), I was interested in knowing whether Eliazar had encountered any form of prejudice or discrimination.

David: Eliazar, have you often had people dislike you because of your ethnicity? For example, at school or at work?

Eliazar: Umm…no. Because pretty much everybody who's around me is the same, and like at work, I mean, they never told me to my face and, I mean, if they did, you know….I don't know.

His response was similar when asked if he often had people dislike him because of his ethnicity.

Eliazar: Because everybody around us is pretty much the same, I mean, it is New Mexico, so, like, if there's a group of people coming to New Mexico and they don't like the culture there then, I mean, get out. [Laughs]

In responding as to whether he had encountered any prejudice or discrimination, Eliazar indicated that he had not because everyone who is around him is the same. His answer was the same in response to whether people disliked him because of his ethnicity.

Not only did Eliazar reveal a strong ethnic identity he also demonstrated a strong sense of ethnic pride in response to whether members of his ethnic group are proud of their cultural history and achievements. He mentioned that every year there are fiestas and "we celebrate the coming of Oñate who, like, settled here in northern New Mexico." Eliazar also mentioned the Misión Museum y Convento in Española. According to the plazadeespanola.com website: "The Misión Museum is a replica

based on the 1944 University of New Mexico excavations of the original church built by the Spanish at the San Gabriel settlement in 1598." Eliazar continued to give other examples.

> Eliazar: And then just like our churches and stuff they're…like the churches that I went to they're there for like hundreds of years, like the Sanctuario de Chimayó…I mean I'd walk every year to that…and it's like our culture is really…up north, but I don't know about here in Albuquerque. I've only lived here for one year so I don't know, like, too much down here. But up north in northern New Mexico…like our plazas and everything is like the history of New Mexico, like our state capitol and everything's there…and like we celebrate everything there…parades and stuff. And we have reenactments of the Spaniards and the horses and the costumes and everything…like it's pretty enriched.

In answering the question as to whether members of his ethnic group are proud of their cultural history and achievements, Eliazar mentioned that his ethnic group celebrates through parades and historical reenactments. He also points out the strong faith of his culture by citing the example of the pilgrimage to El Sanctuario de Chimayó.

Sanctuario de Chimayó is a small chapel in northern New Mexico built over 200 years that is sacred to the descendents of Spanish settlers and to the Pueblo Indians. During *Semana Santa* (Holy Week), thousands of pilgrims walk for miles to reach the chapel believed to have the power to heal mind and body. The pilgrims begin their journey in darkness before Good Friday and by Easter Sunday they pass through the doors of the small chapel (Lacy, n.d.).

Additionally, in reply as to the ways Hispanics in New Mexico maintain unity as an ethnic group, Eliazar responded similarly mentioning different fiestas, such as Zozobra, and attending church. Zozobra is the ritual burning in the effigy of "Old Man Gloom." The burning of Zozobra is the kick-off of the annual *Fiestas de Santa Fe* during the weekend following Labor Day. It is the oldest civic celebration in the United States having been celebrated since 1712 to commemorate Don Diego de Vargas, who reconquered the territory of New Mexico (Kiwanis Club of Santa Fe, n.d.). Moreover, when asked if he could think of any reasons why members of his ethnic group are not proud of their cultural history and achievements, Eliazar responded by saying, "No. 'Cuz I'm personally proud to be who I am and where I come from."

I also asked Eliazar if people in New Mexico see a difference between Hispanics and recent Hispanic immigrants.

> Eliazar: Yes. Yes. There is a big difference, like even in the food. Their food is completely different than our food. Umm…like we speak English—and some of us speak Spanish—but, and like the Spanish we speak here in New Mexico is different than what they speak in Mexico. Like, we, we use a lot of slang and stuff in our speech. And, like, we made it our own, like, we're our own breed, I say.

Eliazar sees a big difference in both food and language between Hispanics and recent Hispanic immigrants. Later in our conversation, he again mentioned the difference in food and that the Mexican traditions for Christmas are different from his Christmas traditions.

Eliazar: Just like our traditions are different. Like the Mexicans that I work with their traditions for Christmas are completely different from my traditions for Christmas. Umm…like…and I guess it just come down to the food…like the way they prepare their food.

David: Now did you say the New Mexicans you work with or the Mexicans you work with.

Eliazar: The Mexicans.

David: The Mexicans that you work with.

Eliazar: See, that's what I identify them as "Mexicans" because that's what they identify themselves as: "I'm Mexican. "I'm from Mexico." They're proud of their culture, too. They represent it all over. I see it everywhere. Some places I call "Little Juarez."

Eliazar's response that some places he calls "Little Juarez" is reminiscent of what Tobar (2005) describes as "I am mexicano," an identifiable set of beliefs and customs, such as veneration for the tricolor Mexican flag.

Eliazar and his ethnic identity

Eliazar's concept of his ethnic identity is related to Goffman's notion of self-presentation. He identifies himself as New Mexican and his culture of origin as Spanish. Eliazar presents himself as New Mexican and thus his every action, gesture, and comments are related to his being New Mexican. He does not see himself as American, but as New Mexican.

Moreover, Eliazar's ethnic identity relates to Tajfel and Turner's (1986) social identity theory. Whereas, others connect with the Hispanic culture or more

specifically, the Mexican, Nicaraguan or Colombian culture—a country-specific culture, Eliazar connects with the New Mexican culture—a state-specific culture. His identity belongs to the New Mexican culture, but at the same time his sense of identity is reinforced by making comparisons with Mexicans. He states that he would be offended if someone were to call him Mexican. He also mentions that there is difference in food and language—the Spanish spoken in New Mexico is different than that spoken in Mexico. Additionally, traditions, such as Christmas are different. Although, he acknowledges that Mexicans are also proud of their culture, he also slights the Mexicans in New Mexico by stating that some places are "Little Juarez." This is a slight to the Mexicans in that he is placing them apart from himself and categorizing them into a small enclave. Eliazar's notion of his identity relates to Tajfel and Turner's elements of intergroup discrimination—categorization, identification, comparison, and psychological distinctiveness. Eliazar tends to categorize people. For example, he separates Mexicans and New Mexicans through their food, traditions and language. Moreover, he states that he would be offended if someone were to call him a Mexican. Eliazar's strong identification as a New Mexican enhances his own self-esteem as when he describes the Spanish used in New Mexico: "Like, we, we use a lot of slang and stuff in our speech. And, like, we made it our own, like *we're our own breed*, I say" [italics emphasized]. Also, Eliazar compares his ingroup favorably to other outgroups. For example, Eliazar compares the New Mexican Christmas traditions to the traditions for Christmas carried out by Mexicans, the manner in which food is prepared compared to Mexicans, and that the

Spanish spoken in New Mexico is different than what is spoken in Mexico. He also explains that the Mexicans are just as proud of their culture as are New Mexicans.

Eliazar also demonstrates a vigorous psychological distinctiveness in his ethnic identity. In other words, he reveals an intense pride and reverence in his racial identity. He states, “I’m personally proud to be who I am and where I come from.” He goes on to explain that his ingroup has fiestas and parades that are “pretty enriched” which reenact the coming of the Spaniards that settled in northern New Mexico. Eliazar also exhibits a determined reverence toward his ethnic identity. He states that he is an Hispanic from northern New Mexico and that if asked what is his ethnicity, he would reply that “I’m New Mexican.” He also asserts that he is from New Mexico and that he didn’t cross the border, the border crossed over to him.

Eliazar’s notion of the border crossing over to him is similar to what Stavans (2001) writes near the end of his book *The Hispanic Condition*:

> Latinos, I believe, were, are, and will always be perpetual alien residents never fully here—strangers in a native land. We are of a different variety simply because, unlike previous immigrants, most of us didn’t come to America; instead, America came to us (p. 245).

Eliazar’s strong sense of ethnic identity, I believe, can be directly connected to his growing up around the environment of Española. His strong New Mexican identity is related to Mead’s notion of the symbolic self. Eliazar’s generalized self—the composite image he has of himself based on how others see him—is strengthened through his interactions with his community in Española. The ethnic celebrations—

the parades, the fiestas, and the traditions he has participated in all become a part of himself and his ethnic identity.

The cognitive component of Eliazar's ethnic identity, his ethnic self-label as being "New Mexican" and thus separating himself from Mexicans, is similar to the results found by Doan and Stephan (2006). They discovered that context, especially geographical location, was a central determinant of ethnic identity. Moreover, Eliazar's strong sense of his identity relates to the findings of Rinderle and Montoya (2008) in which self-identified New Mexican Chicanos/as are very aware of their identity and its separateness from the majority and other groups in addition to its uniqueness and specialness. The chosen identity labels of Chicano/a, Hispanic, Latino/a, and Mexican American were favored in both studies. In addition, the labels American, Spanish-American, and Mexican were also selected. It is interesting to note that even though the participants in Doan and Stephan's study reflected regional labeling preference and some of the participants in Rinderle and Montoya's study were northern New Mexicans, none stated that they were "New Mexican" as Eliazar did. A possible reason why Eliazar stated that he was "New Mexican" and the participants in the above-mentioned studies did not is because of his ethnic identity commitment. According to Phinney (2004, ¶ 12), ethnic identity commitment "refers to the strength of one's ties with a particular ethnic group, the evaluation and importance of, and attachment to, one's ethnic group; and the clarity of beliefs, standards, and goals that one holds regarding one's ethnicity."

There are two types of ethnic identity commitment. Ethnic identity foreclosure referring to commitment without exploration (not questioning parental and societal

values and attitudes) and ethnic identity achievement referring to commitment with exploration (a developed understanding of ethnicity by scrutinizing parental and societal values and attitudes) (Phinney, 2004). Eliazar demonstrates an ethnic identity achievement when asked if people often dislike him because of his ethnicity and he responds: “If there’s a group of people coming to New Mexico and they don’t like the culture there then, I mean, get out.” Additionally, he reveals a pronounced ethnic identity achievement when asked if he could think of any reason why members of his ethnic group are not proud of their cultural history and achievements and he responds by saying: “No. ‘cuz I’m personally proud to be who I am and where I come from.”

This chapter reviewed the research literature on identity in general and then specifically Hispanic ethnic identity. The chapter presented Hispanic ethnic identity from the perspectives of two emerging adults from two distinct environments—Oklahoma City and Albuquerque. The following chapter presents an overview of the literature regarding language use among Hispanics and then offers a discussion about the language use among Hispanic emerging adults in New Mexico and Oklahoma.

CHAPTER 6

Language Use

Spanish or English: Which is the true Latino mother tongue?
They both are, plus a third option: Spanglish—a hybrid.
—Ilan Stavan, *The Hispanic Condition*

According to the *2002 National Survey of Latinos* piloted by the Pew Hispanic Center and the Kaiser Family Foundation, "One of the key traits that defines the Hispanic population and distinguishes it from other racial and ethnic groups in the United States is the large number of individuals who predominantly speak Spanish" (p. 37). The quantity of Spanish speakers in the United States grew over the years. Between 1990 and 2000, the percentage of people speaking Spanish at home increased from almost 8% to close to 11% (Marotta & Garcia, 2003). Furthermore, nearly a decade ago more than 28 million U.S. residents ages five and older spoke Spanish at home, which was approximately 10 million more than the entire people who collectively spoke all other languages, excluding English (National Research Council, 2006). Seven years later, according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2009), the number of U.S. residents ages five and older who spoke Spanish at home swelled 25% to 35 million, constituting 12% of U.S. residents. Undeniably, these large numbers represent the dynamism of the Spanish language within the United States.

Johnson (2000) lists five reasons for Spanish language vitality in the United States. The first reason cited is geographical proximity to an ancestral homeland. Presently, one can find more people of Mexican ancestry in Los Angeles than in all of Mexico, minus one city. More Puerto Ricans are living in New York City than in San Juan. And, the only place besides Miami where there are more Cubans residing is in

Havana (Marger, 2000). Second, there is a loyalty to and love of the Spanish language for native speakers. Stavans (2001), concurring with this assessment, notes:

> Unlike other ethnic groups, Latinos are amazingly loyal to their mother tongue. Because of the geographic closeness of the countries of origin and the diversity in the composition of their communities, Spanish remains a unifying force, used at home, in school, and on the streets (p. 153).

A third reason Johnson gives for Spanish language vitality is that extended family ties or *la familia* provides impetus to develop some level of Spanish language proficiency. Familism or family orientation, a culture-specific value within the Hispanic community, is regarded as extremely significant (Gurak, 1981; Marín, 1993; Moore, 1970; Rodríguez & Kosloski, 1998; Sabogal, Marín, Otero-Sabogal, VanOss Marín, & Perez-Stable, 1987; Triandis, Marín, Betancourt, Lisansky, & Chang, 1982; Vázquez García, García Coll, Erkut, Alarcón, & Tropp, 2000). Moreover, the fact that Hispanics live in de facto segregated, enclosed communities or ethnic enclaves within the United States—sometimes referred to as *barrios*—is a fourth reason Johnson specifies why the Spanish language is robust. Accordingly, to broaden comprehension of these ethnic environs occasional studies have investigated language use within the barrio communities in the United States (Elias-Olivares, 1977; Fishman, Cooper, & Ma, 1971; Shannon, 1990; Zentella, 1980).

A fifth reason is the resources and entertainment via Spanish have grown in tandem with the Spanish-speaking populace. An 80% share of the Spanish language audience is garnered by Univision Communications, a Los Angeles-based company, which has 21 television stations and 33 broadcast and 1,100 cable affiliates (Simons,

2002). "Univision is the fifth largest station in the country—behind ABC, CBS, NBC, and Fox—and its news audience frequently outnumbers those who watch CNN or Fox News. More teenagers watch Univision than MTV" (Ramos, 2004, p. 88). Moreover, Hispanic soap operas known as *telenovelas* are the most popular form of episodic television programming among Hispanics in the United States (Barrera & Bielby, 2001; Fetto, 2002).

Although the percentage of Hispanics ages five and older who speak Spanish at home is close to 80% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009), there also is a decline in the use of, preference for, and, as a result, fluency in Spanish within the second generation that creates a significant variation in the level of mastery of the language (Ardila, 2005; Marín & Marín, 1991; National Research Council, 2006). This coincides with a Pew Hispanic Center survey that found fewer than one-in-four adult first-generation Hispanics are able to speak English very well. However, close to 90% of second-generation adults, and 94% of third and higher generations report they speak English very well (Hakimzadeh & Cohn, 2007). Several studies have found this same generational shift from Spanish to English (Harwood & Feng, 2006; Holleran, 2003; Marsiglia & Holleran, 1999; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Veltman, 2000; Zentella, 2000; Zentella, 2002)

The Pew Hispanic Center survey referenced above also found nearly a third of all Hispanic immigrants reported speaking both English and Spanish "pretty well" or "very well." Moreover, almost 80% of foreign-born Hispanics who arrived before age 11 and two-thirds of second-generation Hispanics disclosed being bilingual. Stavans (2001) contends that inhabiting the realm of bilingualism for Hispanics engenders the

following: “To be or *ser*: that’s the real question: Spanish and English, a native tongue and an adopted tongue, a foot here, another across the border and the Caribbean—a home at home and abroad” (p. 153). Hence, for the Hispanic bilingual there is a fusion of language and identity.

According to Vásquez (2003), the bilingual individual offers a distinctive element to the relationship between language and identity. She states that bilinguals, within a monolingual-multilingual continuum have three options with regard to identity. The first option is to form a strong ethnic identity. The second identity option is to assume the identity of the dominant group or to assimilate into the dominant group. The third option is to develop a bifocal or multifocal view of self that “allows the self to flow in and out of two or more sets of norms and expectations” (p. 33). Vásquez maintains these three concepts of identity encompass both gain and loss; a gain from possessing an increased sense of belonging and solidarity, but also a loss owing to some aspect of sacrifice. This perception of sacrifice assumes that a native or dominant identity precludes other possibilities. Moreover, “the decision to bridge cultural systems by developing two or more seemingly separate ways of seeing oneself also exacts a burden on the individual” (p. 33).

Connected with ethnic identity is the role of language in culture. In Mead’s (1934) view, people utilize language to generate situations and thus signify those entities that are deemed important and significant. The concept of the fusion of language and identity will be a focal point of this chapter. The individuals interviewed for this study had various levels of mastery of the Spanish language. Whereas, the

Oklahoma site group was mainly bilingual; the New Mexico site group was not. A discussion of the use of Spanish and English by these two groups follows.

Oklahoma City Site Group

Of the 7 participants interviewed six were of Mexican heritage and one of Colombian descent. Four were first generation (foreign born), two were second generation (no U. S.-born parents), and one was 2.5 generation (one US.-born parent and one foreign-born parent).

When asked how often they speak Spanish to their friends, the group stated that they speak Spanglish in addition to a Spanish-English combination (one person speaks in Spanish and the other responds in English). For example, Elena, a 19-year-old second-generation Mexican (born in Oklahoma and her parents born in Mexico), pointed out that she felt more comfortable speaking in English:

> Elena:…because, like, my friends they can speak to me in Spanish, but I speak to them in English.

On the other hand, Gustavo, a 20-year-old 2.5 generation Mexican (born in Illinois and his father born in Minnesota and his mother born in Mexico), explained that whether he spoke English or Spanish depended on to whom he was talking:

> Gustavo: I have to say depending on who I'm talking to 'cuz if it's somebody who only speaks Spanish, I'll only speak Spanish to them, somebody only speaks English, I'll speak English to them, you know, like…
>
> David: So if they talk to you in Spanish, you'll respond?
>
> Gustavo: Yes.
>
> David:….back in Spanish. But if they speak to you in English….?

Gustavo: Yes. Like if I'm talking to Francisco (*another interview participant)* I would use Spanish words, English words, everything.

David: OK. So now when you say that, are you doing Spanglish?

Gustavo: Yeah.

Even though these two participants are close to the same age and were both born in the United States, they described that their language preference is different. One is more comfortable speaking English and the other declares that his choice of language depends upon whom he is speaking. He might use Spanish if the other person only speaks Spanish, and he might use English if the other person only speaks English or he may possibly use Spanish words and English words talking to someone who knows both English and Spanish.

With regard to language use with their family members the participants stated that they either speak Spanish or English. Lela, a 21-year-old first generation Colombian, Francisco, a 19-year-old first generation Mexican, and Rosario, a 20-year-old first generation Mexican, all stated that they only speak Spanish to their parents. Pilar, a 19-year-old second generation Mexican indicated that she speaks Spanish and English with her parents. Asked if it were 50/50 between Spanish and English, Pilar specified it was more Spanish, but that if she had a long conversation with her parents, it was more likely that she would speak to them in English. Gustavo, (2.5 generation) pointed out that usually when he talks to his father it is in English but with his mother they speak in Spanish. When I asked Gustavo if he thought speaking to his father in English was because his father was born in the United States, he replied affirmatively.

Moreover, Elena, a second generation Mexican, stated that she speaks English with her parents:

> Elena: ….like, my mom, she speaks English to me. Most of the time it's English, but sometimes it can be Spanish. But my dad is always Spanish, but I always answer him in English.
>
> David: Is that because you feel more comfortable with English or….?
>
> Elena: Well, yeah. I feel that my Spanish is not the greatest.

The language the participants speak with their siblings is also mixed. Rosario (first generation), related that she speaks "Spanglish—Spanish and English" with her brothers. Francisco (first generation) stated that he spoke Spanish and English with his siblings. However, Bernardo, a 19-year-old first generation Mexican and Pilar (second generation) said that they only spoke English with their siblings.

Because their answers were varied regarding the use of Spanish or English toward family and friends, I asked the following question to which Lela gave a perceptive answer:

> David: So with regard to speaking Spanish or English, it is just what you feel more comfortable with based on the person that you're talking to then?
>
> Lela: I would say the vocabulary. Like how you're going to express yourself. So, if you can express yourself using the same vocabulary in Spanish as you would in English, then it would be easier to do it in Spanish if that person spoke Spanish.

What Lela is describing is a strategic form of communication referred to as convergence as per Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT). "CAT is a cross-

contextual theory that emphasizes the communality in motivation, communication strategies, and reactions to the behavior of others that characterize communication across all kinds of intergroup encounters" (Gallois, Giles, Jones, Cargile, & Ota, 1995). Convergence is a communication strategy in which a person modifies his or her speech patterns similarly to another person. According to Giles, Mulac, Bradac, and Johnson (1987), speakers engage in communication convergence when desiring: a) recipients' approval, b) a high level of communicational efficiency, c) a self-, couple-, or group-presentation shared by recipients, and d) appropriate situational or identity definitions (pp. 36-37).

Speaker strategies, according to CAT, result from addressee focus or the manner in which a speaker yields to the needs or behaviors of another. Moreover, convergence is an approximation strategy that focuses on the productive language and communication of the other person (Gallois et al., 1995). Not only is Lela's description of which language to respond to another person, according to Gallois et al., an approximation strategy, it is also a nonapproximation strategy, referred to as discourse management. Focusing on a partner's conversational needs thus can also lead to a sharing of topic choice and development, in addition to shared conversational register. Although Lela's response could be considered the communication accommodation strategy of convergence, another way to interpret Lela's response is that her response is merely functional and semantic in nature or resembling the linguistic relativity of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. "Linguistic relativity says that your language is the familiar room, the usual way of seeing the world and talking about it. Your language lays down habitual patterns of seeing and thinking and talking

when you learn its grammar and vocabulary" (Agar, 1994, p. 68). Rather than regarding Lela's choice of language as an accommodation strategy one could consider her language choice as a form of linguistic relativity. Lela's choice of language is a room she's comfortable with, that she knows how to move around in (Agar, 1994).

The Oklahoma City site group's use of more English and less Spanish is in accord with the linguistic trajectory or language shift that Veltman (2000) argues is occurring among the Spanish-speaking population in the United States. He states that "native-born Hispanics in the late twentieth century adopt English in greater numbers than did Hispanics, 20, 30, or 40 years before" (p. 63). Veltman goes on to state that the adoption of English as a personal, professional language transpires extremely fast in immigrant groups and even more swiftly among the children of immigrants.

The responses given by the Oklahoma City site group correspond with what Valdés (2000) maintains. She would consider the group to be circumstantial bilinguals because they acquired English in the realms of work, school, or neighborhood. Because there are a wide variety of bilinguals within the Mexican American communities, Valdés claims "that it is impossible to conjecture about language strengths and weaknesses based on generation, age, schooling, period of residence in the United States, or any other such criteria" (p. 102).

Moreover, it looks as if from their comments the Oklahoma City site group is not deliberately diglossic, meaning that English and Spanish have acquired particular purposes and are associated with definite areas of activity or subject matter (Valdés, 2000). While English is considered the "high" language of prestige because it is the

language of the larger society and because it is the language of several important areas, such as banking and the political process,

> Spanish, on the other hand, is the "low" language of intimacy, the language in which casual, unofficial interactions of the home and the in-group are conducted. In some communities, it is also the language of the church and of the surrounding neighborhood stores (Valdés, 2000, p. 105).

A few of the participants indicated that when speaking to their parents and to their siblings they speak both Spanish and English, thus integrating both "high" and "low" language. For example, Pilar stated she speaks both Spanish and English with her parents, but that she speaks more Spanish than English with them; although, if she were to have a long conversation with her parents, she would speak to them in English. Several participants mentioned they only speak Spanish with their parents; nonetheless, all the participants declared they speak English with their siblings.

Moreover, it appears the group engages in code switching or alternating words, phrases, clauses or sentences between two languages (Valdés, 2000). An illustration of code switching would be: Dijo mi papá que I have to go to school (My father said that I have to go to school). Valdés (2000) maintains that "a switch into Spanish, for example, by a Mexican American bilingual who is speaking English to another bilingual of the same background, may signal greater solidarity or a reference to values associated with the ethnic language (p. 114). When Gustavo mentioned that if he were talking to Francisco he "would use Spanish words, English words, everything," he was somewhat cultivating with Francisco a commonality for the

Spanish language. Yet, when I asked Gustavo if he would consider his conversations with Francisco to be Spanglish, he concurred.

What emerges from this group interview is that the participants seem to mistake code switching for Spanglish. The former involves alternating parts of speech between Spanish and English and the latter involves using “bastardised” Spanish words—words not accepted by the *Real Academia Española de la Lengua* (Stavans, 2003)—borrowed from the literal translations of English words. Below are some examples of Spanglish followed by the correct Spanish wording:

1) Me voy a parquear la troca. /Me voy a estacionar la camioneta. (I am going to park the truck.)
2) Necesito mopear el piso antes de taipear mi tarea. /Necesito trapear el piso antes de escribir a máquina my tarea. (I need to mop the floor before typing my homework.)
3) Mira, el gato está en el rufo. /Mira, el gato está en el techo. (Look, the cat is on the roof.)

The Oklahoma City group site participants’ use of Spanglish is much more than a hybrid language; it is also a language wherein they negotiate their identity. As Morales (2002) suggests:

> Spanglish is the ultimate space where the in-betweenness of being neither Latin American nor North American is negotiated. When we speak in Spanglish we are expressing not ambivalence, but a new region of discourse that has the possibility of redefining ourselves and the mainstream, as well as negating the conventional wisdom of assimilation and American-ness (p. 97).

The preceding section described language use among Hispanic emerging adults in Oklahoma. The following section presents explains language use among Hispanic emerging adults in New Mexico.

New Mexico Site Group

The four participants interviewed were of either Spanish or Mexican descent. Three of the interviewees, Rodrigo, Beatriz, and Pedro consider their culture of origin as Hispanic, although Eliazar considers his culture of origin as Spanish. Rodrigo is 23 years old and stated that his great-grandmother came from Spain. He does not know much about his father, but Rodrigo acknowledged “he’s like Hispanic, too, as well.” I asked him if his father was from Spain or Mexico and he replied that his father was probably from Mexico. He revealed that his mother was born in Albuquerque, but he did not know where his father was born. Rodrigo said that his great-grandmother came from either Spain or Mexico and that his grandparents were from Chama, New Mexico. Based on the information Rodrigo gave me I surmised that he was either 2.5 generation or third generation.

Beatriz is 19 years old and declared that both sides of her mother’s family came from Spain. Her father was born in Denver, Colorado and her mother was born in Santa Rosa, New Mexico. She is unfamiliar with her grandparents on her father’s side, but she pointed out: “I do know that my grandmother was born in Santa Rosa maybe, too, and my grandfather was born in Corona, New Mexico.” From the information provided by Beatriz I inferred she was either third or fourth generation.

Eighteen year-old Pedro is a third generation Hispanic given that his great-grandparents on his father’s side originated from Spain, and his maternal grandmother

from Mexico and his maternal grandfather from Spain. His father was born in Albuquerque and his mother was born in Las Lunas, New Mexico.

Eliazar is 19-years-old and views his culture of origin as Spanish. He described that he was born in Española, New Mexico and his mother was born in Santa Fe and his father was born somewhere in Colorado. He also mentioned that his maternal grandmother was born in Santa Fe and a grandfather was born in a town between Española and Santa Fe called Cuyamungue. I queried Eliazar if his great-grandparents came over from Spain and he explained that he did not know, but his family had been in New Mexico for hundreds of years.

When I asked them how often they spoke Spanish with their friends they professed they did not actually know Spanish. However, they did mention that their family members spoke Spanish. Pedro stated his grandparents and parents are fluent in Spanish and that they also converse in English. He related that his grandparents and parents speak Spanish to each other, but not to him. I asked Pedro how it was that he did not speak Spanish and he replied, "They never taught me, I guess. Just didn't pick it up, I guess." Regarding his siblings, Pedro explained that his older sister, "she's married to a Mexican in New Mexico. So she speaks it fluently and my other sisters not at all."

Rodrigo declared that his grandparents and his mother communicate in Spanish, but he, his brothers and sisters do not. He explained: "Like, to us, they talk to us in English, but among themselves they would talk in Spanish, but when we would walk in the door, English." I also questioned Beatriz whether it was the same in her household wherein her parents or grandparents spoke in Spanish. She replied that

it was “kind of Spanglish.” In addition, I asked her whether her brothers and sisters converse in Spanish. Beatriz replied, “Oh, no. We don’t speak Spanish. But because I hear it I can understand what they’re saying, I just can’t communicate that much in Spanish.”

Eliazar mentioned that he does not know Spanish, but states “my grandparents they speak Spanglish—what they call English and Spanish together.” He continued: “I mean I should know Spanish. I really should. I think we all should. Everybody in New Mexico should know Spanish, but umm….I don’t think we really meet people who are always speaking Spanish.”

I also asked him if there was a reason why he had not learned Spanish and he replied:

> Eliazar: The reason was because, what, like, my grandpa grew up and he only knew Spanish and then when he went to school…they couldn’t speak Spanish. They’d get hit if they spoke Spanish. So they were Americanized…and, like, it was installed [sic] in him that speaking Spanish was bad, I guess, like, so they weren’t teaching to my mom and she didn’t teach it to me.

I asked Pedro the same question and he replied that he did not know why he does not speak Spanish. He stated, “My grandparents taught my dad and his brothers and sisters, but I don’t really know why my parents never taught us.”

When I asked if the participants thought people in New Mexico believe Hispanics should use English as soon as possible, Eliazar stated “that everyone should know it if you’re in the United States because that’s the primary language spoken throughout the whole United States.” Nonetheless, Eliazar expanded upon his response by assessing his own situation:

Eliazar: Well, for New Mexico I think we should learn Spanish because, I mean, it's who we are, you know. I personally plan to go to Mexico for a couple years and just learn how to speak Spanish 'cuz that's I think how you're supposed to learn it, just be embraced in that whole community of where everybody is speaking Spanish. 'Cuz if you think about the Mexicans who come from Mexico only speaking Spanish, they come to, like, the United States and everybody around them speaks English. So you have to learn it in order to get by. And, I mean, how are you going to get by if you can't speak and communicate with people, you have to be able to communicate and, I mean, I think everybody needs to learn English to communicate in the United States, but should, like, you know, know their own language, too.

The discovery from the interviews with the New Mexico site group that they do not communicate in Spanish illustrates an interesting dichotomy. Although New Mexico is the state with the largest number of Hispanics and close to 29% of its population speaks Spanish at home (Marotta & Garcia, 2003), the participants from New Mexico knew little to no Spanish. Even though "being Hispanic and being a Spanish speaker are not synonymous" (Ardila, 2005, p. 62), nevertheless, it is surprising that none of the participants converse in Spanish. However, if one looks at this situation from an historical standpoint, it is not necessarily unexpected. Marger (2000) discusses that the aspects of internal colonialism: a) forced entry of the dominant group; b) alteration of the indigenous culture; c) administration by the dominant group; and d) the application of a racist ideology all occurred within the

Southwest following the U.S. conquest; yet today some assert those conditions remain presently.

Therefore, when Eliazar explains that when his grandfather grew up in New Mexico he only knew Spanish, but when his grandfather went to school he could not speak Spanish because “they’d get hit if they spoke Spanish” Eliazar is describing a characteristic of internal colonialism. As a consequence, this perception of speaking Spanish as “bad” was subsequently passed on to other generations, thus perpetuating internal colonialism. Nevertheless, Portes and Rumbaut (2001) contend that

> in the United States…the pressure toward linguistic assimilation is all the greater because the country has few other elements on which to ground a sense of national identity….the common use of American English has come to acquire a singular importance as a binding tie across such a vast territory (p. 114).

On the other hand, some would argue that the New Mexico participants are acculturated (Gordon, 1964) or are culturally and structurally assimilated (Marger, 2000) into the larger society having fully blended behaviors, values, and beliefs—their cultural traits. Yet, in Eliazar’s case he is not necessarily acculturated/assimilated. Although he does not know Spanish and only speaks English, Eliazar does not consider himself “American,” he regards himself as “New Mexican.” Moreover, he does acknowledge that he should learn Spanish. However, for the other participants their perspective on learning Spanish is negligible. Even though the participants took Spanish classes either in middle school or in high school, when I asked them if they

were thinking about taking Spanish classes, the responses were unenthusiastic. For example, Pedro tersely answered "no" to the question and Rodrigo responded:

> Rodrigo: Not really. Well, I actually I know a little bit like her (*referring to Beatriz*), I could basically know what they're saying, but I won't be able to say anything back or communicate back…where I can more or less get what they are trying to say.

The participants' nonchalant attitude toward learning Spanish does not render an indifferent disposition regarding their ethnicity. Some scholars, such as Anzaldúa (1987) argue there is a fusion of language and identity: "Ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity—I am my language. Until I can take pride in my language, I cannot take pride in myself" (p. 59). In addition, other researchers contend that "losing a language is also losing part of one's self that is linked to one's identity and cultural heritage" (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; p. 144). Yet, the ethnic pride that the New Mexico site group participants have is not at all connected to their linguistic identity. The participants ardently discussed that members of their ethnic group demonstrate ethnic pride through such Christmas traditions as placing luminarias or farolitos (as they are called in northern New Mexico) outside in addition to eating biscochitos and tamales. Luminarias are brown paper bags containing votive candles for light and sand for weight. Biscochitos, introduced by the Spanish explorers and named the official state cookie of New Mexico in 1989, are anise and cinnamon flavored shortbread cookies. Biscochitos, along with tamales (meat covered in corn meal, wrapped in corn husks, and steamed), are enjoyed during religious holidays, weddings, and baptisms.

When asked how strongly they identify themselves by their ethnicity, several participants pointed out their ethnic identity is often mistaken for either Mexican or Caucasian. For example, Eliazar asserted:

> Eliazar: If someone were to call me a Mexican from Mexico I'd probably get offended, and I would be like, "no, I'm Hispanic from northern New Mexico"….If I'm introducing myself to someone, like, if they ask me, like, what ethnicity I come from I say "I'm New Mexican."

In addition, Pedro commented: "I get the same way, some people call me Mexican and I get offended as well…but what I like to say is Hispanic." Rodrigo, as well, is mistaken for being Mexican:

> Rodrigo: Well, a lot of people assume that I'm Mexican because I have dark skin…and it doesn't bother me too much no more…I'll tell them I'm not, I'm Hispanic."

Conversely, Beatriz has the opposite experience from the other participants:

> Beatriz: Most people are surprised when I say I'm Hispanic because I'm fair…
>
> David: Because of your fair skin then they automatically assume that you're not…
>
> Beatriz: That I'm Caucasian. I'm half Mexican.
>
> David: Well, 'cuz you got the Austrian and the Swedish.
>
> Beatriz: Right. But my culture is Hispanic.

This discussion of language use among Hispanics in Oklahoma and New Mexico presented some interesting conclusions. The emerging adults in Oklahoma

engage in the communication strategy of convergence. Also, the Oklahoma participants engage in code switching, often mistaking this linguistic style for Spanglish. The New Mexico set of emerging adults did not know Spanish, even though New Mexico is the state with the largest number of Hispanics. This does, however, confirm Ardila's (2005) contention that being Hispanic is not synonymous with speaking Spanish. Moreover, the discussion of language use among emerging adults reveals that their ethnic pride is not linked to their linguistic identity. Both groups of emerging adults confirm research that there is a language shift from Spanish to English among Hispanics of later generations.

The following chapter presented an overview of the literature regarding language use among Hispanics and then presented various ways in which language use is managed among Hispanic emerging adults in very divergent environments—New Mexico and Oklahoma. The next chapter draws final conclusions from this project's investigation then discusses the limitations, strengths, and areas for future research.

CHAPTER 7

Discussion

The goal of the present study was to examine the cross-cultural adaptation of Hispanic emerging adults in the Albuquerque, New Mexico and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma metropolitan areas by comparing and contrasting how they perceive and particularize their respective environments. Because the environment plays a key part in cross-cultural adaptation, scholars have encouraged the incorporation of contextual factors as a method to enhance the understanding of Hispanic cross-cultural adaptation (Cabassa, 2003; Garza & Gallegos, 1985; Negy & Woods, 1992). These two research sites were selected because of their distinctiveness to each other.

In his book chapter Rocco (2002) discusses the spaces of difference created by the radical disjunctions of cultures or what he calls "subaltern spaces" and others have variously named hybrid, borders, margins, and third-space. Rocco contends "that the theorizations of these subaltern spaces are limited politically because most lack any serious effort to ground either the theorization itself or the spaces in the institutional contexts within which they occur" (p. 106). Thus, the subaltern spaces of the Hispanic communities within Oklahoma and New Mexico cannot be theorized without grounding the spaces within a contextual framework.

The Hispanic influence in New Mexico is indelibly linked to the state's history. Hispanics shaped a large part of the state's historical past and they will undeniably have an effect on its future. As it is the state with the largest proportion of Hispanics (Guzmán, 2001), New Mexico's Hispanic demographics have profoundly affected its social, economic, educational, and political arenas. As the Albuquerque

metropolitan area boasts the largest Hispanic cultural center in the United States, has a robust Hispanic representation in local government, in addition to propitious Hispanic business conditions (Varoqua, 2003), it seemed fitting to investigate whether these conditions are either salient or negligible in the cross-cultural adaptation of Hispanic emerging adults in that large metropolitan community. In the same regard as New Mexico, Oklahoma's Hispanic population has recently become the state's fastest-growing ethnic group; its presence is being felt educationally, economically, and socially (Murphy, 2003). Hispanic student enrollments are on the rise in the state's public schools, Hispanic businesses are increasing around the Oklahoma City metropolitan area, and law enforcement organizations and state agencies are in need of bilingual speakers (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2009; Owen, 2002; Watson, 2002; Woffard, 2007). Moreover, with Oklahoma City's Hispanic population on the rise, it seemed well-timed to examine the cross-cultural adaptation of emerging adults in the Oklahoma City metropolitan area in light of these recent conditions.

Two of the most interesting aspects of the present study were the participants' discussion regarding their ethnic identity and their language use. A participant from each of the research sites demonstrated opposite manifestations of their ethnic identity and participants from Albuquerque were English monolinguals, but the Oklahoma City participants were bilingual.

Salvador, an emerging adult from Oklahoma City whose ancestry is Costa Rican and Mexican identifies himself as Latin American, but owing to some seeming physical characteristics, he is often mistaken for being of East Indian descent. Yet, rather than be offended at this inaccuracy, Salvador has taken to researching the

culture for which he is mistaken for embodying. Some scholars may conclude from Salvador's actions of educating himself regarding the customs and culture of another ethnicity that he has not fully developed his Hispanic ethnic heritage. What they fail to comprehend is that Salvador is an emerging adult and, as a consequence, is exploring his identity and is likely to examine and consider a variety of possible worldviews (Arnett, 2000). As Phinney (2006) writes, "in their 20s, young people become capable of seeing ethnicity in a wider context. They can take the perspectives of other ethnic or racial minority groups and of the dominant ethnic group" (p.121).

Moreover, one might argue, as a result of his Costa Rican and Mexican roots, Salvador's embracing the culture of another ethnic group is an ancillary element of the fusion model of cross-cultural adaptation. There are, in general, five models that have been used to comprehend the variant process of cross-cultural adaptation: (a) assimilation, (b) acculturation, (c) alternation, (d) multiculturalism, and (e) fusion (LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton. 1993).

The assumption within the assimilation model is the notion of a loss of original cultural identity in the acquisition of a new identity in a second culture. Although similar to the assimilation model, the acculturation model, according to LaFromboise et al., assumes that while attaining competency in the dominant culture, an individual will forever be identified as a member of the minority culture. The alternation model implies the possibility of maintaining a positive relationship with both cultures without the need to opt for one culture over the other. The multicultural model of second-culture acquisition advances a pluralistic approach to second-culture acquisition, whereas the fusion model embodies the assumptions behind the melting

pot theory. "The fusion of cultural forms shows up in every aspect of life including: cuisine, clothing, hairstyles, speech patterns, courtship patterns, business practices, and so forth" (Kramer, 2000, p. 218).

The fusion model views an acculturating individual combining both cultures which then becomes a new "integrated culture" (Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2006). Intercultural fusion is "additive and integrative" (Kramer, 2003) without the supposition of cultural supremacy (LaFromboise et al., 1993). Nevertheless, the psychological impact of the fusion model is ambiguous because there are few proven examples and no available studies that empirically test the validity of the model (Arends-Tóth & van de Vijver, 2006; LaFromboise et al., 1993). Even so, one could reason that because of his dual heritage Salvador has a sense of cultural humility rather than cultural supremacy. In contrast to Salvador's apparent intercultural fusion is the unmistakable ethnic identity of Eliazar, an emerging adult from northern New Mexico.

Possibly due to complex historical processes (Gracia, 2008), Eliazar projects a non-assimilative ethnic identity as he considers himself New Mexican, not Mexican or even American. As a fifth-generation Hispano living in northern New Mexico his point of view is the border crossed over to him, not the other way. In one sense, Eliazar's ethnic identity is tied to the land, confirming what Nostrand (1992) writes, "Hispanos adjusted to their natural environment, stamped it with their cultural impress, and created from their natural and cultural surroundings an identity with the land and a sense of place" (p. 24). Moreover, Eliazar's cognizance of the uniqueness and specialness of his ethnic identity and its separateness from the majority and other

ethnic groups confirms other research that investigated Hispanics in New Mexico (Doan & Stephan, 2006; Rinderle & Montoya, 2008).

Additionally, Eliazar's sense of pride in his ethnic identity is consistent with other research assessing ethnic identity and self-esteem among Hispanic youth (Carlson, Uppal, & Prosser, 2000; Umaña-Taylor, 2004; Umaña-Taylor, Diversi, & Fine, 2002). Even though Eliazar does not speak Spanish, his ethnic identity is contrary to other research on Hispanic-origin English monolinguals. Eschbach and Gómez (1998) found that Hispanic identity becomes inconsistent for Hispanic-origin teenagers who do not speak Spanish. Eliazar's strong ethnic identity negates other research as well. For example, Félix-Ortiz, Newcomb, and Myers (1994) found that Hispanic college students who had a strong Hispanic identity were most comfortable with Spanish. And Perez and Padilla's (2000) findings suggest that after a few generations most Hispanic adolescents exhibit a predominant Anglo culture orientation.

The dichotomy between Salvador's cultural integration of his ethnic identity and Eliazar's robust cultural pride of his ethnic identity is not surprising given that research has also shown that ethnic identity may have varying salience and meaning for the same ethnic group members in different geographical contexts (Umaña-Taylor & Shin, 2007). As Phinney (2006) points out:

> the environment is a critical determinant of the timing, duration, and nature of ethnic identity exploration, and the environments to which ethnic group members are exposed vary widely within the United States. Thus, there is necessarily variation in the identity formation process across groups and

individuals" (p. 129).

Moreover, from the emerging adult perspective Salvador and Eliazar's disparate ethnic identities are parts of the heterogeneity of this period of life. Emerging adulthood "is perhaps the period of life in which variance is greatest, in many aspects of development" (Arnett, 2006, p. 15). Accordingly, future research should explore the variant aspects of ethnic identity among Hispanic emerging adults.

Another intriguing facet from the present study is the participants' descriptions of their language use. The Oklahoma site group participants were mainly bilingual and the New Mexico site group participants were essentially English monolinguals. Overall, the generational level of all the participants and their English language use is consistent with prior research (Hakimzadeh & Cohn, 2007; Harwood & Feng, 2006; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Valdés, 2000; Veltman, 2000).

Even though some scholarship identifies the notion of both loss and gain regarding identity for the bilingual individual (Vásquez, 2003), this perception did not transpire from my interview with the Oklahoma City site group participants. Even though Vásquez (2003) contends "the attempt to participate in more than one disparate cultural system can leave the bilingual in a continuous state of psychological tension" (p. 33), this does not appear to be the case for the Oklahoma City participants. In general, the participants were focused on accommodating their communication toward others. In other words, the participants' use of English or Spanish depended upon a partner's conversational needs. This psychological communication process, according to Communication Accommodation Theory, is related to the concept of speech convergence (Gallois et al., 1995). By implementing a convergence speaker strategy it

does not appear that the bilingual participants in Oklahoma City are in a constant state of psychological strain. Furthermore, the participants engage in code switching which could be considered a form of hearty psychological health because “complex code switching requires that speakers be very proficient in the two languages used” (Valdés, 2000, p. 115). Also, the Oklahoma City participants utilized Spanglish. Their use of Spanglish is more than a hybrid language; it is also a language in which they negotiate their identity (Morales, 2002; Stavans, 2003).

Although some scholarship indicates that there is a loss of culture, a loss of self, and a loss of pride in not knowing the language of one’s cultural heritage (Agar, 1994; Anzaldúa, 1987; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001), this is not the case with the New Mexico participants. Their English monolingualism is not a deterrent to the pride they exhibit for their culture or the pride they exhibit for themselves. Even though they do not speak English, they demonstrate passionate pride in their cultural heritage, thus demonstrating their ethnic pride is not linked to their linguistic identity. The losses of culture, of self, and of pride that supposedly occur from not knowing Spanish may be absent from the purview of the New Mexico participants because of their emerging adulthood. Arnett (2004) advances that “emerging adulthood is the age of possibilities, when many different futures remain open, when little about a person’s direction in life has been decided for certain” (p. 16). Thus, as emerging adults they are in a stage of their life where optimism flourishes and hopes abound and the sensation of loss is nonexistent. In the future, more research should investigate the losses of culture, of self, and of pride as it pertains to Hispanic emerging adults.

By the year 2050, one out of every four U.S. residents will be Hispanic (Ayala, 2006), so there is no denying the fact that the Hispanic population is burgeoning. It will continue to escalate in the years to come as it is a youthful population. And researchers are cognizant of this phenomenon by the titles of their works, such as "Latinos: Remaking America" (Suárez-Orozco & Páez 2002)," "Hispanic Nation" (Fox, 1996) "Latino Wave" (Ramos, 2004), "The Hispanic Challenge" (Ortiz, 1993). "Latinos in a Changing Society" (Montero-Sieburth & Meléndez, 2007), "Hispanics and the American Future" (National Research Council, 2006) and "Latinization: How Latino Culture is Transforming the U.S." (Benitez, 2007).

However, the dominant cultural environment can have a strong influence on how well an "integrated cultural" individual can maneuver within society. For example, van Oudenhoven and Eisses (1998) discovered that integrating Moroccan immigrants in Israel and the Netherlands experienced more prejudice than assimilating immigrants. In addition, Sandel, Wong Lowe, Chao, Meng, and Chang (2006) found that as to the process of cross-cultural adaptation the dominant culture plays a greater role than the individual.

Nevertheless, for Hispanics in the United States the role of the dominant culture upon their cultural adaptation may be abating. Suarez-Orozco and Páez (2002) in the introduction to their book *Latinos: Remaking America* discuss three possible scenarios for the cross-cultural adaptation for Hispanics. The first scenario predicts that Hispanics will assimilate and thus replicate the European experience. The second scenario relates to phenotype in that lighter-skinned Hispanics after two or three generations will be considered White based on major demographic and social

indicators. The third scenario predicts that Hispanics, based on their burgeoning numbers, will construct their own unique sociocultural space and devise new approaches for cultural adaptation. Journalist Jorge Ramos (2004) foresees this third scenario transpiring for Hispanics in the United States declaring:

> What we're seeing is a two-way process: The Latino community is indeed being assimilated in certain ways—for example, their adaptation to the democratic process and a market economy—but in other areas—like language, culture, and the adoption of certain values—they have resisted assimilation and are instead prompting change (p. 81).

From their ever-increasing numbers, it appears that Hispanics will construct their own unique sociocultural space and thus devise new approaches for cross-cultural adaptation. Previously, scholars have argued that the dynamics of cross-cultural adaptation not only involve an individual's adaptive predisposition, but by the conditions of the existing society (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003). As Young (1996) contends this approach "legislates for the political passivity of immigrants and the incapacity of the host culture to learn from them" (p. 61). The "host" culture of the United States cannot be powerless to learn from its Hispanic populace because "the ramifications of the growth of the Latino population are significant and justify that Americans [*sic*] begin thinking about who Latinos are and about their impact on the nation" (Gracia, 2008, p. viii).

With the Hispanic population changing the dynamics of such distinct environments as Gainesville, Georgia, Salem, Oregon, and Little Rock, Arkansas (Ayala, 2006), the United States—according to the behavioral approach to cross-

cultural adaptation—will have to adapt to the growing numbers of this ethnic group or the psychological health of the country will suffer. According to Kim (2001), "clearly, there is an inherent and enduring 'danger' of psychic disintegration…for those individuals who are unable to endure the stresses of the new environmental challenges" (p. 64). As a consequence of the population growth of Hispanics in the United States there will be new environmental challenges ahead as this ethnic group forces the country to acknowledge them as part of its uterus (Stavans, 2001). As Padraig O'Malley suggests, "Latinos may well change the American sense of its identity, not just challenge but abnegate some of the core beliefs America has about itself" (Montero-Sieburth & Meléndez, 2007, p. 27).

In Kim's (2001) theory of cross-cultural adaptation, all individuals (or strangers, as she refers to all persons who move from one culture to another) in the process of their adaptation experience a "stress-adaptation-growth" dynamic because "to the extent that the dominant power of the host culture controls the daily survival and functioning of strangers, it presents a coercive conformity pressure on strangers to acculturate into the existing cultural order" (p. 54). Kim believes individuals are homeostatic, stress-reducing entities that are required to deculturate their previous learning and that are adapted by the environment. She states, "because humans are characteristically homeostatic, individuals strive to hold constant a variety of variables in their internal structure to achieve an integrated whole" (p. 55). Through the work of Piaget we recognize that homeostasis is not true for human learning (Young, 1996), and this is especially true for individuals who are in the midst of emerging adulthood because of the heterogeneity of that period of life (Arnett, 2006). Homeostasis is not a

part of emerging adulthood because it is the age of identity explorations, the age of instability, the most self-focused age of life, the age of feeling in-between, and the age of possibilities (Arnett, 2004; 2006). Moreover, Kim's (2001) notion that adaptation is an environmental driven process flies in the face of emerging adulthood. As Arnett (2006) points out:

> Because of their freedom from social control and the lack of social norms for their 20s, emerging adulthood is the most volitional period of life, the time when people are most likely to be free to follow their own interests and desires, and those interests and desires lead them in an exceptionally wide range of directions (p. 15).

The present study demonstrates this wide range of directions, especially in regards to ethnic identity and language use among Hispanic emerging adults.

Moreover, another theory of cross-cultural adaptation which examines contextual "societal" factors is John Berry's (1980, 1990). However, this theory does not analyze the role of individual actions on group and social situations that occur (Horenczyk, 1997; Pick, 1997). Berry's theoretical structure is closed to the diversity of variables and does not leave room for the plasticity of culture (Ainslie, 2002; Horenczyk, 1997; Pick, 1997). The attitudes of various ethnic groups may have an impact on cross-cultural adaptation, and this behavior would most likely emanate from ethnic emerging adults. Because emerging adulthood is the age of identity explorations and of possibilities, in addition to the most self-focused age (Arnett, 2006), ethnic emerging adults' perspectives on cross-cultural adaptation will vary. The structure of Berry's theoretical model does not allow for flexibility. As Pick

(1997) argues, “the model does not allow for new situations, groups, and social actors that will make up a universe of particular meanings” (p. 50). Emerging adults of Hispanic ancestry will become a potent force due to their burgeoning numbers. The large increase in Hispanic emerging adults will present new situations and create new social actors that will change the configuration of cross-cultural adaption. Without considering emerging adults’ construction of their social and cultural worlds, both Berry’s and Kim’s theories lack an applicability to tangible situations.

The current study is a work in progress. It has touched upon a few issues related to emerging adulthood in general and to Hispanic emerging adults, specifically. Emerging adulthood is a heterogeneous period of life and Hispanics are heterogeneous as well (Hernández, Siles, & Rochín, 2000; Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2001), thus studying Hispanic emerging adults opens the possibility to a variety of research topics. Emerging adulthood is a period of life that is in flux (Arnett, 2004, 2006) which allows for much investigation and further understanding. Hispanics are an understudied group, and with Hispanic emerging adults likely taking more active roles as leaders and workers (Hernández, Siles, & Rochín, 2000), understanding the various experiences in the lives of Hispanic emerging adults will certainly illuminate this distinct period in life.

Previous research has grouped Hispanics as a homogenous group, which does not take into account nationality, immigration history, and familial generation status (Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2001), thus results from this type of previous research do not give a comprehensive picture of this heterogeneous group, thus unintentionally skewing research results. Individuals are influenced by their surroundings and they

also influence those surroundings. As mentioned earlier, with the numbers of Hispanic emerging adults vastly growing the composition of the United States will drastically change. Owing to this impending transformation, more studies are needed that not only investigate the dynamics of emerging adulthood, but specifically emerging adults of Hispanic origin. Previous research has mainly investigated college-age students through variable analytic convenience sample surveys. Although surveys are a useful research tool, this format, through a general statistical pattern, only provides information that emerging adults are "this way." More research on emerging adults ought to be of the interview approach, similar to the current study. The interview approach allows emerging adults to describe their diverse situations and perspectives, plus the self-focused aspect of emerging adulthood permits the capacity for self-reflection (Arnett, 2004).

Accordingly, research on Hispanic emerging adults should involve the interview approach, as well. Additional interview approach research on Hispanic emerging adults will provide a comprehensive and thorough understanding of this burgeoning portion of this ethnic group because researchers will have Hispanic emerging adults' own words to describe their unique situations and their perceptions of those situations. Understanding how Hispanic emerging adults—in their own words—view their respective environments and their place in those environments will provide valuable insight not only into this demographic group but provide a clearer perspective as to how the United States will be transformed from its interactions with this growing segment of the population. Accordingly, the changing demographics of the United States emanating from this burgeoning group "will certainly produce a

social revolution wherein secular traditions of doing business, forming alliances, defining family and community and generating public choices and policies will be transformed" (p. 10, Hernández, Siles, & Rochín, 2000).

A cursory query of Communication Abstracts produced only four articles related to emerging adults with none pertaining to Hispanics. The study of Hispanic emerging adults is vast open research area which behooves communication scholars to be a part of. For example, ethnic identity is a multifaceted and complex construct which can provide communication scholars rich research opportunities, especially regarding Hispanic emerging adults. The current study is a beginning effort in this endeavor. The experiences and perspectives that the participants in the current study graciously shared have provided me with rich source of research data. As a result, I plan to pursue further research to understand the ethnic identity formation among biethnic (or mixed parentage) Hispanic emerging adults, such as Salvador in the present study. For instance, does the gender of the parent play a significant role in the ethnicity that the emerging adult chooses to identity with or is the parent's country a major factor in how biethnic Hispanic emerging adults express their ethnicity? How biethnic emerging adults negotiate and communicate their ethnicity is a research area that is fraught with much potential for communication scholars.

Moreover, emerging adulthood is a period of life that is the age of possibilities that creates an opportunity for emerging adults "to transform themselves so that they are not merely made in their parents' images but have made independent decisions about what kind of person they wish to be and how they wish to live" (p. 16, Arnett, 2004). The familial ethnic socialization experience is a distinct and enduring feature

for Hispanics (Rodríguez & Kosloski, 1998). Further research should investigate whether the family bond among Hispanic emerging adults withers during this period of life when "an unparalleled opportunity begins for young people to transform their lives" (p. 16, Arnett, 2004) or whether the uncertainty, fears, and confusions of this period help solidify family orientation.

Additionally, research on Hispanic emerging adults should follow Umaña-Taylor and Fine's (2004) recommendation that future studies should examine how socialization experiences with nonfamilial sources can influence ethnic identity development. A further recommendation by these authors is particularly pertinent to communication scholars because it addresses the communication influence of both family and nonfamily sources. Umaña-Taylor and Fine (2004) propose:

> it would be interesting to examine the relationship between familial and nonfamilial ethnic socialization to determine whether these ethnic socialization experiences tend to be contradictory (i.e., family and nonfamily sources give inconsistent messages) or complementary (i.e., consistent messages from family and non-family) in nature, and furthermore, whether the complementary or contradictory nature of the experiences influences the ethnic identity development process" (p. 56).

There is diversity within the Hispanic population, from differences in language spoken, differences in immigration history, to differences in nationalities. These variations blended with the heterogeneity of emerging adulthood should foster a fertile and prolific research arena for current and future communication scholars.

It is important to address the limitations of this present study when assessing its contributions to the current literature. One limitation of the study is in grouping Hispanics into one collective ethnic group as it does not acknowledge the diversity among Hispanics (Umaña-Taylor & Fine, 2001). Yet, because research involving emerging adults is a new occurrence any research involving Hispanic emerging adults should not necessarily exclude certain Hispanic participants to achieve a homogeneous sample. Moreover, as previously mentioned, the role of contextual elements has been an under investigated element in cross-cultural adaptation studies; therefore, any research that focuses on contextual aspects, including that which groups Hispanics together, ultimately fosters additional knowledge regarding cross-cultural adaptation. Therefore, future research directions should extend to examining the role of environmental factors among Hispanic nationalities in diverse settings (e.g. Cubans in Texas vis-à-vis Guatemalans in Minnesota) in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the process of Hispanic cross-cultural adaptation.

Another potential limitation, based on the ethnicity of interviewer effects (Reese, Danielson, Shoemaker, Chang, & Hsu, 1986), is having the moderator, an Anglo, lead the interviews. This limitation was offset because of my extensive knowledge and understanding of Hispanic cultural norms (Marín & Marín, 1991; Sue & Sue, 1993). Regardless, of ethnicity, the researcher's theoretical knowledge, experience, and background facilitated the study's structural soundness.

In addition to the potential limitations of the present study, there are strengths that may further the development of cross-cultural adaptation research. First, the study is based on Arnett's (2000) theory of emerging adulthood as a theoretical

foundation to examine the role of the environment in the cross-cultural adaptation of Hispanic emerging adults. Using Arnett's theory fulfills a scholarly demand regarding Hispanic youth development given that the bulk of the research does not validate or build theory but, instead, is essentially exploratory (Rodriguez & Morrobel, 2004).

A second research strength is the focus of comparing and contrasting two distinct research sites that have uniquely different environmental conditions. Much research regarding Hispanic cross-cultural adaptation does not altogether utilize this method of inquiry. Thirdly, the study is strengthened methodologically through the qualitative inquiry of ethnographic interview research, which is "essential for getting 'below the surface' and discovering what people think and feel about particular communication events" (Frey, Botan, Friedman, & Kreps, 1992, p. 385). Thus, this emic or "insider" perspective offers the ability to study subjective reality so as to understand and to explain human behavior and shared meanings (Jones, 1979). Utilizing focus groups interviews rather than solely individual interviews provides a setting that simulates real life in which participants are influencing and influenced by others, thus providing unadulterated insights into their attitudes, perceptions, and opinions (Krueger, 1994). Another strength of the study is in employing a case study method which is a useful tool for investigating trends and specific situations because it underscores detailed contextual analysis of a the relationships between limited occurrences and circumstances (Shuttleworth, 2008; Soy, 1997). Some may argue that the limited nature of single specific and interesting cases is not strong for generalizing to the population as a whole, but, as Stake (1995) contends, people can learn much

that is general from single cases by creating new opportunities to modify old generalizations.

Although cross-cultural adaptation studies on Hispanics are wide-ranging, the research is sparse concerning the extent to which the environment plays in the cross-cultural adaptation of emerging adults. The environmental composition of the United States will inevitably change as Hispanic emerging adults become new social actors, thus warranting further understanding of this newly emerging ethnic group. Hence, the results of the present study should not only provide fundamental information about emerging adults from the largest ethnic minority in the United States, but also advance greater knowledge about the interplay between Hispanic emerging adulthood, cross-cultural adaptation, and the environment.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Personal History

1. What is your age?

2. What is your culture of origin?

3. Where were you born?

4. Where were your parents born?

5. What's the highest level of education you have completed?

6. What is your occupation?

Interpersonal Communication

7. What kinds of friends do you have? [Probe: work-related, school-related]

8. Are most of your friends from the same ethnic group?

9. How often do you speak in Spanish with your friends?

10. How often do you speak in Spanish with your family?

11. Do you have close personal friends who look like me?

Mass Communication

12. How often do you watch television in Spanish? [or English]

13. How often do you listen to music in Spanish? [or English]

14. How often do you read magazines in Spanish? [or English]

15. How often do you read newspapers in Spanish? [or English]

16. How often do you spend looking at Spanish-language websites
[or English- language]

17. How often do you listen to radio programs in Spanish? [or English]

OR

12. What kind of English-language mass media (such as television, radio, magazines
or newspapers) do you use?

13. Which form do you like or use most?

14. What is (are) the major reason(s) you use this form?

15. What kind of Spanish-language mass media (such as television, radio, Magazines or newspapers) do you use?

16. Which form do you like or use most?

17. What is (are) the major reason(s) you use this form?

Ethnic Group Strength

18. Where you live, is your ethnic group highly respected? [how is respect shown; how is disrespect shown]

19. Where you live, how well respected is Spanish language mass media (for example, TV, radio, newspapers)? *[what TV programs or channels do you watch?; what newspapers, what radio stations, what kind of music?]*

20. Where you live, does your ethnic group have control over economic and business matters? [What businesses does your group control? What business does your group not control, but you think maybe it should?

21. Where you live, does your ethnic group have political power [holding political office, having voting power]

22. Where you live, are members of your ethnic group proud of their cultural history and achievements? [participating in cultural festivals, expressing appreciation of famous Hispanics]

23. Are there other examples of how your ethnic group is proud of their cultural history and achievement?

24. What do you think are the reasons why members of your ethnic group are not proud of their cultural history and achievement?

25. In you opinion, what are some of the ways Hispanics in New Mexico (Oklahoma) maintain unity as an ethnic group? [is it through participation in festivals, by attending church, or through music?]

26. How strongly do you identify yourself by your ethnicity? [when you meet a stranger, how do you introduce yourself

Primary Culture

27. In your opinion, what is the primary culture in New Mexico (Oklahoma)? [why do you view it as the primary culture?]

Openness of Society

28. Have you often had people dislike you because of your ethnicity?
    [at school, at work]

29. Have you often been treated unfairly because of your ethnicity
    [at school, at work]

30. In your opinion, do people in New Mexico (Oklahoma) see a difference between Hispanics and recent Hispanic immigrants?

31. Do you think people in New Mexico (Oklahoma) are accepting of cultural differences? [In what ways are they <u>not</u> accepting of cultural differences?]

32. Do people in New Mexico (Oklahoma) have positive attitudes towards Hispanics?

33. Do you think people in New Mexico (Oklahoma) try hard to understand Hispanics who have limited English skills?

34. Do you think people in New Mexico (Oklahoma) believe Hispanics should use English as soon as possible?

35. Do you think people in New Mexico (Oklahoma) dislike Hispanics who speak English with a Spanish accent?

36. Do you think people in New Mexico (Oklahoma) are appreciative of the Hispanic culture?

Conclusions

37. Are there any other issues you would like to discuss?