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¡Mi Historia es Importante! Centering Ethnic Studies in the Spanish as a Heritage Language Classroom

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Abstract

This chapter will provide my testimonio and a pedagogical reflection of my journey as a heritage speaker teaching heritage speaking students like me. I will start by sharing my testimonio of coming to critical consciousnesses which helped me identify that I experienced a Eurocentric education that excluded my history and that of my Mexican American community across the educational pipeline. I will share how I reclaimed my history, language, and culture and how these experiences directly inform my Spanish as a Heritage Language teaching practice.

Mi Testimonio: My Journey to Becoming a Heritage Spanish Educator

My name is Nancy Domínguez-Fret. I am and assistant professor of applied Spanish linguistics in Illinois and the proud daughter of two Mexican immigrants from Jalisco México. As a heritage speaker of Spanish, I grew up speaking Spanish at home and learned English in elementary school. My parents left Mexico in search of economic stability and sacrificed their educational dreams for my siblings and I to have the educational opportunities they did not have access to in their homeland. As a first-generation college student who grew up in a lower-income household, when I think about inheritance, I do not think about financial assets. Instead, I think about the linguistic and cultural inheritance my parents have gifted me. Despite deficit-based narratives of bilingualism and the pressure to assimilate to US linguistic and cultural norms during the early 1990s, my parents decided to pass on their native language and cultural practices onto my siblings and me. This linguistic and cultural inheritance is now being shared with my own children, nieces, and nephews, and with the hundreds of heritage speaking students I have taught this last decade as a high school teacher and now as a college professor.

I would love to say that the US K-12 education system played a key role in the maintenance of my heritage language and culture; but this would be a false narrative. My bilingualism and biculturalism are the product of my parent's labor of love. Despite having access to my heritage language and Mexican culture throughout my childhood, it was not until my undergraduate years that I began to read literature that mirrored my lived experiences as a US Latina. Coming across the field of Ethnic Studies was a healing experience and has helped shaped me into the educator I am today. In this reflective piece, I will share my *testimonio*, focusing on how my language and cultural

educational experiences across the educational pipeline have influenced my teaching practices. I will narrate my journey to understanding the critical importance of placing Ethnic Studies at the forefront of the Spanish Heritage Language (SHL) classroom. I will also share a unit I designed for the SHL classroom that centers the Chicano Movement.

Del Barrio al Doctorado: K-12 Language Educational Experiences

I grew up in La Villita, a predominantly Mexican *barrio* in the Southwest side of Chicago. In La Villita, my heritage language and culture were valued, and this harvested a sense of confidence and *orgullo* in my cultural and linguistic roots. During elementary school, I was enrolled in a Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) program until the end of 4th grade. TBE programs are the most numerous bilingual education programs in the US education system (Freeman, 2004). Although academic content is taught in both Spanish and English, students typically participate in TBE programs for two-three years and are then placed in a monolingual English classroom. The goal of TBE programs is to transition to English-Only instruction, often not providing opportunities for the maintenance and development of biliteracy skills in both English and Spanish (Garcia & Kleifgen, 2018). Despite living in La Villita, after I exited this TBE program, I hardly saw my heritage language, culture or history represented in the school curriculum. I navigated life in two different worlds; one at school where I only spoke in English and Spanish with my parents and community members after the school, when I exited the school doors.

As I reflect on my K-12 education, I am now aware that I was socialized into a Eurocentric education that excluded the history of struggle, advocacy, and resistance of US Latino/x and other minoritized communities in our required coursework. I vividly remember sitting in social studies class learning about the Civil Rights Movement in elementary school and asking myself the following questions: Were there any Mexicans living in the US during the Civil Rights Movement? When did the first Mexican arrive to the US? Did we join the *lucha* to end segregation in US public schools? Sadly, I was too timid to ask my teacher these critical questions. Although I appreciated learning about this movement, I felt disconnected from this portrayal of history because I did not see my community as part of the movement demanding an end to segregation, despite the Mendez v. Westminster educational segregation of Mexican children case that preceded and became a foundation for the historic landmark case Brown v. Board of Education. The literature I was required to read during my K-12 education, undergraduate and graduate schooling, did not truly reflect my lived experiences. These experiences with culturally irrelevant literature, led me to become disinterested in literature and history classes and to classify myself as a “bad” reader. It was not until my early twenties that I realized I was not the problem; I loved to read, I just had not been provided with the opportunity to engage with literature and history written by individuals that looked like me and sounded like me.

Because of the love for Spanish my parents instilled in me, I decided to become a high school Spanish teacher. During my preservice teaching program, I decided to take a Latino Studies course as an elective because these courses were not required in my program. This course opened my eyes to a line of literature I could relate to. I read books, articles and watched films that centered the history of the Mexican American War and the aftermath of this war. These resources facilitated my understanding that the border crossed us, not the other way around. Through this class, I began to reclaim my cultural pride, but unfortunately my exploration of this rich history was paused for

a few years because both my Spanish preservice program and MA in Spanish Applied Linguistics program required and centered Eurocentric literature courses. To obtain my degrees, I had to enroll in literature courses where I read books like *Don Quijote de la Mancha* and *La Regenta*, which were irrelevant to the US Latino/x experience. Because my programs were so focused on Eurocentric literary works, they often disregarded requiring literature relevant to US Latino/x students' lives, like *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* by Gloria Anzaldúa.

What are Spanish as Heritage Language Classes?

After completing my MA degree, I began to teach high school Spanish as a Heritage Language (SHL) in Illinois. SHL courses are designed specifically for heritage speakers. In these courses, students can further develop their Spanish language skills in an academic setting. It's important to note that it is not typically until high school and/or college that heritages speakers, (sometimes) can enroll in SHL courses. Although many US Latina/o/x students, move through elementary school with minimal to no opportunities to continue developing their heritage language in an academic setting, when they enroll in SHL classes, they are often expected to abide by "standard" Spanish language norms. Instead of perceiving their Spanish varieties as an asset, heritage speakers' Spanish language skills are often positioned as a deficit and in need of repair. In my own lived experiences enrolled in college-level Spanish coursework, I was often told that *haiga*, *fuistes* and *parking* did not exist, and this created a sense of shame and linguistic insecurity. In my own dissertation research, where I collected the testimonios of heritage speakers who became SHL educators, findings revealed that (1) all participants experienced or witnessed linguistic discrimination in their Spanish college-level courses (2) all participants shared that they were not required to take an Ethnic Studies course as part of their program literature requirements. Similarly, most participants shared that the literature courses that were required in their programs were not reflective of their lived experiences (Domínguez-Fret, 2023).

In the recent decades, SHL scholars and pedagogues have advocated for the evolution of SHL classes from the eradication approach, that aims to replace students' Spanish home language practices, to a critical approach that centers the language and cultural funds of knowledge of heritage speaking students. Although SHL scholars' theoretical and practical efforts have pushed the SHL field to be grounded in social justice, not much attention has been placed on the intersections of Ethnic Studies and SHL curricula. When I began teaching SHL in 2013, I realized how disconnected the curriculum and program goals were from my students' lived experiences, cultural histories, and their identities. As a SHL educator coming from the same background as my students, I realized that my SHL classroom needed to provide them the opportunity to learn about the history of US Latino/x communities and that my curriculum should mirror and affirm their identities. The SHL field is quite disconnected from its beginnings. We must not forget that the implementation of these courses was rooted in the Chicano/a and Puerto Rican Movements of the 1960s (Aparicio, 1997). Heritage speakers have the right to know this history, their own history.

So, How Did I Learn My Own History? My Journey Exploring the Field of Ethnic Studies

My first step to ensure my SHL class centered my students' lived experiences was to conduct research and explore the field of Ethnic Studies. At this point, I took ownership and responsibility

of reclaiming my own history and culturally sustaining literature; I knew academia was not going to facilitate this process. I began to ask my Latina femtors for reading recommendations and I embarked on a journey where I dedicated an entire summer to exploring what the field of Ethnic Studies was and to reading culturally sustaining literature. I created my own reading list and until this day, I continue to add on to this list. Immersing myself in Chicano/a/x literature and exploring this field guided me to gain the following knowledge:

- The fight for social and racial justice in the 1960s and early 1970s was present through different movements that took place across the country enacted by different minoritized communities. These movements aimed to address social inequalities and demanded an end to systemic racism in different societal sectors and were often led by minoritized students.

- The establishment of the first Ethnic Studies department in the late 1960s was a product of collective revolutionary work led by the *Third World Liberation Front* (TWLF) coalition. This coalition was made up of Black, Chicana/o/a/x and other minoritized student groups in different university campuses across California. These students demanded a shift in the college admissions process and desired to have access to classes that reflected their backgrounds and lived experiences, taught by faculty of Color. Students fought for these causes by organizing strikes, protests, and rallies.

- High school students organized and participated in protests to demand better educational opportunities. For example, in California, students in Berkeley High School advocated for the implementation of an African American Studies department, which they were granted and is still going strong today (Rojas, 2007).

- In 1968, students from Garfield, Lincoln, Belmont, Roosevelt, and Wilson high schools participated in the Chicana/o Blowouts/Walkouts in East Los Angeles. These students were protesting the unequal treatment of Chicana/o/x students in the Los Angeles Unified School District high schools. Students demanded the implementation of a curriculum that was inclusive of Chicano/x history, language, and culture (de los Ríos, López, & Morrell, 2015).

- These movements at the college and high school levels led to the implementation of Ethnic/Chicano Studies courses across California universities and high schools, but also in universities and high schools across the US.

- Larry Itliong, César Chávez, and Dolores Huerta's fight for fair labor pay for migrant farm workers and their activism (although not perfect), for example, the Delano Grape Strike, led to the creation of the United Farm Workers (UFW), a union that continues to fight for the rights of migrant farm workers.

Gaining this knowledge made me proud of being a Chicana. This newly acquired knowledge facilitated my understanding that there is power in community activism. Not only did I want to learn more about this field, but I also wanted to share this history with my students. Reflecting on my own lived experiences, I became critically aware that my SHL class might be the only opportunity my heritage speaking students might have to explore this history and to read literature

that represents their lived experiences. I wanted my students to explore how until today, our community continues to fight against systems of oppression rooted in racism. This is evident in protests and social movements going on today that not only involve but are led by youth of Color. For example, the recent student led walkouts across the US in demand of a ceasefire in Gaza.

The Academic Benefits of Ethnic Studies Courses

In engaging with literature on the benefits of Ethic Studies courses, I came across a line of research that documents that Ethnic Studies courses are identity affirming and provide academic benefits for minoritized students. In her literature review of Ethnic Studies programs in the US, Sleeter (2011) provided empirical evidence that students enrolled in Ethnic Studies courses:

- experience increased engagement, when the literature they engage with is written by authors that reflect their racial/ethnic backgrounds

- demonstrate enhanced literacy skills, higher academic achievement, and hold more positive attitudes towards learning.
  Students gain a sense of self-agency.

In their analysis of administrative data from the Tucson Unified School District (2008-2011), Cabrera et al.'s (2014) study explored if there was a relationship between students who completed Mexican American Studies (MAS) classes and the successful passing of the Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) standardized test and successful high school completion rates. Their results indicated that students who completed MAS classes:

- had an increased likelihood of passing the AIMS standardized test and graduating from high school

- outperformed non-MAS students, in passing the AIMS standardized test and high school completion, despite having significantly lower GPAs in 9th and 10th grade and lower AIMS scores in 10th grade

- MAS courses provided an opportunity for students often wrongfully labeled "struggling" students, to engage in academically challenging and culturally sustaining courses that facilitated their academic achievement

As an SHL educator, it was eye-opening to learn about the academic benefits of Ethnic Studies courses. But it was equally important to become aware that at the core of Ethnic Studies courses is to create historical connections with events presently taking place and students' ethnic identities, with the end goal of encouraging US Latino/a/x students to visualize a better future for themselves and their communities (Stepheson, 2021). Through this research journey, I learned that the goal of Ethnic/Chicano Studies courses is to create a space where the voices and histories of BIPOC students are elevated and are the core of the curriculum. Through these courses, students can become critically conscious of educational as well as social inequities that directly impact their communities. This new *conocimiento* then prepares them to become actively involved in their *comunidades* and become advocates for systematic change. In Illinois, Ethnic Studies courses are

not required across the educational pipeline. Therefore, the SHL classroom is a great place to start to engage students in a curriculum that draws from the tenets of Ethnic Studies. In many SHL programs, the histories and lived experiences of racialized students remain at the margins, because of the hyperfocus on grammar and Eurocentric literature. The SHL classroom is the perfect place for the inclusion of Ethnic/Chicano Studies which can potentially motivate students to enroll, and possibly even demand access to Ethnic Studies courses.

The Chicano Movement: Unit for Spanish Heritage Language Classes

Through my exploration of the Ethnic Studies field, I came across the Chicano Movement. As I immersed myself in learning about this movement, I learned about the 1968 Chicano Walkouts. This history facilitated my understanding that other Chicano students fought and protested for me to have access to SHL classes as a high school and undergraduate student. I learned that our ancestors used to receive corporal punishment for speaking Spanish in school settings. I was able to contextualize that the reason why some US Latina/o/x parents decided not to pass on their native language to their children was to protect them from the racism and linguistic discrimination they themselves had to endure across the educational pipeline. Gaining this critical consciousness guided me to design a unit where I teach about this history in Spanish to my SHL students.

I designed this unit in 2013 when I was as a high school teacher and have continued to update it. I now teach it in my college-level SHL course. I hold this unit close to my heart as crafting this unit has been a labor of love; I see this unit as my opportunity to share history that I wish I would have learned about when I was my students' age. It is important to note that although SHL classes are promoted as a tool to reclaim or further develop a heritage language, these classes continue to perpetuate Eurocentric narratives for US Latina/o/x students and often exclude students' histories. One of the obstacles I endured as I planned this unit centering the Chicano Movement, was that most resources available to explore this movement are in English. At first, I was hesitant to include English resources in an SHL unit because this is something that we are often discouraged to do as SHL educators. However, after much reflection, I decided to use English resources and embrace the beauty in allowing my students to draw on their entire linguistic repertoire to explore their own histories. Therefore, some resources included in this unit are in English, but the conversations students engaged in were in the language of their stories.

In our class we discuss that some of the possible reasons why many of the Chicano Movement resources available are primarily in English could be because the authors might not feel comfortable writing in Spanish due to their limited opportunities to develop their heritage language in an academic setting, heritage language loss or simply because they desired to reach a wider audience. It is important to acknowledge and respect the decisions authors, producers, poets etc. have made with respect to the resources they produce, but this should not stop SHL educators from including these products as sources of knowledge in their SHL classrooms. the next section, I will share an outline of the unit.

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Unit Title:	**The Chicano Movement/El Movimiento Chicano**
Theme:	**US Latina/o/x Civil Rights Movements**
Essential Questions:	¿Qué es un movimiento social? *What is a social movement?* ¿Por qué algunas comunidades organizan movimientos sociales? *Why do some communities organize social movements?*
Focus Questions:	¿Qué injusticias sociales motivaron a diferentes grupos minorizados a formar parte del Movimiento Chicano durante los años 60? *What social injustices motivated different minoritized groups to participate in the Chicano Movement of the 1960s?* ¿Como son las protestas, los boicots y las huelgas son una representación de activismo social? *How are protests, boycotts, and strikes a form of social activism?* ¿Cuáles fueron los logros del Movimiento Chicano? *What were the outcomes of the Chicano Movement?*
Metas de aprendizaje/ Learning Goals:	Puedo identificar eventos históricos que documentan la participación de las comunidades latinas en la lucha en contra de la segregación en las escuelas públicas de los Estados Unidos *I can identify historical events that document the involvement of U.S. Latino/x communities in the fight against segregation in US public schools* Puedo describir eventos importantes que ocurrieron durante el Movimiento Chicano y que fueron liderados por diversos grupos de activistas *I can identify and describe important events that took place during the Chicano Movement led by different activist groups* Puedo dialogar sobre algunos de los logros del Movimiento Chicano *I can describe some of the outcomes of the Chicano Movement* Puedo hacer conexiones entre movimientos sociales del pasado y del presente que impactan las vidas de las comunidades latinas que residen en los Estados Unidos *I can make connections between past and current social movements that directly impact the lives of U.S. Latina/o/x communities* Puedo escribir un cuento corto sobre un movimiento social contemporáneo, un activista de mi comunidad o un evento histórico importante que ocurrió en mi comunidad. *I can write a short story about a contemporary social movement, an activist in my community or an important historical event that took place in my community.*
Social Justice Standards: **English** **Spanish**	Justicia 12 JU.9-12.12 Puedo reconocer, describir y distinguir la injusticia en los diferentes niveles de la sociedad. *Justice 12 JU.9-12.12 I can recognize, describe and distinguish unfairness and injustice at different levels of society.*

	Justice 13 JU.9-12.13 I can explain the short and long-term impact of biased words and behaviors and unjust practices, laws and institutions that limit the rights and freedoms of people based on their identity groups. *Justice 13 JU.9-12.13 I can explain the short and long-term impact of biased words and behaviors and unjust practices, laws and institutions that limit the rights and freedoms of people based on their identity groups.* Acción 20 AC.9-12.20 Trabajaré en conjunto con personas de diversos orígenes y grupos para planificar y llevar a cabo acciones colectivas contra la exclusión, el prejuicio y la discriminación, y llevaremos nuestras acciones a cabo con creatividad y tras haber reflexionado para poder lograr nuestros objetivos. *Action 20 AC.9-12.20 I will join with diverse people to plan and carry out collective action against exclusion, prejudice and discrimination, and we will be thoughtful and creative in our actions in order to achieve our goals.*
Vocabulario/ *Vocabulary*	1. *Los pizcadores* 2. *Piquete* 3. *La huelga* 4. *El sindicato* 5. *La peregrinación* 6. *La agricultura* 7. *Los pesticidas* 8. *La cosecha* 9. *El boicot* 10. *Los derechos del trabajador* 11. *La discriminación racial* 12. *La segregación* 13. *La igualdad social* 14. *La equidad social* 15. *El activista* 16. *Las protestas pacíficas* 17. *Las tasas de graduación* 18. *Los derechos civiles*
Semana 1 ***Week 1***	**Week theme/*tema de la semana*:** Why does our history matter? What intersections are present in the fight for social justice across different minoritized communities in the US? **Week description/descripción de la semana:** I start this unit with a bellringer, asking students to write a few bullet points summarizing what was going on in the world and in the U.S. during the 50s and 60s. This bell-ringer activity serves as a tool to activate students' prior knowledge. **Some questions I ask are:** ¿Qué eventos históricos ocurrieron en los Estados Unidos durante los años 50 y 60? ¿Qué individuos o que grupos minorizados estuvieron involucrados en el movimiento de los derechos civiles en los años 50 hasta los 70?

	¿Cómo crees que eran las condiciones laborales de los trabajadores del campo durante estas décadas? ¿Cómo crees que se percibía el bilingüismo durante estas décadas? After we answer these questions as a class, we briefly review the 14th amendment and reflect on whether this amendment led to the equal treatment of all US citizens. I then show my students the following images:  Some of my students had never seen these images, which facilitated our discussion of the racial discrimination Mexicans and other minoritized communities have historically endured in the US. We then split into small groups and each group is assigned to read one of the following children's books written in Spanish. The goal of this activity is for students to explore court cases and/or historical events that involved US Latino/x communities and that were relevant to the Civil Rights Movement. ● 1931- Alvarez v. Lemon Grove School District- *Todos Iguales / All Equal by Christy Hale* ● 1947- Mendez v. Westminster School district *Separados No Somos Iguales de Duncan Tonatiuh* (See appendix for additional resources) ● 1954- Brown v. Board of Education (See appendix for resources) ● Ruby Bridges- *La historia de Ruby Bridges by Robert Coles*, *BBC article* (See appendix for additional resources) Each group creates a short 5-minute presentation summarizing the main points in the book they were assigned, and they present it to the class. Students who are in the audience are required to complete a timeline using the historical events students are presenting about. We use this timeline during the rest of the unit and students continue filling it out as we discuss additional important events. Learning about these landmark events facilitate my students' understanding of the intersections of the lived experiences of Black and US Latino/x communities across time. For example, students explore how US Latino/x communities were not only residing in the US even before the Civil Rights movement, but they were also actively pushing back against segregation in US public schools and helped pave the way for the historic Brown vs. Board of Education case in 1954.
Semana 2 y 3 ***Week 2 and 3***	**Week theme/*tema de la semana*:** What does it mean to be Chicano? What was the Farmworkers Movement? **Week description/descripción de la semana:** We started this week by discussing the different theories behind the origin of the term Chicano (Resource: *El Término chicano/o*).

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	Students completed a KWL chart about the Chicano Movement, where they were asked the following questions: What do I know about the Chicano Movement? What do I want to learn about the Chicano Movement? And What did I learn about the Chicano Movement? (note: this last question was answered at the end of the unit). We then read about the four components of the Chicano Movement (Spanish resource titled *Movimiento Chicano in Educando el Cambio*.) In our class, we primarily focused on exploring two components of the Chicano Movement: The Farm Worker's Movement and the 1968 East LA School Walkouts. To explore the Farm Worker's Movement, students watched the documentary, Chicano the struggle in the fields. They completed a summary of the documentary, and we had a classroom discussion about the content/history discussed in the documentary. Some topics we discussed in class were farmworkers: - Daily and annual salary - Life expectancy - Educational opportunities for themselves and their children - Labor conditions - Living conditions Students worked in small groups to zoom into important individuals or events discussed in the documentary. Each group had class time to conduct research and then presented their findings to the rest of the class. Some of the individuals and events mentioned in the documentary that students furthered researched were: - 1965 Delano Grape Strike (Resources: *La Huelga de Delano*, *La Causa*, *La Huelga de Delano*, *La Huelga de Delano: a 50 años*). - César Chávez (Resources: *Biografía de César Chávez*, *¿Quién fue César Chávez y Por Qué es Importante en E.E.U.U.?*). - Dolores Huerta (Resources: *Biografía de Dolores Huerta*, *Dolores Huerta*, *Preguntas frecuentes sobre Dolores Huerta*). - March from Delano to San Francisco (Resources: *Recordando la Histórica Peregrinación de 1966*, *El plan de Delano*, *La Voz Del Campesino*). - The United Farm Workers Union (Resources: *Cesár Chávez y La Unión de Campesinos*, *UWF*, *Victorias del UFW*, *UFW Strikes, Boycotts, and Farm Worker Actions 1965-1975 - Mapping American Social Movements*). After these presentations, students are asked to work in small groups to write a short story summarizing the Farm Workers Movement. Students are asked to write their story keeping in mind their audience are 2nd and 3rd graders. After these presentations, we read an excerpt of *Cajas de Cartón* written by Francisco Jiménez. This provided an opportunity for students to visualize how the struggles in the fields also impacted the farmworkers' children. We discussed how this movement helped improve the conditions of farmworkers today, but there is still much work to be done to better not only the salary and working conditions of farmworkers, but also the lives and educational opportunities for their children. A resource that can be used to continue reflecting on this topic and how it continues to impact this community today is the documented titled *La Cosecha/The Harvest*.

	Some questions we discussed this week were: 1. *¿Crees que valió la pena la lucha por los derechos de los trabajadores agrícolas en las décadas de los 60 y 70? Explica tu respuesta*. 2. *¿Cuáles fueron algunas de las victorias del sindicato United Farm Workers (UFW)?* 3. *Explica por qué los hijos de los trabajadores agrícolas tienen menos acceso a una educación justa*. As a class, we also explored the *UFW Strikes, Boycotts, and Farm Worker Actions 1965-1975 - Mapping American Social Movements resource*, which allowed students to visualize the impact of the farmworkers movement and see that it was something occurring nationwide, even in Chicago.
Semana 4 y 5 **Week 4 and 5**	**Week theme/*tema de la semana*:** What was the Chicano Movement? Why did US Latina/o/x students participate in protests and Walk-Outs in the 1960s? **Week description/descripción de la semana:** I start this week by asking students to answer the following question individually: *¿Cómo crees que era la vida de los estudiantes chicanos durante la década de 1960?* After engaging in a conversation about this topic, we begin to watch the movie Walkout (during 2-3 class periods) which documents the 1968 East LA high school student-led walkouts. I divide the movie into 2-3 class periods and engage students in written and speaking reflections about the events discussed in the film. Some topics we discuss are: 1. *Las condiciones en las escuelas de Los Ángeles durante la década de 1960* 2. *El activismo de Sal Castro, Paula Crisóstomo y Carlos Muñoz* 3. *El bajo índice de graduación de los estudiantes latinos* 4. *El castigo corporal por hablar español en las escuelas* 5. *La falta de maestros latinos en las escuelas* 6. *La falta de clases de literatura e historia Chicana* 7. *Las tácticas que usaron los estudiantes para luchar por sus derechos* 8. *Las intersecciones entre el Movimiento Chicano y la lucha por los derechos civiles de las comunidades minorizadas* 9. *La presencia y el apoyo de los padres en los Walkouts* After watching the movie, as a class, we read an article titled *Educación en Coachella* and watch 3 videos which document the *testimonios* of Ramona, Socorro, and Yolanda, who experienced and/or witnessed racial and linguistic discrimination in Coachella, California during the mid 1970s. We then discuss how continuous collective activism can promote change in our local communities. We discuss how corporal punishment, for example, is illegal in the US. But we also discuss how students continue to experience linguistic discrimination in US schools (see appendix for resources on this topic). For homework, students are asked to google other cases of linguistic discrimination that occurred in Illinois or other surrounding states. The following day, we discuss what actions we can engage in to fight against linguistic discrimination in US public schools. We then reflect on the ways in which the Chicano Movement continues to be alive today through student activism. As a class, we participate in a gallery walk, where students view images and read parts of the article titled *50 años después de los 'East LA Walkouts', la lucha*

	de los estudiantes latinos por la equidad educativa en Los Ángeles continúa. For homework, students are asked to write a short story summarizing the East LA Walkouts. Students are asked to write their story keeping in mind their audience are 2nd and 3rd graders. During this last week of the unit, we also explore: - The social and academic benefits of Ethnic Studies courses, Ethnic Studies course availability across the US, states that have legislation regarding Ethnic Studies and MEChA earlier Chicano student organizations active between 1967-2012 , and the impact of community activism in the fight for immigration rights (See appendix for resources). - Student activism present at Northern Illinois University. As a class, we visit the Latino Resource Center, and a staff member shares the history behind the center, specifically sharing how the center exists today because of the activism of Latino students. Students are also asked to read additional resources to further explore the history of student activism at NIU. Students then work in small groups to decide in what ways they can become activists at NIU or in our local communities.
Proyecto de la Unidad ***End of Unit Project***	For the end of our unit project, students are asked to write a children's story documenting a historical event, the life of an activist, or movement that is important for US Latino/x communities. As a class, we talk about starting with small actions of activism and sharing important stories with elementary school children is activism. Students engage in the process of writing short stories for students who traditionally do not have access to this history until much later in their academic journeys. Here is a description of the project in Spanish. This year students' books were read by elementary and high school students in Illinois.
Additional Resources	**Week 1 Resources:** ***Todos Iguales / All Equal by Christy Hale*** ***Separados No Somos Iguales de Duncan Tonatiuh***, Article (teacher resource) 1954- Brown v. Board of Education, Article (teacher resource), Spanish video (Micros Jurídicos #9 | Brown vs. Board of Education. Fin de la Segregación Racial) *La historia de Ruby Bridges by Robert Coles, BBC article* **Week 2 and 3 Resources:** El Término chicano/o). KWL chart Educando el Cambio Chicano the struggle in the fields La Huelga de Delano, La Causa, La Huelga de Delano, La huelga de Delano: a 50 años) Biografía de César Chávez, ¿Quién fue César Chávez y por qué es importante en EE.UU? Biografía de Dolores Huerta, Dolores Huerta, Preguntas frecuentes sobre Dolores Huerta). Recordando la histórica peregrinación de 1966, El plan de Delano, La voz del campesino) Cesár Chávez y La Unión de Campesinos, UWF, Victorias del UFW, UFW Strikes, Boycotts, and Farm Worker Actions 1965-1975 - Mapping American Social Movements)

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	Cajas de Cartón La Cosecha/The Harvest. UFW Strikes, Boycotts, and Farm Worker Actions 1965-1975 - Mapping American Social Movements resource, **Week 4 and 5 Resources:** Walkout Movie Handout La presencia y el apoyo de los padres en los Walkouts Educación en Coachella Linguistic Discrimination in schools today: (resources: 2023, 2023, 2014) *50 años después de los 'East LA Walkouts', la lucha de los estudiantes latinos por la equidad educativa en Los Ángeles continúa* file:///Ethnic Studies Legislation/ State Scan Ethnic studies courses across the United States MEChA and Chicano Student Organizations 1967-2012 Immigrant Rights Protests -- Spring 2006 Additional resources: Reading list Chicano! Taking Back the Schools. *Chicano! History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement.*Video. NLCC Educational Media, 1996. https://centropr-archive.hunter.cuny.edu/poster_series/images/brief_history_P_IV_poster.pdf https://www.aarp.org/espanol/politica/historia/info-2014/movimiento-chicano-mexico-fotos.html#:~:text=POL%C3%8DTICA,a%C3%B1os%20de%20activismo https://depts.washington.edu/moves/brown_beret_map.shtml#:~:text=In%20the%20barrios%20of%20Los,%2C%20job%2C%20and%20housing%20equality. https://www.california-mexicocenter.org/mujeres-chicanas-y-su-participacion-en-el-movimiento-de-trabajadores-agricolas/ https://elpais.com/america/sociedad/art-now/2022-05-25/this-is-for-la-raza-50-anos-de-arte-chicano.html https://www.um.es/tonosdigital/znum28/secciones/tintero-5--literatura_chicana.htm La historia de los Young Lords, de pandilla a movimiento político

Conclusion

As an interdisciplinary scholar, writing a unit centered in a field that I had to explore on my own was a difficult task. However, as a US Latina SHL educator, I felt that it was part of my responsibility and activism as a scholar to provide my students with access to curriculum that documents the legacy of US Latino/x resistance against racial and linguistic discrimination. As a heritage speaker myself, I always felt that SHL curricula often excluded US Latino/x history and literature and centered Eurocentric history and literature that is often not relatable or identity affirming for our SHL students. Although this unit is not perfect, I hope it serves as a tool for other SHL educators to continue or begin to ensure their SHL curriculum is informed by the field of Ethnic Studies and explores issues of race, language, and immigration status among other important topics. I did want to add that my focus was on the Chicano Movement because most of my students are Mexican American. If your student demographics are different, I would highly encourage you to ensure you center your students' stories. Our students need to know that others before us put their lives on the line to ensure we had access to courses where our heritage language was taught. Although many things still need to change in our society, the activism of the students during the Chicano Movement paved the way for us to have more linguistic and racial freedom. We must find ways to ensure this history surpasses our SHL classroom and gets to the ears and hands of our community nationwide. I will end with a letter I wrote and share with my SHL students during our first class:

> Dear Heritage, Spanish Students,
>
> My hope is that this class teaches you more than how to speak what some call "proper Spanish," "formal Spanish" or "*castellano*.".
>
> My hope is that you understand that the way you speak Spanish is not wrong, it's perfectly correct and it makes you the unique person that you are.
>
> My hope is that in my class you continue to explore your cultural *raíces* and that you understand that you belong *y que eres* ENOUGH.
>
> My hope is that *nuestra clase* is centered around U.S. Latino/x history and literature that probably never made it to your school's curriculum because you had to learn *mentiras sobre Cristóbal* Colón.
>
> My hope is that if you feel that your *español* is "horrible," "a shame," or "not good enough," that you understand that your Spanish insecurities are a result of the systemic racism in this country.
>
> My hope is that you understand that some of you were robbed of your heritage language for the simple fact that our language was not deemed important enough.
>
> My hope is that you understand that the simple fact that this class is being offered, *es* progress, it's a gift, *es una oportunidad*. *Algunos de nuestros antepasados fueron golpeados* for using their native tongue.

My hope is that you understand that the way you feel about your Spanish is not your parent's fault. See, they were told English was good enough. A common message from teachers to parents was (and in some places continues to be):

"***Señora***, your daughter will never make it in this country if you don't stop speaking Spanish to her at home. English only, por favor."

My hope is that you understand that this class *es una oportunidad de enamorate de tu idioma de herencia, de tu cultura, de tu gente y de tu comunidad*.

My hope is that you get angry enough to want to maintain your heritage language *y así pasarlo de generación a generación* because that's your linguistic right.

My hope is that you understand that NOW being bilingual is an asset and a commodity, but to you, it's way more than that. *El español es tu familia, tu comida, tu música, tus emociones, tu identidad*.

My hope is that you are so empowered that when others tell you "Speak in English we are in America" you respond "Listen, *como dice* Anzaldúa you can't tame a wild tongue!"

Con amor,

Su profesora de español

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