

IN THEIR OWN WORDS: FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINERS' NARRATIVES

by

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ABSTRACT

IN THEIR OWN WORDS: FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINERS' NARRATIVES

by

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Ph.D, 2023 Curriculum Studies

Dr. Gabriel Huddleston, Associate Professor, Chair of the Department of Counseling, Societal Change, and Inquiry, Director of the Center for Public Education and Community Engagement

The purpose of this study is to capture the stories of foreign language teacher educators and examine their professional paths, which will provide a more complete perspective and understanding of the field of foreign language teaching and learning in the United States. Utilizing Anzaldúas' theories and methodologies helps frame foreign language teacher educators' experiences, allowing us to learn and understand their stories that will provide the field with a comprehensive view of the key roles, tasks, and functions these individuals perform and how these narratives impact the overall development of the field. Consequently, there will be opportunity for all members of the field to reflect upon and evaluate their own professional and personal objectives and goals.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Study

What teacher educators require of teachers, they must, as teacher do, require of themselves.

(Gaudart, as cited in Li et al., 1994, p. 97)

The purpose of this study is to capture the stories of foreign language teacher educators and examine their professional paths, which will provide a more complete perspective and understanding of the field of foreign language teaching and learning in the United States. Utilizing Anzaldúas' theories and methodologies helps frame foreign language teacher educators' experiences, allowing us to learn and understand their stories that will provide the field with a comprehensive view of the key roles, tasks, and functions these individuals perform and how these narratives impact the overall development of the field. Consequently, there will be opportunity for all members of the field to reflect upon and evaluate their own professional and personal objectives and goals.

Theoretical Background

Teacher educators have unfortunately failed.

(Gaudart, as cited in Li et al., 1994, p. 85)

This proposed study refutes Gaudart's quote included at the beginning of this section and seeks to problematize such simplistic statements that diminish and ignore the complexity of the work of all teachers, but especially the work of foreign language teacher educators, which is particular to this investigation. The limited research produced regarding the work of foreign language teacher educators in the United States presents an awkward and contentious definition of the purpose and goals of their practices, which only adds to the growing pains that the field suffers as it seeks to implement its reforms. Lunenberg et al. (2008) cite the words of Martinez,

Little systematic research has been undertaken to inform us about fundamental characteristics of the professional lives of this occupational group—their qualifications, their recruitment, their career pathways into and through the academy, their teaching and research practices, the problems they encounter, or their professional development needs and practices. (p. 1)

Previous to Lunenberg et al. (2008) comments, Moon (1992, as cited in Li et al., 1994) said,

The literature often seems to assume that the people who need to be developed are the teachers, whether pre-service or in-service... Very little thought is given to the other practitioners involved such as the college lectures and head teachers, and how their development could be enhanced. (p. 46)

Research on foreign language teacher educators is uncharted territory because their experiences and knowledge have not been treasured nor studied extensively. Finding out who foreign language teacher educators are and what guides their practices will provide the field with a clearer and fuller picture of where the field stands and what it aims to accomplish. Due to the lack of research focusing on the voices of foreign language teacher educators in the U.S., many of the references in this dissertation will be dated, which was one of the primary impetuses for this research. One of this investigation's objectives is to update the research in the field of foreign language teacher educators, but some citations, quotes, voices, and references come from general teacher education, second language acquisition, and some directly from foreign language. The choice to include all was made to further bridge (Anzaldúa) these disparate fields that the investigator found imperative to learn and connect with one another. However, my overall purpose is to present the stories of foreign language teacher educators in the U.S.

Lunenberg et al. (2014) present Ducharme's (1993) metaphor of teacher educators having two heads,

Janus-head ... teacher educators seem to have even more than two faces: “School person, scholar, researcher, methodologist, and visitor to a strange planet.” Such combinations can be a source of tensions and conflict because one has to meet several expectations and norms, which are sometimes hard to combine. (p. 7)

This investigation does not desire to fall into a modernist and positivist creation of a duality of self. Instead, this investigation seeks to offer a postmodern perspective that supports and comprehends the multiplicity of an individual existence. This investigation presumes that foreign language teacher educators’ function and manage different positions and perspectives simultaneously. Therefore, teacher educators are perceived as borderland individuals (Anzaldúa, 1987), moving from one position to another, straddling roles, contexts, places, and spaces. This investigation believes that foreign language teacher educators can be seen as bridges that connect the practice and application of teaching with the method and development of teaching. Anzaldúa (2009) writes, “Bridges are thresholds to other realities, archetypal, primal symbols of shifting consciousness. They are passageways, conduits, and connectors that connote transitioning, crossing borders, and changing perspectives. Bridges span liminal (threshold) spaces between worlds” (p. 243). By moving in and among several borderlands, individuals can develop a different way of seeing the world. Borderland individuals develop a *mestiza* consciousness that shifts from, “analytical reasoning that tends to use rationality to move toward a single goal (a Western mode), to divergent thinking, characterized by movement away from set patterns and goals toward a more whole perspective, one that includes rather than excludes” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 101). By telling the his/herstories (Anzaldúa, 1987) of foreign language teacher educators, this investigation will benefit the field by recognizing and highlighting the versatility and fluidity of these individuals’ understandings of their role and how it connects and enhances the work that they accomplish while supporting preservice and in-service teachers.

Significance of Study

The field of foreign language in the United States has experienced radical changes since the turn of the 21st century, and a major task for foreign language teacher educators is to understand, apply, teach, analyze, evaluate, and reflect on these changes. The field has been slow to implement, if at all attempt, these changes because of divergent positions and viewpoints. Due to this lethargic disposition, it is imperative that the teacher educators at the forefront of these changes be heard. As mentioned before, the field has done insufficient exploration on the viewpoints and opinions of foreign language teacher educators in the United States. The field of foreign language is at a crossroads, producing optimal circumstances for a deep introspective analysis of its objectives and goals. This is an opportunity to search for better congruence and stability in order to solidify the field's importance in the educational path of every student in this country. The foreign language field in the United States can only benefit by understanding and embracing the stories of the teachers who give it life and purpose. Through and with these narratives, the field can purposefully direct development and training of teachers, but it can also obtain feedback from foreign language teachers and provide newfound issues not yet considered.

Terminology

This investigation will use the term foreign language (as opposed to second language), since most educational settings in the United States where a foreign language is taught have foreign language departments, not second language departments. The term foreign language is also slowly shifting toward the use of the phrase world languages to dissolve any hierarchical dichotomies that aim at separating and positioning at odds languages and their attainment. In this investigation, the term foreign language will be used since this study will focus on the proficiency of a language other than English in the context of the United States. In order to perform a complete and exhaustive investigation for this research project, I researched terms

such as foreign, second, and world language. After gathering the data, I determined whether the information within the text pertained to foreign language teaching and learning and not another field of language teaching and learning. The field of teaching and learning English as a second language or any effort that aims at the intersection of the proficiency of two languages simultaneously, such as dual, immersion, or multilingual programs are not the focus of this investigation and are not considered appropriate.

For clarity, teacher preparation or education, teacher training, and teacher development must be defined. Crandall (2000) describes teacher education quoting the work of Widdowson (1997) as the “development of language knowledge and language teaching and learning ... problem oriented, with the implication of a broader intellectual awareness of theoretical principles underlying particular practices” (pp. 36, 121). Teacher training, Crandall (2000) writes, “emphasizes the development of skills to apply this knowledge in the practical techniques to cope with predictable events” (p. 36). J. C. Richards (2009) defines training as “entry level teaching skills linked to a specific teaching context ... development of a repertoire of teaching skills, acquired through observing experienced teachers and practice-teaching in a controlled setting” (p. 160). Crandall (2000) quoting Wallace (1991) describes development as “something that can be done only by and for oneself” (p. 36). Crandall continues “development is a life-long process of growth which may involve collaborative and/or autonomous learning, but the important distinction is that teachers are engaged in the process and they actively reflect on their practices” (p. 36).

With the help of these authors’ definitions, this investigation will define teacher preparation and/or education as the knowledge acquired by futures teachers as they engage in learning about the language and the process of language acquisition, most likely, in preservice venues (i.e., university courses and student teaching). In this investigation, teacher training will

be defined as acquired knowledge that expands the tools and strategies of teaching a foreign language that is utilized for specific situations and experiences. This training can be acquired in preservice and in-service venues, which could be college preparation courses or workshops offered by reputable entities within the foreign language field. Teacher development is born from the curiosity, necessity, and eagerness of individual teachers seeking growth in their knowledge of teaching a foreign language. This knowledge could be acquired by teachers in similar venues to those mentioned above. Defining these terms becomes essential since, in many articles and books, these terms intermix, and their definitions become blurred, adding confusion and disorganization to the entire research produced to date by the field of foreign language teaching and learning. Disorientation continues as others study and evaluate the state of the field of foreign language teaching.

Foreign Languages in the United States: The State of the Field

Americans need to be open to the world; we need to be able to see the world through the eyes of others if we are going to understand how to resolve the complex problems we face.

(Kramsch et al., 2006a, p. 56)

Educator and author Claire Kramsch, in the quote above, questions Senator Daniel Akaka's statement at a 2005 conference for national foreign language coordinators because he speaks of seeing and not speaking. This action emphasizes a modern outward gaze founded in difference and imperialistic views. Kramsch continues "Foreign language education has to prepare students for a much more interconnected and transcultural world than in the days of the cold war" (p. 56). Globalization provides the possibility, and perhaps necessity, of speaking another language. This interconnection could provide individuals living in the United States the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations that could provide mutual understanding and

additionally self-awareness and evaluation. Still, the pervasive preference of learning one language versus another changes according to the economic and security ties different languages provide for the nation and its inhabitants. Regarding the preference for learning one language versus another, Leeman (2007) writes, “the definition of United States’ interest as global economic competitiveness has favored those languages considered useful for international business or for capturing niche markets within the United States” (p. 37). The increased interest in learning Arabic, Chinese, and Spanish and the decline of French, German, and Russian documented by Leeman (2007) demonstrates the favoritism and potential monetary rewards of learning some languages and not others.

On the other hand, learning a foreign language is rapidly losing its priority in the educational process of most students in the United States. *US News and World Report* presented a piece by Clayton Lewis on March 12, 2015, titled “Monolingual Myopia,” in which they informed their readers about the steady decline of students in the United States taking a foreign language during their educational careers. This news agency used the report produced by the Modern Language Association, which is one of the leading organizations in language development in the United States, and reported a 6.7% decrease in enrollment of foreign language courses between 2009 and 2013. For example, the report showed that Chinese language programs suffered a 26% rate drop during this 4-year span. The report focused on a couple of items that could lead to reasons for this decline. The first item discussed in the report was the assumption that students are looking to take the fast and easy road to graduation, and foreign language courses do not secure that path. The second assumption proposed that many new courses offered in business and technology attract students more than foreign language. Also, many employers do not support, require, or praise the acquisition of a second language (Schulz, 2002) since English has become the lingua franca for most economic and technological fields

that promote and sustain global economies. Mauranen (2009) writes, “English has established its position as a lingua franca beyond any doubt; along with its status, it has become one of the symbols of our time, together with globalization, networking, economic integration, and the Internet” (p. 1). The interest of acquiring knowledge and skills that are attached to monetary compensation, as in business and technology courses, deters many from investing the time that acquiring a language demands, especially if this skill does not promise economic compensation. Simultaneously, many foreign countries enforce and promote the learning of English as a second language in their education systems to prepare their citizens and their economies to enter the global arena that uses English as the universal language for commerce. Therefore, being able to speak English provides an economic advantage and opens local and global monetary opportunities.

Not all is lost, since we cannot dismiss that the United States, with its global reach, close relations, and involvement in many parts of the world, still welcomes the proficiency, both cultural and linguistic, of knowing a foreign language. The United States continues to grow as a nation composed of immigrants who, for the most part, are willing to assimilate and acculturate themselves as quickly as possible. The work of Ronald Takaki (2012) and Joel Spring (2016) provide a historical perspective of how numerous groups of immigrants were driven, propelled, or pushed toward assimilation or acculturation at various periods of time throughout the history of the United States. The agglomeration of economic, social, and political events created the desire and demand for many immigrants and original people to become proficient in English as a set standard, especially if a person is hoping to be successful in the United States. Takaki’s and Spring’s works present why many immigrants, as generations became more Americanized, continue to lose proficiency in their original languages and do not pursue the acquirement of a second language or even return to learn the language of their ancestors. Moreover, the population

of the United States is rapidly changing and cannot be easily categorized with terms such as majority and minority, which complicate further the need and appreciation for the attainment of a second language by its citizens. Still, many economic and social sectors find themselves in desperate need to speak the language(s) of these multicultural, plurilingual, vastly diverse, and complex global individuals to best provide for and serve them. Due to this, some groups have pushed to maintain and preserve their original, ethnic, and cultural or linguistic identities. This has aided in the teaching and learning of their languages, which has been welcomed, fostered, and encouraged by the field of foreign language in the United States.

Within these parameters, the education system of the United States has tried to accommodate the diverse needs of students and has made foreign language programs available and attainable to those who desire to pursue them, but the availability and accessibility of these programs are inconsistent and can vary significantly from one location to another. The inconsistency of language offerings creates secondary issues because the allocation of support and adequate development of these programs do not always meet the needs and progressive growth of language students and educators. Instead, and as mentioned above, the creation, support, and development of language programs tend to meet the standards and requirements of economic and social trends and not the needs and desires of individuals.

These opening observations present how the field of foreign language teaching in the United States is filled with contradictory discourses and efforts that create confusion since many of these positions collide with one another. The field itself has suffered many modifications, alterations, conflicts, deviations, contradictions, and separations that stem from a deeply rooted disorganization of the field, and the following paragraphs aim at presenting the entanglement of the various issues that make foreign language an intricate field of teaching.

Leading the Profession of Foreign Language Teaching and Learning in the United States

The American Council for Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) is the national organization that provides leadership and direction to the field of foreign language since its establishment in 1967. It currently estimates around 12,000 members who teach a foreign language in the United States at all levels of instruction. In the mid 1990's strong voices ignited a conversation that led to ACTFL's 1996 document called the *Standards of Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century*. The foreign language community often refers to this document as *The Standards*, and the document is the result of an extensive effort that induced the unification of the aims and the direction of the entire field of foreign language. This document established, finally, a set of objectives and goals that foreign language teachers can utilize as guidance in order to support and help learners in the process of acquiring a foreign language and at the same time make teachers and instructors accountable to the teaching of these languages. *The Standards* have changed since their original publication in 1996 with revisions and recommendations done in 2002 and with their latest version published in 2012. *The Standards* define the aims of the language learning process starting with the 5 C's: communications, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities (ACTFL, 2012).

The 5 C's are supported by three modes of communication which are: interpersonal interpretive, and presentational that account for the performance assessment of the language. The 5 C's and the modes of communication revolve around the different language skills: reading, writing, listening, speaking, and other possible and necessary combinations of these to produce communication. The image provided in Figure 1 is a visual representation configured by ACTFL.

Figure 1 - ACTFL 5 C's of the Language Learning Process



The disseminating of *The Standards* to all members of the foreign language community has been a slow process. Some in-service teachers did not learn about the aims of this document during their teacher preparation, and some preservice teachers are not being exposed to these standards because their education programs have been slow to introduce, present, and adopt this information. McAlpine et al. (2007) notes,

Those of us who teach or are in charge of the educational process in language departments at the college and university level have paid little or no attention to the release and subsequent implementation activities that have ensued since the publication of [the Standards]. (p. 248)

Another reason for the lack of propagation of *The Standards* could be that foreign language and education programs aim at different goals in the preparation of future foreign language teachers, making and keeping their efforts divided. Schulz (2000) comments,

We still largely lack cooperation between language departments (in charge of developing the disciplinary content knowledge and language skills) and colleges of education (in charge of developing professional knowledge and pedagogical skills), and teacher education is seldom seen as the joint enterprise that it needs to be. (p. 517)

Pearson et al. (2006), discussed the requirements that they believe every language teacher should have or be exposed to in order to teach a foreign language: “Course requirements in a successfully articulated program ideally include the equivalent of a full double major in language and pedagogy” (p. 510). McAlpine et al. (2007) adds,

While much national attention has been given to what students should know and are able to do in a foreign language classroom, very little attention has been placed on what their teachers should know and be able to do as foreign language educators. (p. 248)

ACFTL (2015), document titled “Program Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers,” delineates six standards for the development of foreign language teachers in the United States. These teacher preparation standards are:

Standard 1: Language Proficiency: Interpersonal, Interpretive, and presentational

Standard 2: Cultures, Linguistics, Literature, and Concepts for Other Disciplines

Standard 3: Language Acquisition Theories and Knowledge of Students and Their Needs

Standard 4: Integration of Standards in Planning, Classroom Practice, and Use of Instructional Resources

Standard 5: Assessment of Language and Cultures – Impact on Student Learning

Standard 6: Professional Development, Advocacy, and Ethics. (p. 3)

This set of standards for teacher preparation, first published in 2002, encourages foreign language teacher programs to submit the necessary documents for their programs to receive ACTFL/CAEP (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation) recognition.

Focusing on ACTFL's (2013) six standards, CAEP added four principles. These are: "A: The Learner and the Learning, B: Content, C: Instructional Practice, and D: Professional Responsibility" (p. 2). ACTFL's six standards and CAEP's four principles complement and support each other in the development of foreign language teacher preparation/education. ACTFL/CAEP (2015) provides guidance and examples to prospective teacher educators to develop and support future foreign language teachers. This document offers rubrics to delineate what teaching programs should require and expect of preservice teachers while successfully covering and completing each standard and principle. The document states,

This is the first set of foreign language program standards to have been developed by the profession and approved by NCATE (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education). Beginning in 2004, foreign language teacher preparation programs undergoing CAEP review were required to base their program report submission to the 2002 standards. In July 2013, NCATE became CAEP CAEP approved teacher education program standards in foreign languages reflect the profession's expectations for the specific knowledge, skills, and disposition that foreign language teachers should have as they enter our classrooms. These standards will enable the profession to monitor the quality of language teachers being certified by institutions throughout the country. (p. 3)

The word "monitor" hints at a hierarchical position that aims at gazing into the performance and abilities of preservice teachers and the programs in which they attained their preparation/education. This overseeing position feeds into modernist and capitalist frameworks that have infiltrated educational spaces since the implementation of governmental projects that demand evidence and results as if the education of individuals were a business venture. Leeman (2007) writes, "Second language ability is increasingly commodified as a job skill, rather than a

symbol of education and cultural capital” (p. 37). Foreign language teaching and learning has not escaped the imposition of such positivist and behaviorist agendas like No Child Left Behind, Race to the Top, or the Common Core, which support these capitalist tactics. It can be argued that *The Standards*, or any standards document that the foreign language field created and adopted, is just another tool that aims at quantifying language acquisition. Burns (2009) argued that “the standards movement has been brought into education from the fields of business and organizational management and reflects a reductionist approach in which learning is reduced to the mastery of discrete skills that can easily be taught and assessed” (p. 7).

The acquisition of a foreign language is a life-long endeavor that grows and solidifies through practice and usage. It should not be treated as a list of items that are memorized and checked-off when acquired. Language is ever-changing because it is used, produced, and valued by individuals who perform it in different situations and for different purposes. Schrier (2011) writes regarding the teaching and learning of foreign languages,

The public is being allowed to label our profession as good or bad, right or wrong, working or failing because we have failed to prove the complexity of our profession ... But measures of what we do should not be determined by narrow conceptions of teacher quality and student learning that focus exclusively on test scores and ignore the incredible intricacies of learning and teaching given diverse classroom experiences. What we have failed to define is what makes the content knowledge specific to foreign language teaching special. (p. 2)

Teacher preparation standards that include the word “monitor” set up a hierarchical construction of power and denies individuals involved in the teaching and learning process the democratic experience that education should create and offer. Consequently, it is imperative to understand the motives that drive teacher educators’ objectives as they train teachers while simultaneously

achieving the programs' requirements set by the teacher preparation standards. The ACTFL/CAEP (2013) document does not mention the development of in-service teachers who seek to broaden their understanding of foreign language teaching and acquire the necessary training to expand their teaching tools and strategies and to keep abreast with these national placed standards that were not learned and reflected upon because they were not yet set. Then, what are in-service teachers supposed to do with this document and the others that the field has created and updated? Who would help and support them while trying to rise to the same level of performance as their soon to be colleagues? Because of these questions, it is important to analyze standard six, "Professional Development, Advocacy, and Ethics" (p. 3) and see what is expected of a preservice teacher that consequently will also be expected of a seasoned teacher.

ACTFL/CAEP (2013) standard six emphasizes the need to understand how to express the benefits of knowing and producing a foreign language. It also expects teachers to seek professional development for the duration of their careers in order to be current with linguistic and cultural developments. In the rubric for this standard, one of the items that preservice teachers must meet is the "Disposition for seeking professional growth" (p. 30). The issues mentioned are obviously important, but these are abstract components that are difficult to measure, sustain, and prove. Therefore, how is this to be accomplished? How does a person prove a specific disposition? Even if attending a workshop or reading a text is evidence of this disposition, how does this really prove that any learning or implementation of new information will actually reach the classroom? Who will "monitor" the presence of this disposition especially when it comes to in-service teachers? The answers to these questions are not clear, but both preservice and in-service teachers can look toward ACTFL as a main source to obtain information and support when it comes to adequate development and training that would meet *The Standards*.

Still, more questions surface: Who are the individuals who support the development of language teachers? What qualifies them to impart this training? How do their teaching and training agendas support the development of preservice and in-service teachers? The path that these teacher educators have traveled to get to these positions and what his/her stories (Anzaldúa, 2015) tell us about the foreign language teaching field in the United States is pertinent to this investigation. This point is fundamental because standard six in combination with CAEP's Principle D encourage candidates, future foreign language teachers, to "recognize the importance of being socialized into the profession and the responsibilities entailed in becoming a professional language educator. They seek, value and emulate mentors" (ACTFL/CAEP, 2013, p. 31). This statement highlights the importance of knowing who these teacher educators are since preservice teachers, not to mention in-service teachers, are to mirror their practice after these individuals. Moreover, the teacher preparation standards document states that the education/preparation of future teachers is entrusted to both the faculty of foreign language and education departments, as hinted in a previous quote in this investigation.

Leadership

The Modern Language Association (MLA) was established in 1883 and has more than 25,000 members globally. Even though ACTFL's standards are designed to cover teaching in grades K-16, ACTFL has been perceived to focus on the needs and experiences of teachers and learners of foreign language within K-12 settings. Comparatively, the MLA has focused on the development and support of faculty and students in English and foreign language programs within higher education plus the teaching and learning of English abroad within K-16 settings as well as adult education.

In 2007, MLA made public its report titled, *Foreign Language and Higher Education: New Structure for a Changed World*, as a response to the field's transformation ignited by

ACTFL's standards document. This report presented the MLA's unified affirmation of the importance of teaching and teaching training and development. The report pointed to the fact that throughout the history of the organization, the MLA had,

privileged literary scholarship both in English and foreign language. Research, by and large, has focused on textual study of various theoretical perspectives. With few exceptions, neither the MLA nor individual scholars have concerned themselves with how such knowledge reaches students ... we find that the MLA as an organization has not granted scholarship on teaching the same status it has granted textual scholarship. (p. 229)

Still, this criticism was not central to the report itself but just an observation among its vast and various propositions. The report's main recommendations were to increase the transcultural and translingual abilities of students while implementing ACTFL's level of performance into the learning outcomes of language programs. In order to accomplish the task proposed by MLA (2007), the objectives, goals, activities, sequence, approach, production, and performance of entire programs would need to be completely revamped. This monumental effort would require combining the vulnerability and willingness of seasoned and novice faculty in order to create the space to introduce and establish such profound changes. The report addressed the importance of this great challenge, and the committee in charge of composing this report wrote that "foreign language departments ... must transform their programs and structure Replacing the two-tiered language-literature structure with a broader and more coherent curriculum in which language, literature, and culture are taught as a continuous whole" (p. 3).

The *Perspectives* section of *The Modern Language Journal* published in 2008 presents a mixed acceptance and implementation of the MLA's report. In this *Perspectives* section, several of the members of the committee who produced the report voiced their personal stances

regarding the recommendations made in the document. Their views and positions are contrasting, which provides a glimpse to the discordant narratives that plague the field of foreign language. For example, Pratt et al. (2008) came together to affirm the necessity that “FL (foreign language) departments, if they are to be meaningful players in higher education—or indeed survive at all as autonomous units—must radically transform themselves, particularly in the areas of curriculum integrity and governance” (p. 288), which is not the focus point of the report. Still, these authors emphasize the foundational changes necessary if the field and the report’s recommendations were to be successfully implemented and accomplished. Yu (2008) commented on the implementation and success of a curriculum that integrates language, linguistics, and culture, which is the main point of the report. Yu highlights the fact that many foreign language departments already have the foundation to revitalize their programs since they already have courses in place that would only require interconnection that could be attained if programs were able to break down the structural barriers that divide them. This assertion connects Yu’s work with that of Pratt et al. (2008). Wellmon (2008) echoes articles by Yu and Pratt et al. and writes, “If the institutions of training and production do not transform themselves, change across the field will be piecemeal and ineffective” (p. 292).

In contrast, Pfeiffer (2002), provides an “ungraciously blunt” (p. 296) perspective regarding the report and its goals. He begins by criticizing and questioning the make-up of the MLA’s report committee. He highlights how this group’s report did not have any members who oversaw language programs and were most likely unfamiliar or unaware of the day-to-day challenges and the clashing contrast that the report’s recommendations make toward the work that individual teachers must accomplish. Pfeiffer (2002) writes,

As it stands, committee membership mirrors the tilted governance structure that the report identifies as a serious obstacle to reform FL departments. This would be a minor

matter if the committee's recommendations, upon closer examination, did not reflect the lack of such expertise to a surprising—even disconcerting—degree. (p. 296)

Pfeiffer proceeds to question the expertise necessary for faculty, seasoned and novice, to determine if a program is willing to begin the implementation of the report's recommendations:

So the first need is a substantial faculty development effort to build internal expertise. In other professions, such as medicine and law, it is standard practice for successful members to upgrade their knowledge and practical abilities regularly. For collegiate teachers, this is not a commonly accepted practice, nor is it built into their career paths. (2007, p. 297)

This statement complicates the entire teacher development and training landscape within foreign language since, historically, faculty in higher education have overseen the teaching and training of future teachers. Pfeiffer questions the practical and theoretical knowledge of these individuals provoking questions such as: Who could provide these faculty members with the necessary training and development for them to have the appropriate skills and knowledge to move the field in the direction of the recommendations made by the report? What would be the aim of these training and development efforts?

Heidi Byrnes, associate editor of *Perspectives*, asks several questions that are central to the inquiries made by Pfeiffer. She desires to know if the MLA has the reach and resources to move, implement, and support the recommendations made by the report. Also, Byrnes (2008) questions if the MLA has individuals in leadership positions who can lead these monumental changes. A principal question that Byrnes asks and the one that has more impact to the purpose of this investigation is,

Does the MLA have the mechanism for creating the kinds of faculty development events, writ large, that are clearly at the heart of the proposal, and does it have the persuasive

power to shift power relationships within the very professoriate on whom its own intellectual position and its very governance otherwise depends? (p. 286)

Even if the main recommendation of the report was to develop and increase translingual and transcultural competencies in language learners, the focus of these brief articles swirl around the preliminary and foundational changes that need to be (re)solved to begin the work of language teaching and learning.

These inquiries only increased in complexity when recalling McAlpine's advice about the need to acquire a double major in the target language and education in order to be a well-rounded and prepared foreign language teacher. Long (2000) writes about the difficulty of attaining and completing a degree combining both majors. She states,

Many traditional humanities-trained professors of foreign language and literature do not want to associate with Colleges or Schools of Education. Reflecting whether we like to admit it or not, teacher education has come to be perceived as every student's second choice (Labaree 1999). School of Education professors are treated as second-class citizens in today's academy... Those of us in foreign language departments who work in or collaborate with Schools of Education on foreign language teacher preparation are aware of this stereotype. Pervasive snobbery continues in foreign language departments, where some professors teach literature and others teach language, second language acquisition, and pedagogy. (p. 434)

Long highlights yet another layer of complexity in teacher education, development, and training since foreign language departments must break down barriers within their own units and also reach out and bridge their program's efforts with those that can be supported and developed by education programs. Then, both faculty in foreign language and education must be well versed in the changes, needs, and aims of the foreign language field. This directs attention back to the

knowledge that teacher educators must acquire, which raises, once again, how the foreign language field will develop and train these individuals.

Additional Support

Besides ACTFL and MLA, there are many regional and state organizations and agencies that support and aid the development and training efforts of both preservice and in-service teachers. The goals and objectives of each organization can be found in their mission statements, presenting a glimpse into their programs, but there is no research available on how these organizations produced, modified, and customized their training and development courses. Below is a list of all national language centers around the country that offer support in specific areas of the vast field of foreign language within the United States.

- Center for Advanced Language Proficiency Education Research (CALPER), The Pennsylvania State University.
- Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA), University of Minnesota.
- Center for Applied Second Language Studies (CASLS), University of Oregon.
- Center for Educational Resources in Culture, Language & Literacy (CERCLL), University of Arizona.
- Center for Language Education and Research (CLEAR), Michigan State University.
- Center for Open Educational Resources and Language Learning (COERLL), University of Texas at Austin.
- Language Acquisition Resource Center (LARC), many around the country.
- National Capital Language Resource Center (NCLRC), Georgetown University, George Washington University, and University of California at San Diego.
- National Foreign Language Resource Center (NFLRC), University of Hawaii.

- National Heritage Language Resource Center (NHLRC), University of California, Los Angeles.
- National Middle East Language Resource Center (NMELRC), Brigham Young University.
- Center for Languages of the Central Asian Region (CeLCAR), Indiana University.
- National African Language Resource Center (NALRC), Indiana University.
- National East Asian Languages Resource Center (NEALRC), The Ohio State University.
- South Asia Language Resource Center (SALRC), University of Chicago.
- Slavic and Eurasian Language Resource Center (SEELRC), Duke University.

The title of each of these centers hints at their focus. These centers offer courses and workshops, both in person and on-line, to interested individuals. Most of these courses are not free of charge, but some scholarships are offered to cover the cost of the courses in addition to some travel and lodging expenses. Therefore, preservice and in-service teachers interested in developing their skills and knowledge must reflect on their needs, research programs, and venues where their inquiries may be answered. Moreover, teachers may need to pay, perhaps travel to these sites, and incur many expenses that they must cover under their teacher salaries.

This added effort is sometimes alleviated by some school districts implementing language coordinators into their programs. A language coordinator is usually a veteran language teacher who can provide guidance and support to other teachers within their programs. The language coordinator's task usually includes the implementation of professional development and training for the teachers within the district, along with many other responsibilities such as curriculum development, program assessment, and teacher evaluations. These multiple duties make this a difficult job to fulfill. More importantly, not every district has a language

coordinator, and if a district does have one, this person may not necessarily be trained or knowledgeable in foreign language teaching and learning. Many districts' language coordinators are former English, ESL, or bilingual teachers who acquire the task of supporting the teaching practices of foreign language teachers within their districts. If responsibly implemented, districts would require language coordinators to become knowledgeable in the content and practices of different areas of language teaching and learning.

Wilbur (2007) highlights the intricacy of foreign language teaching and quotes Sullivan (2001) when she writes,

Only L2 teachers have the added burden of creating activities for students in which both the content and language to discuss the content together form instruction. This unique feature of language teaching creates special challenges and considerations in the preparation of new foreign language teachers. (p. 83)

Due to this complexity, many language coordinators could become part of the population to be trained and developed by the previously mentioned organizations, which presents a new set of challenges and objectives in the creation and development of their programs. Considering that only a handful of coordinators or selected teachers can attain training and development and proceed to share information with colleagues, the quality of interpretation and delivery of the information acquired needs to be questioned. Verkler (2003) notes,

Requiring teachers to assume the role of students in professional development training can be a formidable task. Every teacher feels that he or she is an expert in some facet of education. Many enter a professional development activity ... with some trepidation. (p. 219)

In order for language coordinators to avoid foreseen and unforeseen obstacles when implementing training and professional development for teachers, the primary issue should be

the question of what type of training and development language coordinators deserve and require as they become teacher educators. Also, language coordinators must choose the issue(s) that may improve their particular programs. Therefore, any training or development effort provided in this manner cannot be individualized to each teacher's needs, since this will ultimately leave some teachers unsupported in their development. The conglomeration of divergent issues that language coordinators must balance places a burden on these individuals as they attempt to become knowledgeable in vastly diverse areas of language teaching and learning. Both teachers and coordinators may choose to extend their knowledge base and seek further training and development by returning to school and obtaining an advanced degree. Schrier (2010) writes,

My colleagues and I have discovered that the in-service teachers we have admitted in to graduate study have as their agenda and demand that the coursework provide them with a practical framework for teaching languages in the schools and nothing more. Their interest in studying theory and research is often conditional. They expect and sometimes vociferously demand that their coursework provide them only with enhanced instructional techniques, and they are dismissive of theory. (p. 181)

The contrasting dichotomy presented here is another contested space that shows what different groups value as useful knowledge when it comes to the field of foreign language teaching. Faculty, like Schrier, aim to introduce what they think will be beneficial for in-service teachers to know, such as theory, method, and reflection. These faculty members express hesitation when asked by teachers to educate them on practical techniques and tactics they are desperately seeking for immediate implementation in their language classrooms. Schrier (2010) continues,

Without a larger sense of how the research and theory guide instruction, teachers can easily lose sight of what comes next, compiling merely a collection of haphazard,

random, and disconnected tool-book-type activities. Hence when we considered improving in-service teachers' practices, a goal of graduate programs for teacher in foreign language education must be to help teachers build their pedagogical knowledge from bottom up, grounding their practices in coherent research and theory. (p. 181)

This statement circles back and highlights the disconnected goals that exist among educational institutions and foreign language supporting organizations and how they are juxtaposed with the realities of classroom in-service and preservice teachers' experiences. These contrasting positions provoke inquiries again about how and why in-service and preservice teachers are being trained and developed. Schrier proposes one, but only one, avenue of how to approach the teaching, training, and development of teachers. It would be beneficial to the field to know how other individuals who train and develop teachers view their practices as teacher educators providing a clearer perspective of where this integral piece of the process stands.

Further Complications within the Field of Foreign Language in the United States

As previously discussed, the field of foreign language in the United States has experienced profound changes in the last couple of decades. Many individuals presently teaching did not have the opportunity to learn and assimilate to the changes that the field has implemented. Vélez-Rendón (2002) points out that,

The body of knowledge and skills that a second language teacher needed two decades ago is no longer sufficient in today's global and rapidly changing world. While knowledge of subject matter—viewed as grammar and pedagogy—sufficed 20 years ago, today's second language teacher faces challenges that required a wider array of competencies. (p. 461)

To aggravate the matter, due to the shortage of foreign language teachers, many districts around the country found themselves hiring individuals who perhaps have not been trained in the

process of second language acquisition and foreign language teaching and learning at all (Pufalh and Rhodes, 2011). This primarily questions the quality of teaching that many students are receiving if they are being taught by individuals who may not be knowledgeable or are not even aware of the national standards and aims of foreign language performance and proficiency.

Kissau and King (2015) cite the work of Feistritz et al. to note that prior to 1980, 97% of teachers entered the teaching profession through a traditional college education program. However, they stated, “the burst of new hires from alternative preparation programs really took off in the last five years, with 4 out of 10 new hires coming from these [nontraditional] routes.” (p. 147)

Some go so far as to say that these in-service teachers do not belong back in the classroom until they receive the necessary training and development that the field demands (McAlpine et al., 2007).

Crookes and Chandler (2001) discussed the work of Van Patten (1998) regarding the lack of qualified postsecondary faculty teaching future language teachers. Van Patten (1998) argues that there are not enough well-prepared language educators because many foreign language departments teach literature and culture almost exclusively and do not develop appropriately prospective teachers with the applicable knowledge in linguistics and pedagogy to be successful classroom teachers. Crookes and Chandler (2001) continue with this argument and cite the work of Berne (1998):

Many such FL (foreign language) degrees are obtained by teachers, but these professionals are nevertheless not prepared to engage in a process of life-long professional development This is a recipe for obsolescence; it implies a serious risk that the postsecondary level faculty in training today will not develop in their level of professionalism and use of pedagogy. (p. 131)

The quote above circles back to some of the issues that have already been discussed and to the main interest of the investigation, which is proposing to find out who foreign language teacher educators are, uncovering their stories, and listening to what they say about foreign language teaching in the United States.

These issues grow even further when the matter of native versus non-native speakers as teachers enters the discussion (Kramsch, 1997). Regarding this topic, Crandall (2000) states,

Determining who is a “native speaker” is not quite so simple as previously imagined, and the linkage between native-speaking proficiency and professional competence is also often misconstrued (when teachers are hired not because of their preparation, but because they are “native speakers”). (p. 43)

Jourdenais (2009), in her article “Language Teacher Education” printed in *The Handbook of Language Teaching*, asks if teachers need to be formally educated in order to teach a foreign language. She answers her question by affirming that they do but also notes, “Certainly, we have all seen job announcements for teaching positions in which being a ‘native speaker’ seems to be the only qualifications required” (p. 647). Jourdenais continues her argument by questioning if speaking and knowing the language because of place of birth and a lifetime of speaking practice can prepare someone and aid them in being a successful language teacher. She does agree that perhaps that is all some individuals may need but,

we also frequently see these teachers, sometime later, seeking workshops or enrolling in teacher education programs which suggest that, in some way, some level of further preparation is needed in order for teachers to be successful in their classroom and in their professions. But what should this education consist of? ... do teachers need academic instruction in certain theoretical areas? (p. 647)

Jourdenais, again, presents the question of the type of individuals who can help and support the training and development of foreign language teachers. Does the training and development of teachers who are native speakers need to be different from those who are not native speakers? Why would it need to be different? How would it be different? Do teacher educators need to be different for these groups? Why or why not? Do the goals and objectives of the training and development created by agencies that support, teach, and train in local and national venues need to be questioned if teacher educators are themselves non-native speakers? Could being a native or a non-native speaking teacher educator help or hinder the training and development of preservice and in-service teachers? To solidify these questions, the words of Freeman and Johnson (1998 as cited in Jourdenais, 2009) are necessary to consider:

Teachers are not empty vessels waiting to be filled with theoretical and pedagogical skills; they are individuals who enter teacher education programs with prior experiences, personal values, and beliefs that inform their knowledge about teaching and shape what they do in their classrooms... . Learning to teach is affected by the sum of a person's experiences, some figuring more prominently than others, and ... it requires the acquisition and interaction of knowledge and beliefs about oneself as a teacher, of the content to be taught, of one's students, and of classroom life. (p. 648)

These statements are at the heart of this investigation.

This project considers that all individuals participating in the training and development process are individuals filled with personal his/herstories (Anzaldúa, 2015) that have impacted the (de)(re)construction of their identities. Individuals embedded in this process move between realms and levels of engagement, responsibility, and availability within teaching and learning. One moment, they can be the educators; in the next, they might be the learners. For this reason, this investigation proposes that teacher educators have or must develop a borderland identity

(Anzaldúa, 2021) that allows them to reflect and consider different perspectives simultaneously in order to best manage and respond to the needs of the individuals they assist. Foreign language teacher educators are, or need to be, border-dwellers who move in between languages, roles, places, spaces, goals, and objectives and are continuously in a reflecting and evaluating mode that creates a vision of their educational and teaching efforts. The attainment of this *facultad* (Anzaldúa, 1987) allows foreign language educators to intuitively modify and utilize their knowledge and skills to best meet and guide preservice and in-service teachers' learning processes. Understanding, analyzing, and examining foreign language educators' views and unique positions can provide the field with an alternate embodied perspective of the training and development of foreign language teachers that considers all and any influences that can have an impact on their practice.

It is pivotal to consider the importance of the social cultural connections that bind people with their locations. Tedick and Walker (1994) write, "we need to move toward a conceptualization of second language instruction based on an understanding and internalization of complex social cultural relationships as they are reflected in verbal and nonverbal discourse." (p. 301). They continue,

We consider that the process of making change in second language teacher education involves at least three stages: approaching change in second language teacher education within the context of reform in teacher education generally, analyzing a number of entrenched problems in the second language field specially, and planning to bring forth those changes in actual practice. (p. 301)

Tedick and Walker's goals are vast, and this investigation will only provide a sliver of help to reach the objectives these authors proposed more than 20 years ago. The main purpose of this investigation will be to capture the his/herstories (Anzaldúa, 2015) of teacher educators in

foreign language in order to present their perspectives regarding training and development of present and future foreign language teachers and supporting staff. This investigation is interested in analyzing their professional trajectories in order to understand and eventually propose different avenues that can be taken when creating and implementing training and development for those individuals pursuing personal and professional growth within the field of foreign language in the United States. Tedick and Walker, in the same 1994 article, state,

While most of the literature on second language teacher preparation is descriptive or prescriptive in its emphasis, we, like others (e.g., 26) argue that it is important to uncover the conceptions, beliefs, and values that underlie the descriptions and prescriptions, or the thoughts that guide our practice. (p. 302)

Embedded in the echo of these words, this investigation anchors its hopes and begins the path to collect and learn from the his/herstories (Anzaldúa, 2015) of established foreign language teacher educators and searches for new ways to enhance, support, and advance the field of foreign language in the United States.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Teachers of teachers--what they are like, what they do, what they think—are typically overlooked in studies of teacher education.

(Lanier and Little, 1986, as quoted in Lunnenberg et al., 2014, p. 1)

Lunnenberg et al. (2014) explain how teacher educators' pathways differ significantly since they serve and practice in a variety of contexts with diverse expertise and perform distinct and various tasks, which produces difficulty in defining who is or can be a teacher educator. The definition for teacher educators that this investigation will use is that of any individual involved in the support of any preservice or in-service teacher's preparation, education, training, and development. In Chapter 1, teacher preparation and/or education, teacher training, and teacher development were defined. The goal of this investigation is to learn more about foreign language teacher educators' professional paths. Therefore, these terms were researched extensively for this investigation.

Three important articles, which are foundational to the understanding of foreign language teacher educators, serve as examples of the complexity of the research that needed to be accomplished in order to have a complete understanding regarding the topic in question. The first article is Berhardt and Hammadou's (1987) work titled, "A Decade of Research in Foreign Language Teacher Education." This article is a primary source of information involving the topic of foreign language teacher education. Their article is a response to the Holmes Group (1986) report titled, "A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century," which came up with seven major obstacles teachers face while trying to develop and grow in their profession. Berhardt and Hammadou (1987) began their research in ACTFL's annual bibliography of 1977-1978 and other resources not specified, but all of them, "1) argue how foreign language teachers should be taught; 2) identify teacher behaviors to be encouraged; and/or 3) observe teachers with an intent

to train them in a given model for all levels of foreign language teaching” (p. 290). As product of their research, Berhardt and Hammadou developed seven categories of analysis and classification for teacher development and training in foreign language. The seven categories are: “1) global position statements; 2) teacher behavior; 3) training of teaching assistants; 4) training of university professors; 5) in-service opportunities; 6) supervision; 7) methods course curricula” (p. 290).

The importance of this article lies in the fact that it gathers information on and draws attention to the different training and development foreign language teachers need in comparison to teachers of other subjects. Berhardt and Hammadou (1987) write how the field of general education, up to that point, had made no real impact in the implementation of training and development of foreign language teachers. Also, the authors describe how the articles they researched paint a picture of what the experts desire to see in beginner teachers, but these propositions become just opinions since there is no research in the implementation of such ideas by these experts. Clearly, to Berhardt and Hammadou (1987), the field of foreign language up to 1987 had not even begun to question some basic issues regarding the preparation, training, and development of foreign language teachers. They summarize their concerns in five points: 1) the insufficient amount of research done related to foreign language in the United States; 2) research performed regarding foreign language teaching and learning without any specific theoretical framework; 3) the absence of research regarding successful teacher education programs; 4) minimal research done on the education of preservice foreign language teachers; and 5) the lack of understanding and usage of teacher education literature within the field of foreign language. In Berhardt and Hammadou’s article (1987), there is no clear definition of what they mean by foreign language field. The reader is left to speculate that this does not include English as a second language, since their research concentrates on ACTFL’s archives, which mainly focused

on other languages besides English. Also, the article only covers a decade of research, from 1977 to 1987, and the limitation of time must be acknowledged. The authors do not mention teacher educators particularly except to claim that these individuals must be experts in the field. They do not comment on the qualifications an expert must possess. Still, the fact that the authors mention both teacher educators and the need for specific qualifications makes their article key to the investigation.

Unquestionably, Berhardt and Hammadou's (1987) article leaves the field with a series of questions that need answers. The authors wrote,

If we wish to resolve the problems identified by investigators in the Holmes Group, and respond to them with solutions that are tailored to the uniqueness of foreign language education, then the time has come for subject matter specific research in teacher education It would be disheartening to imagine the profession still facing the same seven obstacles enumerated by the Holmes Group at the end of yet another decade. (p. 196)

Unfortunately, Berhardt and Hammadou's fears came true, at least up to the year 2000, when Schulz's article, "Foreign Language Teacher Development: MLJ Perspectives—1916-1999," was published. Schulz's article is without a doubt the most complete chronological research done over foreign language teaching and learning in the United States, making it a foundational piece to the field. The article clearly states that only those books and articles related to foreign language teaching were included in her investigation, which are then divided into a handful of periods.

In the first period, Schulz discusses works published between 1916 and 1940. At that time, the field was concerned with teacher requirements and knowledge that needed to be obtained in order to be a successful foreign language teacher (Puring, 1929, as cited in Schulz

2000). Other articles (Freeman, 1941; Johnson, 1922) emphasized the amount of experience a preservice teacher needed in order to successfully lead a foreign language classroom. In the next period, 1941 to 1966, the same topics surfaced: teachers' knowledge and training experience. The components, quality, and development of the foreign language methods course arose as a new concern to the field at this time (Dannerbeck 1966; Furness, 1949; Huebener 1956; Reynolds, 1952; Thomas, 1954). Schulz also devoted sections in this period to the qualifications different states required for FLES teachers (Guerra, 1956), the training and supervision of instructors in foreign language departments at the university level (Wilkelman, 1960), and the impact of the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) in the field of foreign language teacher development. These topics focused on the quality of foreign language teachers, and the literature of this period proposed goals, objectives, and characteristics that needed to become part of teacher development and training in order to produce qualified teachers. It must be noted that Schulz (2000) qualifies this period as the "golden age" (p. 505) since the NDEA provided funding and support for the development of foreign language programs bestowing recognition and importance to the field.

Schulz continued with the period between 1966 to 1991, during which major steppingstones in the field occurred: the first national meeting of ACTFL and the passing of the Bilingual Education Act (1968). Schulz also introduced the importance of the Modern Language Journal (MLJ), which had not been utilized as a source of information before by the field. This period is, once again, preoccupied with what teachers need to know, how they know it, and how to best train and develop productive and purposeful teaching attitudes and behaviors in preservice, service, and university teaching to increase effectiveness in the foreign language classroom (Freeman, 1971; Berwald, 1974; Otto, 1969). The literature presents the disparities among content, objectives, and knowledge that existed, and still does, in the field, which only

aggravated issues of assessment and certification of teachers in the United States since different standards applied in different places around the country (Joyaux, 1975; Mueller, 1972; Lange, 1983). Schulz (2000) also discussed the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Services (1978) and its minimal impact on the field since the project ended in 1985 because of lack of funding effectively nullified its objectives.

Schulz (2000) then discusses the period between 1992 and 2000, and she highlighted the lack of growth and expansion of the field. Schulz writes,

We are still discussing many of the same issues that were discussed more than 80 years ago, and we still have not found solutions to many of the problems that plague the development of FL teachers. FL teacher preparation is still long on rhetoric, opinions, and traditional dogma ... we still have not found ways to develop and to guarantee and adequate linguistic proficiency in all of our teachers ... we still largely lack cooperation between language departments and colleges of education Requirements for teacher preparation and teacher certification still reflect a chaotic variety among states, and certification is still no guarantee of adequate teacher competence in many states. School districts still employ teachers who have only minimal qualifications... . We still do not have clearly stated, commonly agreed upon, and reliably evaluated high standards for entry level FL teachers. (pp. 516–517)

Overall, Schulz presents a picture of a field divided and in need of common objectives, development, and growth. Schulz's recommendations for future research in the field focus on the need to extend study abroad; create meaningful language experiences for preservice and in-service teachers; investigate, define, and describe foreign language teacher behaviors; and the pressing need to collaborate with colleges of education in the development of foreign language

teachers. Still Schulz makes no mention of teacher educators, their needs, career paths, and development or training.

Gloria Vélez-Rendón's (2002) article, "Second Language Teacher Education: A Review of the Literature," presents the intertwined paths that the field of foreign language teaching and learning has with the field of English as a second language (ESL). In the introduction to this article, Vélez-Rendón discusses how the field of second language, not specific to foreign language or ESL, is trying to understand, value, and define the knowledge, skills, and practices of language teachers. She highlights that,

very little attention has been paid to how second language teachers learn to teach, how they develop teaching skills, how they link theory and practice, and how their previous experiences inform their belief systems and thus what they do in the classroom. (pp. 457–458)

Vélez-Rendón continues and claims that the field of second language encompasses three other fields, which are "English as a second language (ESL) teacher education, foreign language (FL) teacher education, and bilingual teacher education" (p. 458). She argues that these fields will benefit from the research that each one produces due to the common goal that these fields have—"effective second language teaching and learning" (p. 458). Even if these fields have this goal in common, they also have several divergent objectives and positions. For example, second language acquisition methods and approaches can apply to the fields. However, issues of motivation, social and economic profit and gain of learning a language, and availability and implementation of language programs must be considered since they will produce contrasting settings and objectives for each teaching and learning situation. Differentiation in curriculum due to space, place, and the opportunities that can or cannot be created does not become well understood and practiced within the field of second and foreign language until the middle of the

decade. Lantolf's (2000) book that introduced sociocultural theory and approach to language teaching was not mentioned in Vélez-Rendón's article. It would have offered answers to some of the issues she raises. The publication dates of these two works are close so this is not an oversight as much as it is an unintentional mishap. Foreign language programs, depending on geographical location, vary in availability and popularity due to usage and purpose. Because of this, Vélez-Rendón's claims can now seem naïve and outdated, but her article does propose a series of topics that the various fields still study and value.

For example, Vélez-Rendón (2002) brings attention to the understanding of teachers' roles in relation to their previous teaching and learning experiences. She also urges the field to investigate the creation and development of education programs that support preservice teachers along with the importance of a reflective approach to teaching. Still, by presenting a variety of sources from the three fields devoted to teaching language and teacher education, Vélez-Rendón's argument loses strength when she presents sources that are not comparable and compatible for all three fields. An example is how she presents a section titled, "The Standards" (p. 463), and provides ACTFL's production of foreign language objectives and goals, which cannot apply to ESL or bilingual standards especially when thinking of teaching and learning a language outside the USA since each country will have different objectives and goals for their programs. Vélez-Rendón also presents the "Freeman and Johnson's Framework" (p. 463), and even though it makes perfect sense and could apply to all three fields, both Freeman and Johnson work exclusively in the field of ESL, and their research is greatly influenced by international trends of English teaching and learning, which do not match with foreign language teaching and learning in the United States. What is certain is that there is no mention of teacher educators, who they are, how they develop, and what they need, leaving a gap in the research for this investigation.

Berhardt and Hammadou (1987), Schulz (2000), and Vélez-Rendón (2002) are important because they accomplish a comprehensive overall view of the field of foreign language as it stood at the beginning of the 21st century. Therefore, this investigation will cover literature from the year 2000 to 2016. The decision was difficult to make since some of the research analyzed for this investigation was not studied or quoted in the three previous works highlighted here. This is not an oversight of the works previously mentioned because the literature was published simultaneously as the works presented, or perhaps, the authors did not know of their publication. As an example, there were several works published in the journal *TESOL* in 1998-1999 that were not considered by any of the three previous works, even though they have the words *second, world, foreign, teacher education, training, and development* in their titles. Also, overviews of the bibliographies of the three works presented above diverge greatly, and there is not any particular work that can be considered a foundational piece to the field or fields. This is perhaps due to the particular focus of each work or maybe because of the convoluted terminology that is used, or not, in order to study the fields of second language and foreign language teaching and learning.

The following literature review will proceed similar to that of Schulz (2000) and be divided into periods—a grouping of years that can provide a comprehensive foundation of the work and knowledge produced to best understand foreign language teacher educators in the United States.

Exceptions

The selection of works in this section are worth mentioning due to relevant connections to the objectives and goals, research method, and inquiries made in the current project. These works do not appropriately fall into any of the periods that follow, but these works do help highlight work that has been produced and are similar to what this project wants to accomplish.

Russell and Korthagen's (1995) work presents a close look at teacher educators. This book gathers a collection of teacher educators' narratives that displays the reflection process, acts of inquiry, and development within their diverse teaching practices. This book is an international effort, and it provides the experience of teacher educators in the United States, but it does not present the experience of foreign language teachers. In the preface of the book, both Russell and Korthagen describe themselves as faculty members of education programs in higher education and as teachers of teachers. The collaborators in the book share similar definitions of themselves; they are teachers of preservice and in-service teachers and simultaneously faculty members in universities, colleges, and/or teachers at K-12 schools. The importance of this book lies with the fact that it seeks to find who teacher educators are and establishes this question as one that needs to be addressed and investigated in the field. The authors' goal for this book was to set a foundation for the exploration and analysis of the experiences of teacher educators. Richert (1995) writes in the introduction to the book about teacher educators' experiences,

it is difficult for teachers to confront squarely the uncertainty of their work and to recognize that questions are as important as answers in the development of successful practices. The cultural milieu of teaching, therefore, renders it exceedingly important for teacher educators to reveal the learning requirements of their work and to model these learning processes in their practices. (p. 5)

The knowledge and understanding of teacher educators' practices could provide the field of foreign language with added reinforcement about how to manage the intricacies of teaching within a field that is experiencing major changes. This book could serve as a model to now gather the stories of foreign language teacher educators.

Bailey et al. (1998) questions "When do teacher educators have the opportunity and time to reflect on their own teaching?" (p. 537). Bailey and colleagues proceeded to explain the

process they utilize in order to reflect on and evaluate their teaching practices within a series of conversations. The article provides vivid recollections of their feelings and thoughts during and after their dialogic exchanges. They wrote,

the way teacher educators have traditionally acquired professional knowledge is by trial and error, and intuition. What we have briefly described and illustrated here is a collaborative practice that supports us as teacher educators in moving beyond the limits of our own experiences. (p. 423)

Bailey et al. (1998) provides the field with some of the first voices to express the need for language teacher educators to examine and continue their training and development. This comes after the group self-labels as teacher educators and presents their qualifications. They wrote,

We teach in public or private colleges or universities, and some of us have administrative roles in addition to teaching. Most of us also supervise student teachers and interns. Among us, we teach or have taught almost all the courses offered in an MATESL program: methodology, linguistics, second language acquisition, literacy development, and many others. We are all active in local and national professional organizations, do consulting with school systems and other agencies, and are involved in research, in many cases classroom based. (pp. 537–538)

The question then becomes: Are these the qualifications and experiences that every teacher educator can or should have? Because of the statement above, it can be assumed that these teacher educators lead preservice teachers, but as stated earlier in this writing effort, this is not the only place nor the only type of teachers who seek and complete teacher development and training. Therefore, who are foreign language teacher educators in the United States? Where are they? What are their career paths? Do they need and should they seek further training and development like these teacher educators found necessary? There are no answers yet to these

questions, but what is certain is that there are teacher educators who do find it necessary to evaluate and reflect on their professional growth and development.

Period 1: 2000 to 2005

Scebold and Wallinger's (2000) article regarding the state of foreign language teaching in the United States was published in the *NAASP* (National Association of Secondary School Principals) *Bulletin*. Scebold, a top director at ACTFL, and Wallinger, a professor in higher education, wrote about the extensive work that ACTFL accomplished starting in 1998 with the production of several documents that propelled the national standards performance project within foreign language in the United States by advancing the field from the 5 Cs towards the three modes of communication. Scebold and Wallinger also discussed the shortcomings of the field of foreign language in the United States because, "As a profession, we lack the professional structure and clout to motivate these changes, let alone force them As foreign language educators, we have been singularly ineffective in extending the boundaries of professional involvement" (p. 4). Due to these failings, Scebold and Wallinger suggest training future teachers through programs certified under the NCATE standards that support and solidify ACTFL's goals and objectives. Again, the article does not speak of the development or training of in-service teachers. It does not even mention the development of teacher educators who may not know or understand the changes that were occurring in the field at the time. The authors assume that teacher educators are not only up to date with the changes in the field but that they are disposed to implement such changes and willingly submit their programs for evaluation and certification under NCATE standards. As of 2016, according to Texas Higher Education Data, there are 147 universities and colleges in the state. Most of them have language programs, and out of those programs, only two language programs are NCATE certified. This is a small example of the discrepancies that exist in the field regarding the implementation of seventeen-

year-old recommendations, which teacher educators were encouraged to follow if their programs aim to support future foreign language teachers. This also rings truth to the words of Scebold and Wallinger regarding the lack of support and motivation to create changes within the field of foreign language teaching and learning.

Other articles and books published in this period focused on the overall development and training of foreign language teachers, and little is mentioned regarding the role of teacher educators. The literature seeks, produces, evaluates (Bell, 2005; Cunningham & Redmon, 2002; Lozano et al., 2002, 2004) and recommends (L. Q. Allen, 2002; Cunningham & Redmond, 2002; Schulz, 2002), best practices, methods, and materials that the education, development, and training of foreign language teachers should implement, require, and offer (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003) in order to provide productive experiences (Kohonen et al., 2001) for the professional growth of preservice and in-service foreign language teachers. A branch of literature that stretched from these efforts points toward questioning teacher identity and its relationship toward development and training. Varghese et al. (2005) wrote,

It became apparent that in order to understand language teaching and learning we need to understand teachers; and in order to understand teachers, we need to have a clearer sense of who they are: the professional, cultural, political, and individual identities which they claim or which are assigned to them. (p. 22)

Teacher identity was certainly not a new topic in teacher education (Duff, 2012; Norton, 2000, 2010; Pavlenko, 2002; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004), but the foreign language field was just beginning to inquire into the essential needs and support required to prepare successful foreign language teachers. It was not until 2002 that ACTFL's *Standards for the Preparation of Foreign Language Teachers* was published, and before this document, the field was adrift in an ocean of crashing and clashing views regarding the objectives and goals of the education and

development of teachers in the field. At the same time, Lantolf (2000) introduced Vygotsky's theories on language to the field of second and foreign language teaching sparking a revolutionary movement that departed from analyzing and labeling the roles that teachers fulfilled in their profession (Richards & Lockhart, 1994) and moved toward problematizing these roles while considering the social and cultural impact teacher practices encounter while developing under the influence of standard-based proficiency and evaluation.

Also within the 2000-2005 period are articles that question the training and development of teacher assistance and graduate students in foreign language programs that were responsible for teaching undergraduate students in higher learning institutions and who would potentially become teachers themselves (Brandl, 2000; Debicki, 2001; Maxim, 2005; Pfeiffer, 2002). Byrnes (2001) advanced this conversation and questions the entire structure of language programs in higher education. Byrnes's argument is fueled by the publication of the MLA's final report on teaching, in which the association evaluated "curriculum, classroom practices, research on teaching, theories of teaching, and relations between teaching and scholarship" (p. 225), in foreign language programs in higher education. As mentioned before, there is great divide between the field of foreign language, teacher education, linguistics, and second language acquisition regarding the content that future foreign language teachers must acquire in order to be considered well prepared foreign language teachers. There is no doubt that second language acquisition and linguistics cannot be disconnected from the field of foreign language teaching and learning because it provides methods and approaches that must be implemented in order to teach a language. Hinkel (2005), titled *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning*, compiles a variety of articles that cover ESL, L2, second, and foreign language teaching topics. It expands from the implementation and application of methods and approaches to teacher education, training, and development. However, this handbook does not mention the

role of teacher educators. It is presumed that these articles aim to provide guidance, results, and materials for teacher educators to implement in their teaching practices in order to provide support, content, and knowledge to their preservice teachers. Other similar examples are Cooks (2001) and Bartels (2005) that also focus on second language acquisition and linguistics issues, but still, no clear discussion on the role of teacher educators is provided.

Diane J. Tedick's (2005) book is specifically aimed toward teacher educators parallel to the work of Russell and Korthgen (1995). This book focuses on the field of ESL in the international arena, excluding the United States as a site for foreign language teaching and learning. Tedick's (2005) goal for this book was expressed as follows:

Teacher educators from different second language and instructional contexts have an opportunity to engage in professional dialogue, despite the fact that ultimately, we are all working toward the same goal—the preparation and continuing professional development of second language teachers so that their students might communicate across linguistic and cultural boundaries. (p. xvii)

Tedick compiles the work of experts in the field that range from the type of knowledge necessary to teach, the various contexts where teachers teach, the collaborative work that is produced in the field, and, obviously, the education, development, and training of preservice and in-service teachers. Tedick urges teacher educators to evaluate and reflect on their own practices and consider their own needs for professional development. The work of Crandall (2000) is comparable to the work of Tedick (2005) and Shulz (2000). Crandall provides an extensive annotated bibliography of the work published in the field of ESL since the early nineties. The downside of this work, and most of the work published in this period, is that there is no concrete connection between teacher educators and the field of foreign language teaching and learning in the United States.

Furthermore, Richards and Farrell's (2005) book is also a resource for teacher educators that explains the different ways in which teacher development can be implemented and imparted. The book does not discuss the role of teacher educators within each of the settings, but it does provide a guide on the value, preparation, and evaluation of various teacher development options and opportunities that focus on in-service teachers, highlighting the particular needs of this group, which had not been distinctively considered until this investigation.

Period 2: 2006-2010

Jack Richards continued his 2005 publication with an article published in 2008 and also collaborated with Anne Burns in a book in 2009, which he reconfigures in another article in 2010. In the 2010 article, he investigated, "ten core dimensions or skills and expertise in language teaching. These are: language proficiency, content knowledge, teaching skills, contextual knowledge, language teacher identity, learner-focused teaching, specialized cognitive skills, theorizing from practice, joining a community of practice, and professionalism" (p. 101). These ten topics are similar to what is studied within the field of foreign language in this second period, but Richards's work (2005, 2008, 2009, 2010) definitely set the field of ESL and second language in the international and national level far ahead of the field of foreign language teaching and learning in the United States. The literature on foreign language teacher education, training, and development in the United States in these "ten topics" (Geyer, 2008; Jourdenais, 2009; Kost 2008; Pearson et al., 2006; Richards, 2010; Schrier, 2008, 2010; Steele et al., 2009; Van Den Branden, 2009; Watzke, 2007; Wilbur, 2007) was greatly influenced by NCATE and ACTFL's standards and the need to implement them nationwide (Donato, 2009). The necessity to unify the field of foreign language took priority in the research produced while ESL and second language fields began to appreciate, utilize, value, support, and expand qualitative research in the United State and abroad.

The work of McAlpine et al. (2007) is a perfect example of the research done in this period in foreign language teaching and learning. The authors specifically focused on the development of in-service teachers who may not be aware of the changes that occurred within the passing of ACTFL's standards. They wrote, "Teacher professional development is largely episodic, piecemeal, and rarely individualized or discipline-specific. In attempting to meet the needs of all, it most often meets the needs of none" (p. 42). These authors were invested and correlated their efforts on educating, training, and developing preservice and in-service teachers under ACTFL standards and MLA's recommendations. Simultaneously, McAlpine and Dhonau (2007) presented the detailed plan of implementation that the University of Arkansas at Little Rock used for its foreign language teacher program to be certified under NCATE's standards and hoped it could serve as a blueprint for other programs to become certified as well. These two articles recommended changes to be implemented in higher education foreign language programs but neither refers to any training or development of faculty in their university after ACTFL standards and MLA's recommendations were made. Other articles, similar to the period before, questioned the development of graduate students and teacher assistants who could, in the future, become foreign language professors and teacher educators (H. W. Allen, 2009; Allen & Noguera-Azarola, 2010; Klee, 2006; Maxim, 2005). Overall, the literature regarding foreign language teaching and learning in higher education at this time questions and debates who would implement the changes that ACTFL recommended, MLA supported, and NCATE demanded and how those changes would be implemented (Byrnes, 2007, 2008, 2009; Geisler et al., 2007; Robinson et al., 2006).

The work of Davis (2010) focused on foreign language teaching and learning in the United States. Davis compiles the perspectives, positions, and knowledge of present and past experts in the field and creates a template for foreign language programs offering content,

materials, experiences, and recommendations that they argue are imperative for the education, development, and training of preservice and in-service teachers. Davis writes, “Foreign language teacher educators definitely practice in a time of transition. I hope the contributions in this volume aid our colleagues’ evolving practice in this changing field” (p. xxvi). Davis’s foundational piece understands and grasps the intricacy of foreign language teaching in the United States, but it can also be misused if the propositions that the work offers are implemented without also considering the sociocultural context of the teaching practice. Davis’s work can then be juxtaposed with the work of K. E. Johnson (2006, 2009). Johnson utilizes and expands on Lantolf’s (2000) work on sociocultural theory and offers her approach, step by step, on how language is learned, how to teach language, how sociocultural, historical, and structural factors affect language learning and teaching, and how to support the education, training, and development of preservice teachers. Johnson’s work is developed in the field of English as a Second Language (ESL) and not in foreign language, but her work is inescapable because it proposes a paradigm shift that, if implemented in conjunction with the objectives and goals that the foreign language field aims to accomplish, could create a revolutionary and positive development for the entire field.

Finally, the work of Cochran-Smith et al. (1990, 1996, 2008), the *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education*, does provide an extensive view on teacher education presenting a wide variety of past and present research. Even though the handbook does not focus on language teacher education, development, or training, it provides the pulse of the enormous field of education and the overall issues along with questions that envelop the profession.

Period 3: 2011-2016

The literature produced in this third period has similar objectives from the two previous periods and is still being influenced by the general teacher education field, ESL, second language, linguistics, and language acquisition fields.

K. E. Johnson (2015), in the field of ESL and second language, continues her work in sociocultural theory. She advances her work by proposing a theory based on Vygotskian views of teaching and learning in which the relationship between the teacher educator and preservice teacher develops as a supporting conversation in order to ease the transition from student of education to practitioner in the profession. Johnson's theory, titled "obuchenie" (p. 517), asks for teacher educators to morph their practices from a dictative role toward one that mediates and facilitates the teaching and learning experiences to better model the teaching view and any repercussion that these may have on preservice teachers' practices. Johnson highlights how it is in the interaction between what is being learned and what is being experienced where teacher educators need to grow their reflective practices and become supportive mediators. Johnson calls for empirical research to be utilized to capture and understand these dialogical relationships in order to improve and advance the field of language teaching and learning.

Simultaneously, similar investigations were being produced regarding this effort (Farrell, 2012; Lui & Zhan, 2014; Lee & Kemple, 2014). The work of Wright and Beaumont (2015) answers Johnson's (2015) call for the production of empirical work in language teaching. Wright and Beaumont collected the stories of ESL and second language teacher practices around the world but do not include an experience in the United States. The different chapters within the book display narratives of the teaching practices of language educators, but it is unclear if these individuals define themselves as teacher educators or as university and college faculty. In a like manner, K. O. Mason's (2014) book, from the field of general teacher education, exposes the

problems that exist between higher education faculty and teacher educators in regard to their role in the education, training, and development of teachers. Mason writes, “The ideas of teachers and teacher educators on topics in education are not isolated entities. The work of university educators often reflect, analyze, and evaluate the work of teachers” (p. 15). Continuing in this branch of the literature, Lunenberg et al. (2014) is dedicated exclusively to answering and defining who teacher educators are. Their definition suggests the following,

Teacher educators are a heterogeneous group. Not only do they come from different backgrounds, but they also work in different settings (Lunnenberg, 2010). Some work in an institution for teacher education for primary education, some in a teacher education institution for secondary education. Others work in teacher education institutions for specific fields ... Moreover there is a growing group of school-based teacher educators co-operating with those who are institution-based and with their students (Van Velzen & Volman, 2009) ... They teach a subject or pedagogy, and support students who do field work ... teacher educators are increasingly expected to develop and carry out courses for experienced teachers and to do research (Koster, Dengerink, Lunenber, & Korthagen, 2008). (p. 5)

Lunenberg et al. (2014) present the results of their qualitative research project, in which they evaluated the literature regarding this topic between 1991-2011. After reading the literature, the authors come up with six roles that teacher educators aim to fulfill in their profession. Each chapter is dedicated to explaining one role and its various characteristics. The explanation of the research and its methodology are confusing and produce a lot of questions, and their setting and examples are from The Netherlands since that is where all of the authors reside. Unfortunately, the work of Lunenberg et al. leaves more questions than answers after a promising start to finally figuring out who teacher educators could be.

Several investigations in this period focus on the creation, maintenance, and evaluation of language programs (Akbari & Dadvan, 2011; England, 2012; Ortactepe & Akyel, 2015; Smith, 2014). Swanson (2013) provides a guide for higher education programs in how to recruit language teachers. The book is not specific on what type of language program this effort targets; perhaps both second and foreign language. The book does provide a detailed description of the process that the author followed at his university in order to grow the teacher education program. The information could be used as a model to increase the size of a language program, but there is no information on the design of the program itself. Huhn (2012) researches the literature, although the timeframe is unclear, to find models that could serve as foundational examples that could help create strong foreign language teacher programs. He highlights five programs around the country that include four characteristics that make them model programs. These characteristics are: “1) Development and Assessment of Candidates’ Foreign Language Proficiency, 2) Foreign Language Program that Blends Language and Content, 3) Collaboration with Colleagues in the College of Education, and 4) Opportunities for Professional Development” (pp. 173–174). Once again, there was no discussion regarding teacher educators, their function within the program, or their own professional development. Furthermore, there are a series of articles that investigate these characteristics and debate the importance of one or several of them and the impact that they have in the education of preservice teachers (Brooks & Darhower, 2014; Hidebrandt & Swanson, 2014).

Teacher identity and teacher beliefs continue to be questioned and investigated. Martel (2015) discusses the relation that pedagogical knowledge and practice has in preservice teacher identities and how these morph and impact their beginner teaching practices, but it does not make recommendations to teacher educators on how to support the experiences of preservice teachers. Kissau et al. (2013) surveyed 222 preservice and in-service teachers. The authors

accentuate the need for tailored training, since different groups have unique needs and challenges in their practices. Some articles called for teacher development through mentoring. Höbusch and Worley (2012) advocated for this mentor relationship while working with teacher assistants in higher education. Asención Delaney (2012) explained the role of a teacher mentor along with the benefits of this relationship and made suggestions for the implementation of mentoring in preservice and in-service teaching practices. Kissau and King (2015) questioned the entire mentoring process and claimed that potential mentors will need further development and training if they are to become successful mentors. This further development and training will need to be designed, which means that it would need to be further investigated; this has not yet been done. Also, the training and development of teacher assistants in higher education programs is questioned in regard to the development of the curriculum in language programs (Enkin, 2015; Höbusch & Worley, 2012). Still, the question of who teacher educators are, their needs, development, and duties escape the grasp of the research being produced in this third period.

Summary

The books and articles published between 2000-2016 within the field of foreign language teaching and learning in the United States display a field in transformation—a field that is trying to set goals, objectives, and standards that will revolutionize the way foreign language is taught and learned. This provokes the voices of many to speak at once, some out of excitement, others out of doubt, a few out of resistance, and many more out of uncertainty. Still, the field was going to change, and it needed individuals who would be able to lead the implementation of the proposed reforms. These leaders are difficult to point out because the field was, and still is, searching for diverse answers within a thundering cacophony of intriguing and puzzling questions that continue to float in vast oceans of past issues that interlace with the newly

proposed changes. Schrier (2011) writes in her editorial message titled, “Teaching a Foreign Language is Unforgivingly Complex,”

We are all of a profession that has defined itself over the years as a hybrid of language expertise and cognitive learning theories. Because of this dual personality, we have failed to conceptualize and, therefore, define just what is quality foreign language teaching. (p. 2)

The field continues to be adrift, even if it has delineated what is desired and required of foreign language teachers and the programs where they received their education, training, and development. The field did not account for certain steps in the (re)creation and implementation of these objectives and goals. Further training and development of teacher educators is not mentioned; perhaps it is hoped for, but it is not a point that the field considered. Therefore, the need to determine who teacher educators are and to find out what roles they play in the education, development, and training of preservice and in-service teachers becomes imperative. By understanding the paths of foreign language teacher educators, the field will be able to better support them and promote their ability to morph, adapt, and grow in an array of teaching settings.

Another factor that must be considered after completing the literature review for this investigation is the realization that the field of foreign language is unable to stand alone and needs the knowledge produced by the fields of teacher education, second language, ESL, linguistics, and second language acquisition in order to grow. The other fields have, in their own way, already proposed ideas that can serve as foundational principals toward the attainment of knowledge and growth for their fields and can provide root knowledge for the foreign language field that is still developing. The literature shows that foreign language has already borrowed and implemented some ideas from these fields, but it has done so in a prescriptive manner. The

foreign language field is trying to invoke massive changes and perhaps is incapable of looking beyond the practice of teaching a foreign language and is unable to reflect on the process that it has utilized to envision these changes. By knowing and understanding the career paths of teacher educators, the field can begin to reflect and make appropriate modifications to improve the education, training, and development of all foreign language teachers.

Without a doubt, the literature on foreign language teacher educators' and their career paths is limited. Still, it is the estimation of this investigation that knowing and understanding the stories of foreign language teacher educators is pivotal in order to grasp the vitality of the field. Teaching does not exist without individuals—especially those who have the important task of supporting preservice and in-service teachers. Therefore, it is essential to appreciate and comprehend what foreign language teacher educators do, accomplish, and desire for the field to continue to grow and move forward to assert its value and importance on the educational landscape and experience of students in the United States.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative serves as a vehicle for interpretation and reinterpretation or shared experience that has the power to affect systems and open new possibilities of understanding.

(M. A. M. Sharp, 2013, p. 123)

Narrative inquiry is a vast field that has been utilized and studied since the beginning of the 20th century. Susan E. Chase (2007) defines narrative inquiry as “an amalgam of interdisciplinary analytic lenses, diverse disciplinary approaches, and both traditional and innovative methods—all revolving around an interest in biographical particulars as narrated by the one who lives them” (p. 58). Chase provides an overview of the diversity and versatility of this method. She begins by affirming that narrative can be produced in both written and oral form.

Narrative can be a short story that focuses on a specific topic, encounter, or experience. Also, it can be an extended story about a topic that overtakes an individual’s life, or it can narrate a person’s entire life. Narrative inquiry is also called life history, which is hub under work that is characteristic to biography and autobiography. Life history is also named life story by some researchers, while others use the term personal narrative. Chase (2007) explains that oral histories, used mainly by historians, contain similar characteristics to the other methods previously named. Casey (1995) lists various methods in which narrative is central. These are: autobiographies, biographies, personal accounts, life writing, personal narratives, narrative interviews, documents of life, life stories, life histories, oral history, ethnohistory, ethnobiographies, autoethnographies, ethnopsychology, personal-centered ethnography, popular memory, *testimonio*, and *pamietniki* (Polish memories).

Denzin has written extensively on the use of narrative under the umbrella of interpretive ethnography, interpretive biography, and interpretive autoethnography. In his (1989) book “Interpretive Biography,” he tells us that this method,

involves the studied use and collection of personal-life documents, stories, accounts, and narratives which describe turning-point moments in individual’s lives (Denzin, 1989a, chapter 2, 1989b, chapter 8). The subject matter of the biographical method is the life experiences of a person. When written in the first person, it is called an autobiography, life story, or life history. (p. 13)

Denzin’s work on this topic is studied by Victoria Landu (2014), and she comments on his book titled, “Interpretative Autoethnography” (2013), “Denzin described the interpretive autoethnography as a biographical study of life experiences and performance of a person. Using exemplars, the author tried to connect the dots between lives, performance, the epiphany and it’s (sic) interpretation” (p. 1). Going further, Clandinin’s (2006) *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: Mapping a Methodology* is one of the most complete works in which this form of research inquiry is investigated, studied, and explained. This book provides a clear description of this versatile method. Chapters in the book examine narrative and its use under different fields of the social sciences. The use of narrative in this work is mainly anchored to the usage of life histories and stories, autoethnography, and art-based narratives as methodologies.

In her study and definition of narrative inquiry, Chase (2007) includes that this form of investigation must be treated as a form of discourse; therefore, there is ongoing dialogue between participants and researcher. Narratives provide a detailed description of the spaces and places where the research is developing in order to better conceptualize the complexity of the issues being investigated. Since narrative is a verbal action, the researcher must carefully balance the perspectives of all involved in the research process, including their own voice. Some narratives

will be presented in first person making the views of the researcher part of the investigation. For this reason, narrative inquiry presents issues of validity. Ellis and Bochner (2000) discussed, in their study of autoethnography, personal narrative and reflexivity that there is skepticism about narrative inquiry because much of it is based on memoirs and could be fictionalized and romanticized. Ellis and Bochner write regarding the issues of position of the researcher, voice, place, and usage of memory and myth,

A text that functions as an agent of self-discovery or self-creation, for the author as well as for those who read and engage the text, is only threatening under a narrow definition of social inquiry, one that eschews a social science with a moral center and heart We need to question our assumptions, the metarules that govern the institutional workings of social science—arguments over feelings, theories over stories, abstractions over concrete events, sophisticated jargon over accessible prose. Why should we be ashamed that our work has therapeutic or personal value? (p. 746)

The previous paragraphs illustrate that narrative inquiry is complicated to define and utilize. This methodology is adopted and applied under many different titles and has developed different ways of acquiring data, analyzing it, and presenting it. Narrative inquiry provides a wide range of possibilities, but it demands that researchers employing this method become well versed on its usage and application and clearly state the parameters they will be using while working with this method.

Narrative Inquiry in the Field of Language Teaching

Narrative inquiry within the field of language teaching, in its many approaches and methods, has become a tool that training and development programs utilized to promote reflection in order for teachers to bridge the theoretical part of their training with the practical experiences they encounter in the classroom. These programs aim to administer and exercise

narrative inquiry as a way in which teachers can theorize and analyze their behaviors under the supervision and support of faculty, teacher educators, or lead teachers (Coulter et al., 2007; Craig, 2011; Norton & Early, 2011; Ostovar-Namaghi et al., 2015; Tsui, 2007). Also, Casanave and Schecter (1997), collected a series of personal essays that focused on the professional development of language teachers. In the introduction, the authors described their book as “a collection of first-person narratives by language educators from many fields: English education, language arts, English as a second and foreign language, bilingual education” (p. xix). The authors asserted that the book’s collaborators “share a belief that the literature in language teacher education field is missing a fundamental and essential personal voice” (p. xx). This collection of narratives became a foundational piece that reinforced the use of narrative inquiry in teacher development, even if it does not contain the perspective of foreign language teachers in the United States.

The literature produced in the field of foreign language is limited and what exists rumbles over the importance of qualitative research production versus quantitative research (Plonsky, 2014). Coffey (2015) advocates for the creation, collection, and analysis of language portraits to better understand both teachers and students of language as they reflect on their language experiences. Coffey encourages and describes language portraits as autobiographical narratives in which,

Reflecting on subjective experiences through the articulation of one’s plurilingual repertoire is an essential move to bring language teacher education in tune with the wider turn to language learning as an embodied (Atkinson, 2010, Kramsch, 2009) situated investment that is not explicable in terms of instrumental transaction or (even) cognitive training. (p. 502)

The embodied experience of learning and teaching a language produces different ways of knowing and being in the world (Freire, 2018). Coffey (2015) considers preservice teachers and writes, “As teacher candidates become inducted into the world of teacher professionalism, there is a risk that their personal, experiential, and sensory delight in languages becomes compartmentalized, marginalized, by the routinized formats of depersonalized, accountable knowledge” (p. 509). The intersection between theory, teaching, and learning a language, Coffey advises, can be examined through the analysis of language portraits within teacher preparation programs that can serve as spaces where preservice teachers can feel safe to explore and (re)conceptualize their relationships with the language. Pavlenko (2002) advocates for the production and analysis of language learning memoirs, which are, again, a narrative (re)collection of an individual’s process of learning and teaching a language. Pavlenko’s focus on the issue of voice in narrative sparks similar investigations within the field of language learning (Chase, 2007; Ellis & Bochner, 2000), but not foreign language teaching and learning in the United States.

Narrative inquiry defined by Clandinin (2013) not only honors individual experiences but also emphasizes the “exploration of the social, cultural, familial, linguistic, and institutional narrative within which individual’s experiences were, and are, constituted, shaped, expressed, and enacted” (p. 18). Narrative inquiry develops around a dialogical conversation among researcher and participants that vulnerably opens them up to share the inexplicable complexity of lived experiences. Pavlenko (2002) presents her view toward the “truth” of language learning memoirs and writes, “researchers and practitioners are to approach narratives and, in particular, language learning memoirs, as discursive constructions rather than as factual statements” (p. 216). The search for facts and “truth” diminishes the potential of narrative inquiry by applying a modernist perspective that desires structure, compliancy, and order.

In contrast, Moen (2006), who studies narrative and its potential in teacher education, postulates the similar question regarding “truth” in narrative and writes, “True stories are, thus, stories that are believed” (p. 63). Narrative inquiry holds the potential to engage with others in a space of shared communion that holds the possibility for self-reflection and (re)(de)construction of communal experiences. The limited work produced in the field of foreign language that uses narrative inquiry is still trying to escape a positivist paradigm polluted by the necessity to obtain and produce manageable quantified data that can be used to obtain established goals. This is not surprising and should not be strongly judged if one considers the tremendous changes that the field has experienced and is still trying to implement.

English as a second language or as a foreign language has produced a vast amount of research that utilizes narrative inquiry. For example, Kalaja et al. (2008) collected narratives of teachers of English around the world to capture the diversity of contexts and issues that arise in their practices. The authors mention that they are interested in “life stories (or self-narratives)” (p. ix). In their introductory article, the authors write about the different aspects of the book that set it apart from previous uses of narrative in language teachers’ practices. One specific difference is the “analysis of narrative” and “narrative analysis” as different frameworks for data examination. These authors explain the differences and write as “analysis of narratives” being situations “in which case data consists of narratives, the analysis of these focusing on aspects of their content and/or form” and “narrative analysis,” which is when “case sets of data are analyzed, the outcome being an explanatory narrative” (pp. 4–5). The book is sectioned into a collection of written individual, oral, and multimodal narratives, which use both narrative analysis and analysis of narrative in their investigations. The authors concluded the book by praising the use of narrative in order for preservice teachers to reflect on their practices as well as the benefits of collecting other artifacts (drawings, paintings, journals, photos, video, etc.) to

create a more global picture of an individual's life story. The clarification of the way in which a narrative can be analyzed becomes a key component of a desirable application and implementation of narrative inquiry making the work of Kalaja et al. (2008) key within this field.

Johnson and Golombek (2002) write within the fields of English as a second language and English as a foreign language and focus their efforts on teachers' professional development. At the beginning of their book titled, *Teachers' Narrative Inquiry as Professional Development*, the authors compare teacher narratives with case reports and write,

Like case reports, they (narratives) are a particularly useful form of teacher research because they are relatively easy to obtain and yet can provide a rich source of teacher-generated information that is of great interest both to the teacher-narrator and to others interested in how teachers conduct their practices, the thinking and problem solving they employ, and the resources they draw on in their daily practices. (p. ix)

This explanation may present an oversimplification of teachers' narratives by portraying them as case reports, but the authors quickly problematize their origin and purpose and ground their definition of narrative with the immense work of Clandinin and Connelly (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, 2000; Clandinin and Connelly, 1992, 1995, 2000). Johnson and Golombek (2002), like Connelly and Clandinin, conceptualized narrative inquiry under Dewey's theory of experience, which explains that experiences develop in a continuum and that the knowledge and perception of those experiences morphs according to the conditions in which new experiences are (re)(de)constructed. Johnson and Golombek also express the importance of the sociocultural and historical context in which experiences are lived, which has been Johnson's (2015) stance in her previous work. Johnson and Golombek (2004) assert that the production, analysis, and study of teachers' narratives play an intrinsic role in teacher development. Still, the authors do not mention the role of teacher educators in this process of development, but in the collection of

narratives in their book, there are several narratives from faculty members that support preservice teachers' education.

Golombek and Johnson (2004) write, "Narratives then also demonstrate how teachers' knowledge is bound up in how teachers create instruction in response to their emotions and values, and how they place themselves in relation to others" (p. 308). The authors perceive that the process of writing narratives creates a meditational space where teachers can draw upon various resources to reconceptualize themselves and their instructional practices. Within this space, their development is mediated by the intersections of experiential and "expert" knowledge. Expert knowledge provides both a discourse through which to name experiences and a basis upon which teachers are able to ground their internal rationale for alternative ways of understanding themselves and their teaching practices. This expert knowledge is a tool to (re)(de)construct their sociocultural contexts and emotions that are embedded in a particular time and find personal and meaningful ways to reflect and modify their sense of purpose and objectives. Stemming from the article, this writing process remains housed within teacher programs, dismissing the role of teacher educators.

Johnson and Golombeck (2011) continue their work and define three different functions that support and augment the potential of narrative as a meditational tool for teacher development. The functions are "narrative as externalization, narrative as verbalization, and narrative as systematic examination" (p. 488). The authors assert that not every narrative will contain all three and that the output of written narratives is not the focus of this activity. Instead, it is "the cognitive processes that are ignited as a result of engagement in narrative activity" (p. 488). Narrative externalization is the function in which teachers are able to voice their feelings and dilemmas in an oral or written form and begin to make sense of how their emotions and concerns intertwine. By looking for connections in what may seem disassociated, teachers can

begin to search for solutions and possibilities and work toward reorganizing their teaching practices. The second function, narrative as verbalization, is a balance between what Vygotsky (as cited in Johnson & Golombek, 2011) described as everyday concepts and scientific concepts. The article explains that everyday concepts originate from teachers' daily experiences, while scientific concepts are derived from theoretical acquired knowledge produced by the field. The connections of everyday and scientific concepts must be situated within the characteristics of teachers' workplaces/workspaces, which will potentially create productive reflection toward concrete and applicable solutions for their individual teaching practices. Teachers engage in narrative as systematic examination by constantly assessing their practices while utilizing narrative inquiry in its different applications. Teachers must consider the parameters and objectives of the chosen narrative format, since each one will provide different positions and information about the situation being assessed. Narrative inquiry utilized as professional development in language teaching and learning holds the potential to revolutionize the field by highlighting the importance and impact of teachers' daily experiences and merging this knowledge with the theoretical acquired knowledge that dominates the field.

Johnson and Golombek (2011) write,

narrative activities, in particular grounded in sociocultural theoretical perspective, has much to tell us about how best to support and enhance teacher professional development and about the role of teacher educators and their practices in that development... .

Teacher educators need to examine their own practices and become strategic in how, when, and why they mediate in teacher professional development. (pp. 504–505)

Johnson and Golombek's (2002, 2004, 2011) work systematically sets out to underline the potential, necessity, and benefits of narrative inquiry and its relation to teacher development and finally bring attention to the position and role of teacher educators in this complex process. It is

on the heels of their work, as well as the other works mentioned above, that this investigation set out to gather the experiences of foreign language teachers in the United States.

The field of language teaching and learning has utilized narrative as a tool for in-service and preservice teachers to reflect on their practices, but it has not collected information on the experiences of foreign language teacher educators, and little is known, if anything, about their professional paths and potential needs for development. By knowing and understanding the his/herstories of foreign language teacher educators, this investigation may embody the bridge between the theory and practice of teaching a foreign language. Understanding the participants' paths will provide the field with invaluable knowledge about how to best educate, develop, and train preservice and in-service teachers and, at the same time, support foreign language teachers' growth and expertise.

Method

This investigation implemented narrative inquiry as methodology defined by Connelly and Clandinin (2000), in conjunction with Anzaldúa's (1987) views on narrative and its potential for change. Clandinin defines narrative inquiry as

a way of understanding experience. It is collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interactions with milieus. An inquirer enters this matrix in the midst and progresses in the same spirit, concluding the inquiry still in the midst of living and telling, reliving and retelling, the stories of the experiences that made up people's lives, both individual and social.

(Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 20 as quoted in Clandinin, 2013, p. 18)

Anzaldúa (2009) describes why she writes:

Because I have no choice By writing I put order in the world, give it a handle so I can grasp it I write to record what others erase when I speak, to rewrite the stories

others have miswritten about me, about you. To become more intimate with myself and you The danger in writing is not fusing our personal experiences and world view with the social reality we live in, with our inner life, our history, our economics, and our vision. (pp. 30–31)

This study merged these conceptions, Clandinin and Connelly's and Anzaldúa's, and collected the stories of three experienced foreign language teacher educators within the United States while valuing narrative as a phenomenon that is "relational, continuous, and social" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 17). The principal investigator for this writing effort met in person with all three participants, at different conferences, three times each for a total of nine meetings, each lasting one to two hours.

This investigation assumed that foreign language teachers and, even more, foreign language teacher educators are individuals living within complex borderlands. Anzaldúa (1987) defines borders as, "a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition" (p. 25). Foreign language teacher educators straddle borderlands between languages, roles, responsibilities, and other tasks, both personal and professional, that can only be understood through listening and understanding their life experiences. These can best be presented and captured by the openness that narrative inquiry offers to the researcher and participants. In summary, narrative inquiry provides the tool to present the intricacy of the roles of foreign language teacher educators and how impossible it can be to compartmentalize their roles without diminishing and dehumanizing their potential and impact within the field of foreign language teaching and learning.

Participants, Site, and Recruitment

This investigation was only able to recruit three experienced foreign language teacher educators because many potential recruits declined to participate. However, three participants is a typical and accepted number for narrative inquiry studies. The first requirement for participants in this study was that they self-identify as foreign language teacher educators within the United States. The next requirement was that participants needed to be experienced foreign language teachers. This was defined as having had at least five years of experience as foreign language teacher educators by the time of the first interview. This period of five years as a minimum was in order to focus on teacher educators who have developed a certain comfort level and have adjusted to their roles as foreign language teacher educators. Participants have had the chance to develop a certain repertoire they count on as they perform their task as foreign language teacher educators. There were no further time parameters that participants needed to have been involved in the field of foreign language.

All national and regional organizations in the field of foreign language have identified experienced foreign language teacher educators since these organizations offer professional development opportunities to their members. This fact simplified the recruitment process for this investigation because potential participants could be enlisted from these sources. Additionally, this investigation relied on the knowledge and connections from the principal researcher's more than 20 years of experience within the field. The principal investigator for this research had a professional relationship to two of the participants in the study. This was unavoidable since the field has a limited number of individuals qualified and accessible to provide and impart foreign language teacher training and development, especially when training is provided at independent venues, such as national or regional conferences. Still, the researcher and the participants did not have a personal relationship that went beyond trainer and trainee or teacher and student.

Additionally, previous contact between researcher and participant should not be labeled as negative or intrusive to the investigation because the researcher has had the opportunity to build rapport with the participant(s) and is confident that they meet the criteria needed for the study.

Potential participants were approached at national, regional, and local conferences and meetings and provided with a document explaining the objectives of the investigation. Also, participants who had been previously identified and vetted for the two requirements mentioned above but were unable to meet in person were contacted via email to propose participation in the investigation. The email provided a summary of the objectives of the investigation similar to the document provided to potential participants who were met in person. Participation was completely optional. Participants were not compensated in any form, and they were able to withdraw from the investigation at any point up until the formal publication of any work related to their participation.

Foreign language teacher educators inhabit a great variety of places. One of the participants for this investigation holds a position in a higher education institution. Another participant holds an administrative position in his/her particular school district. The other participant is a retired educator who now is a consultant that provides professional development all around the U.S. Therefore, traveling to their various locations within the United States was critical to accommodate the participants' schedules and availability. Any of the sites visited were convenient to the participants, and the researcher met each participant.

Once participants were recruited, the principal researcher and each participant met face to face for a total of three interviews lasting one to two hours each. Each interview had a particular focus and a period of at least six weeks passed between each meeting. This time allowed for the participant and researcher to reflect on the information discussed and provide the opportunity to (re)consider information that could be added, deleted, or questioned from the previous meeting.

The first interview concentrated on participants' introduction to the field of foreign language by learning about their educational and teaching backgrounds, their personal and professional language interests, and how they ultimately became foreign language teacher educators. The second interview inquired about their present role as foreign language teacher educators and how they perceived and embodied their role within the field. Also, within this interview, particular attention was placed on the pedagogical tools and strategies they developed and utilized to be successful, or not, in their teaching practice. The third and last meeting focused on collecting their overall perceptions of the field and how their practices morph as the field continues to change. It was also important to determine where they see their practices, as well as the practices of all foreign language teachers, heading and what changes they see as necessary in order for the field to advance the field.

All interviews were audio recorded, and the researcher collected field notes during the interviews. Pseudonyms were utilized to protect participants' identities. The researcher transcribed and thematically compared all interviews to highlight commonalities, peculiarities, and discrepancies that can best portray the complexity and diversity of the personal and professional practices of foreign language teacher educators.

Table 1*Participant information*

Name	Race/Ethnicity	First (L1) & Additional Languages (L2, L3, etc.)	U.S. Region of Employment	Role
Abi	White/Costa Rican-American	Spanish & English (L1), French (L2)	Texas	Language coordinator for a public school district.
Tana	White/American	English (L1) French (L2)	United States	Retired K-12 teacher, now consultant providing world language training and education.
Jinni	White/American	English (L1) & various language at several levels of proficiency and performance in each one.	Michigan	Professor at a higher education institution.

Note. Jinni grew up speaking English, but due to travel and work experiences can speak French, Italian, Polish, German, Serbian, Czech, Russian, and Spanish.

Analysis

This investigation utilized thematic analysis to examine the data gathered from participants. Thematic analysis is a qualitative analytic “method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail. However, frequently, it goes further than this and interprets various aspects of the research topic” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Careful listening and writing were imperative in order to refrain from simplifying the liminal positions these individuals held as potential borderland beings.

This paper assumes that foreign language teacher educators embody the incertitude of living in the borderlands and the transitions and modification that must be embraced while dueling in the unpredictable place that their positions present. Therefore, once that data was gathered and approved by participants, the researcher listened for the commonalities in the stories to find the foundational characteristics that a successful foreign language teacher educator must show, perform, and offer in order to support the development of in-service and preservice teachers in a field that is experiencing dramatic and radical change. By understanding, through their narratives, the transitions and adaptations of foreign language teacher educators, the entire field can contemplate the intricacy of the goals that should be accomplished. Anzaldúa (2009) writes, “Like a favorite old shoe that no longer fits, we do not let go of our comfortable old selves so that the new self can be worn” (p. 48). The principal investigator assumes foreign language teacher educators have already let go of their “old selves” and that they are supporting the rest of the field on how to (re)(de)construct a new self. Understanding this process is pivotal for the advancement of the field because it announces what is required from all its participants if a successful transition of the field is to be accomplished. Anzaldúa (1987) writes, “Awareness of our situation must come before inner changes, which in turn come before changes in society. Nothing happens in the ‘real’ world unless it first happens in the images in our heads” (p. 109). The field must understand, see, hear, feel, and sample the changes of those who lead foreign language teachers in the process of advancement if any changes are to occur. A field that has been static for so long must be shown what is possible, desirable, and required for growth.

Anzaldúa says,

Every increment of consciousness, every step forward is a *travesía*, a crossing But if I escape conscious awareness, escape “knowing” I won’t be moving. Knowledge makes me more aware, it makes me more conscious. “Knowing” is painful because after “it”

happens I can't stay in the same place and be comfortable. I am no longer the same person I was before. (p. 70)

The field of foreign language in the United States is in a *travesía*, and this investigation hopes to add to the body of knowledge to better understand the changes needed and demanded by and for the field to move forward and achieve what has been set out to accomplish. Consequently, narrative inquiry as a methodological tool will allow the field to understand and know the stories of foreign language teacher educators and can provide a space for all involved to be a part of the change and success of one another.

Researcher Position

Clandinin (2013) writes regarding narrative inquiry and says that, “We do not stand metaphorically outside the inquiry but are part of the phenomenon under study” (p. 24). Therefore, narrative inquiry allows everyone within the process, researcher, participants, and readers of the narrative, to be involved in the analysis and reflection of the experiences being exposed. Also, narrative inquiry under Dewey's ontology, which is foundational to the work of Connelly and Clandinin (as cited in Clandinin, 2006), is “not transcendental, it is transactional” (p. 39). These transactions of experiences cause narrative inquiry to construct bridges that connect various forms of (new) knowledge and understanding. Anzaldúa (2009) writes,

Bridges are thresholds to other realities, archetypal, primal symbols of shifting consciousness. They are passageways, conduits, and connectors that connote transitioning, crossing borders, and changing perspectives. Bridges span liminal (threshold) spaces between worlds, spaces I call *Nepantla*, a Náhuatl word meaning *tierra entre medio*. Transformations occur in this in-between space, an unstable, unpredictable, precarious, always in-transition space lacking clear boundaries. (p. 243)

As a seasoned foreign language teacher, I have attended many professional development seminars and training opportunities because I am constantly searching for the latest innovation in foreign language teacher practices and knowledge. The foreign language field is rapidly changing, and in order to stay abreast, I have trusted foreign language teacher educators to help me develop into the teacher that I am today. Also, within the last couple of years, I have become a foreign language teacher educator myself and have questioned this new position. I have not found many answers to my personal inquiries. Therefore, this investigation allows me to potentially find answers to my questions and simultaneously advance the field by utilizing narrative inquiry as a method while gathering the stories of foreign language teacher educators that the field has unfortunately failed to collect and value. The words of Caine et al. (2013), in the following quote, clarify and solidify my commitment to this investigation. They write, “Experience in our world is grounded in a relational in-between space where we attend to the multiple dimensions of looking backward and forward, inward and outward, and pay attention to places simultaneously as spaces of being, becoming, and possibility” (p. 582). As I proceeded with the investigation, I knew that I would have to (re)(de)construct my personal and professional perception of self, which I expected to bring instability, discomfort, and confusion. This also brought the potential for (in)(re)novation and growth. In other words, I this was another opportunity to embody *currere* (Pinar, 2012).

CHAPTER 4: IN THEIR OWN WORDS: FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINERS' NARRATIVES

In this section, I present the narratives composed from my interviews with three foreign language teacher trainers and educators who practice in the United States. I had the pleasure to meet them each three times, and I have combined the data gathered from our meetings into one narrative for each participant. This chapter starts with my personal account that was the catalyst for the thesis for this writing effort. Following the introduction, the stories of Tana, Jinni, and Abi enable us a glimpse into their lives as trainers and educators of foreign language teachers. This dissertation aims to highlight and increase (Kayi-Aydar et. al, 2019) the significant insights that the field of foreign language teaching in the United States can obtain as we learn from these educators' stories. The narratives offer insights into their experiences while providing understanding of the issues, gains, losses, challenges, successes, and goals related to this field.

Introduction: The Workshop

When two or more opposing accounts, perspectives, or belief systems appear side by side or intertwined, a kind of double or multiple “seeing” results, forcing you into continuous, dialectal encounters with these different stories, situations, and people.

Anzaldúa (2002, p. 547)

Every pair of eyes darted toward the back of the grandiose ballroom in search of a female voice delivering a heavy critique regarding the comments made by the presenter. Her hands moved vigorously accompanying the words of protest. Some people sitting toward the front of the ballroom, closer to the presenter, stood up to see and hear her better. I had a front row seat, since I was sitting merely a table away, and I was able to seize every one of her words. I have a hazy recollection of her appearance, but I remember vividly the pair of cumbersome dark rimmed glasses that weighed heavily and precariously on the tip of her nose. She did not see

through her glasses, but above them, which made her head slope towards the ground. Her long fingers produced reprimanding movements of negations. I cannot tell you what sparked her objection, but to simplify her declamation, she was questioning the intention of the presenter and the tactics, tools, and advice being provided. Her remarks immediately brought me back to life from my boredom, and I could see that I was not the only one who experienced this jolting strike of sudden energy, since everyone in the place stretched their backs and necks turning their heads to get a better look at her and hear her rebellious critique.

This woman could have gone unnoticed for the entire conference, consisting of three long, lazy Texas summer days, sharing space with at least two hundred foreign language teachers from across the United States, all trying to learn, share, and add weapons to our teaching arsenals. I have been traveling the United States every summer for more than 20 years to attend similar events as this one. I enjoy it. It is true that sometimes the information in these professional development workshops can get repetitive, and I sometimes do not agree with what is being presented. Still, I go to these events in search of new information, tricks, experiences, and advice, but most important, with the willingness to reflect upon and evaluate my teaching tools and practices, always hoping I am on the right path to support my students' second language acquisition experiences. It was toward the end of the second day when the words this woman uttered made me question the foundation of my teaching development.

As she completed the last syllable of her statement, all heads, with wide eyes and perked ears, turned toward the front of the ballroom and waited, with anticipation, for an answer. The presenter, a well-known teacher trainer in the United States, stood attentive to the echo of her words with shoulders slumped down, heavily weighted by our gaze. I could not hear the question he darted back at her, but it set her off into a cantankerous diatribe. She scooted to the edge of her seat and her arms moved rapidly, matching the pace of everyone's heart. She reproached his

interrogation swiftly by firing several inquiries back. To paraphrase, she questioned his power of knowing her position and experience as a teacher and how he could know what her students were like. How could he know what they needed and wanted from her? Could he understand what it was like to work with her administrators and parents? He was in the safety of a decorative ornate ballroom dumping all this information on us, just to walk out the door and never know or care if what he was telling us would work for us. He could not tell her to throw everything away that she had known and practiced and just believe that his way was the best approach. She pointed out that he was not even a native speaker of the foreign language he taught. How could he know what it is like to be taught Spanish by her, a native speaker, and learn the language from somebody that embodied it's sounds and culture? The room fell silent again. The presenter offered answers to her questions. I did not hear them because my attention stayed on her. Even though I did not, and still do not, agree with much of what she questioned, she had brought up a good point. Who were all the individuals from whom I have received training? What were their backgrounds? What were their goals and objectives as they delivered the training?

I have received training and development from real luminaries in the field of foreign language and second language acquisition, which, coincidentally, include the presenter for the event narrated above. Some of my trainers have been university professors, well-known foreign language and second language acquisition scholars, senior teachers, and linguists, but I had never questioned their intentions and positions. Did I not question because I attended venues and conferences in which I trusted that someone would have hired the trainer or speaker with the appropriate knowledge to impart the workshop? Why had I placed my teacher development and training in the hands of others without question? Why had I never concerned myself with knowing who they were?

Heavily influenced by Chicana feminist epistemologies, in particular the work of Anzaldúa, my *mestiza consciousness* (Anzaldúa, 1987), combined with my *nepantlera* ways, (Anzaldúa, 2009) and my dedication as a *Malintzin* researcher (Flores Carmona, 2014), drove me to search for answers to the questions above. Anzaldúa (2015) explains *arrebato* and writes, “*Cada arrebato* is an awakening that causes you to question who you are, what the world is about” (p. 125). *Arrebato* can be a violent, sometimes earth-shattering experience, and that is what this women at this conference delivered for me. Particularly, this *arrebato* originated out of curiosity as Anzaldúa (2015) writes, “Trying to understand these convergences compels you to critique your own perspectives and assumptions” (p. 125). As I become more involved in foreign language teacher training, I want to know about the role(s) these teachers of teachers play in the field. Therefore, I decided to interview three seasoned foreign language teacher trainers and seek to capture a glimpse of their lives to understand what frames their practices, objectives, and goals as they perform their roles. These are their stories.

Abi’s story: Rock Stars

Words are our trade
we speak them soft
we speak them hard
we do not push the hand
that writes, the times do that.

The New Speakers, (Anzaldúa (2009, p. 24).

Abi’s eyes filled up with tears, and her powerful voice broke while she tried to continue our conversation through distorted words. I placed my hand on her shoulder and remained silent as she apologized for crying. A few seconds passed while she gathered herself, and I thought about telling her that I felt the same way about my parents as she does about hers. I did not do it

in fear that we would both be crying uncontrollably, sitting uncomfortably in unsteady stools of a small coffee shop located in the busy lobby of the hotel where the conference was taking place.

Abi, like me, was born outside of the United States, and we are both first generation immigrants. She is the creation of her Texan missionary mother who fell in love with a local young man making Abi a *Tica* by birth. The term *Tico* or *Tica* is the demonym used to describe someone born in Costa Rica. I am a *Chilanga* by birth, since I was born in Mexico City. When I remind her of my nationality, she tells me through chuckles that, when she goes back home to Costa Rica, her family members find it very interesting when she speaks because her Spanish sounds Mexican and her English has the distinctive sounds of Texas. As she explains this, I think of Anzaldúa's (1987) words when she writes, "*Soy un amasamiento*, I am an act of kneading, of uniting and joining" (p. 103). Abi's language performance is influenced by the convergences of her language experiences as a producer of Spanish in Texas that encapsule dialectical and syntactical variances and phonetic peculiarities, consequently creating a distinct embodiment of her language production. Abi's acceptance of this language and self-dynamics provides her with a multiple perspective of the possibilities of the language experience and production of others. These language experiences, which at first may seem opposite and contrasting, rub against each other, yet Abi has been able to merge these linguistic encounters, balancing and creating new possibilities of language formulation. Her language coalesces and creates a space that belongs to her, a particular third space of language potentiality.

Abi's family is extremely important to her. Proof of her sentiments is her reaction towards her father's migration story and the smile that forms in her lips while she talks about her extraordinary artistic daughter. Also, Abi laughs and smiles as she jokes about her younger *Tico* sibling who stands out when he visits Costa Rica due to his impressive height and lack of

Spanish speaking abilities. Our conversation quickly focuses on again on her parents' migration story.

Abi moved to the United States along with her family as she started first grade, and her family worked hard to make a life for themselves in this country, especially her dad. Abi's mom was a teacher, and her father did everything he could to provide for his family. She tells me that her father has always struggled with learning English, and she regrets immensely ever feeling embarrassed about him and his inability to completely grasp the language. Assimilation, as the key method to becoming and being accepted in the United States, has cause immense language violence, because as immigrants, we must let go of our first language and accept English as the first and most valued key to succeeding and reaching the mirage of the American dream (Hickey, 2015). Abi, as an adult, understood the enormous sacrifice—physical, mental, emotional, cultural, linguistic—that her father had to endure to support and care for his family in this country. I completely understand her feelings and know exactly why she cried while telling me about him. I too have pondered over the struggle, loss, and gain my parents experienced by migrating to the United States.

I have known Abi for about eight to 10 years. My first recollection of her is as an important member of the leadership team of a state organization for foreign language teachers. In our conversations, I learned that Abi became a Spanish teacher more than 25 years ago because it combined both of her passions: Spanish and teaching. Spanish is her first language, and even while knowing the language, she had an immense desire to know everything about it. Therefore, after submerging herself in a deep study and understanding of the language, she was ready and eager to teach it to others. Abi credits her third-grade teacher and her own mother as the sources of teaching inspiration and mimics some of their teaching techniques in her practice.

Abi remembers with joy the communicative project-based education that she was exposed to in her earliest day of education back home in Costa Rica. Abi said,

My first exposure to education was eclectic. I spoke Spanish but was learning French and English all at the same time. This school praised what students could produce and supported them to get to the next level. That is how I like to learn; to learn by doing and not just sitting there and the teacher spitting information and not talking and producing.

Abi provides us with a strong example of what ACTFL has been telling foreign language teachers to implement in their practices for more than a decade. With a simple glance at ACTFL's (2010) *World Languages 21st Century Skill Map*, communicative production of the target language embedded in real and daily tasks in conjunction with other academic fields that push students to be creators of knowledge and teachers to be supportive guides is core to successful foreign language teaching. This was Abi's first formal educational experience and, obviously, a powerful foundation of her teaching practice. Abi also recalls her third-grade teacher's classroom as a place for conversation about the content she was teaching. Abi explained how her teacher would not stand in front of the classroom and lecture, but instead, she made students accountable for parts and pieces of the material, which they would have to present to their classmates. Abi and her classmates, as young third graders, were teaching each other while her teacher would just fill in the gaps. This educational approach is a phenomenal example of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development and sociocultural theory (Davydov, 1995).

Abi describes herself as a student-centered teacher, also key component of the *21st Century Skill Map* (2010), even if at first, she did not know that was what she was doing. She explained that, in her classroom, she was never the center of attention and that she was very clear with her students about producing and performing in the target language every time they were in her class. Abi recognizes that extrovert students did much better in her class, while introverts and

perfectionists would agonize, but she was firm with her expectations because she knew that to get good at a language, a person must talk and practice continuously. This is the basis of a successful communicative approach classroom that ACTFL affirms as the best method for teaching and learning a foreign language. Abi would model and hand the class over to her students to interact and create meaningful conversations. She would tell her students “Drama and theater are my second life. In this class you are going to act and to pretend experiences with each other and have lots of dialogues. You will use your bodies to act and communicate.”

Spontaneous speaking and prompt feedback are imperative to Abi, which drove her to create her own version of the can-do statements before they even existed. ACTFL’s (2017) *NCSSFL-ACTFL Can-Do Statements* are a set of descriptors that serve as guidelines for self-evaluation that can track a learner’s progress and proficiency in the target language. The *Can-Do Statements* were published less than a decade ago, which highlights Abi’s admirable work on producing her own version. Abi explained,

I was doing checklists a little more detailed than the Can-Do Statements. In a document, I would have the skills we were working on. Then each student and I would mark how they were progressing and mark the areas that need it improvement. Then we wrote some things the student could go back and do better next time.

She would allow students several tries to improve their speaking and give a grade to their best attempt. Before she knew about proficiency levels, she graded students’ work in ranges of performance and rewarded adventurous attempts at utilizing new language concepts and vocabulary. The current ACTFL *Proficiency Guidelines* were published in 2012, but there were earlier versions of this document dating back to 1986. It was not until the publication of the *21st Century Skill Map* (2010) that clear emphasis was given to proficiency in the target language, moving the field away from simply developing the four skills of speaking, writing, listening, and

reading towards the appreciation and understanding of language acquisition, its different stages, and the ultimate goal of learners' proficiency in the target language. Again, the fact that Abi encouraged students' performance and that she graded in proficiency ranges, such as ACTFL's novice, intermediate, advance, superior, and distinguished, is an extraordinary teaching practice. Abi believes that rigid rubrics, and only one oral performative task per grading period is not fair, reliable, or beneficial to the students.

Abi created and implemented several tools and practices that enhance her students' learning experience within a supportive atmosphere based, for the most part, on what she valued as a student. Abi reflected upon her experiences and generated curriculum that not only promoted students' language acquisition but that supported the recommendations made by the field of foreign language utilizing her understanding and knowledge. Abi is adamant that repetition and support, not memorization and punishment, along with clear but not overwhelming feedback is what language students need to become better speakers of the language. The foreign language field has created documents and guidelines that help direct teachers' practices, but Abi added to them and utilized her love for learning and teaching, her role models' examples, her passions in life and combine them to implement a forward-thinking teaching practice that enacted decisive foundational issues the field was barely suggesting.

From the beginning of her teaching career, it was clear to Abi that her teaching style and techniques were out of the ordinary because what she valued in her classroom was not what she had experienced in her own Spanish classes. Abi did not study a language in high school because none were offered. This highlights the fundamental issue of access and the discrepancies regarding foreign language programs and abilities that impact the educational experience of United States students (Welles, 2004). Even though she grew up bilingual in Costa Rica, she lost a lot of her Spanish while growing up in Texas because speaking Spanish was not encouraged

and carried a negative connotation when she was a child. She remembers that people would think that only migrant workers would speak Spanish and people would judge her and her family not knowing anything about them and their lives. In college, she wanted to reconnect with the language and decided to start from the very beginning course even though she could have tested out of a few courses. Abi does not regret this decision because it gave her an opportunity to see how every level of Spanish was taught. She enjoyed every course she took, and she describes her program as traditional, meaning grammar and literature oriented. Her student teaching experience was peculiar because she was embedded with a teacher on the brink of retirement. Abi described this teacher as a depressed woman who slept on her desk during her planning period at school. Abi knew she would not learn much from this woman, but it gave her a chance to see the potential of the language classroom and the students since this retired teacher simply handed over the class for Abi to teach.

Abi's first teaching job was at a small rural district where she recalls,

I did a disservice. I taught every tense and we conjugated. I am embarrassed. I did a lot of things that traditional teachers do. Then, I remembered my dad struggling with learning English and started to realize my unrealistic standards.

Even though it was her first job, she did not follow the curriculum step by step. She found many of the activities in the book boring and prescriptive. So, Abi read the ancillaries that came along with the textbook and became the teacher from the "margins." She explained,

You know how in the teacher edition of the textbook, there are many extra activities on the margins. Well, that is where I lived. There were speaking activities we could do.

There was art we could produce. There was culture we could enjoy. The margin stuff was fun, but it takes time, energy, lots of explanation, modeling, a lot of back and forth with the students; it takes being a facilitator and not a podium instructor.

Abi's curiosity drove her to look further than what was prescribed to teach, and again she found connection with what she appreciated and created curriculum that was enjoyable, well-rounded, and challenging for her and her students. Paying attention and looking into the margins of the books is representative of Abi's determination to search for alternative sources and questioning what is worth knowing, teaching, and learning.

After five years at this rural school and living in the "margins," Abi moved to the middle of the country to teach again in a rural setting. She said,

It was like being in another country. I was 30 miles from where the KKK for that state started. I think that if I would have had darker skin, the students would have not been as open, or the district would have not hired me. Because I came across very Anglo and have fair skin, they 100% accepted me and let me do many things with the students.

Abi recognizes that this experience was good for her, mainly because it was fun for her to be the most knowledgeable individual regarding Spanish in the area. The fact that the color of her skin protected her from being dismissed, judged, or questioned is a privilege she valued because it provided her with voice and a place to teach, but Abi was glad to finish with that position and returned to Texas to continue in the profession.

This reminiscing about teaching made Abi miss the classroom and daily interaction with students. She believes that teaching is innate in her. As the years passed and she acquired more experience, she became noticeably conscious of her teaching. Abi explained that she could feel if something was going wrong in class and immediately tried to assess the value of the activity and reflect on how she could change the delivery and production of the content and task. I asked her how she acquired this sense, and she said that it was the faces of the students and the flow of the lesson that informed her when she needed to pivot and adapt to the needs of the class. She told me, "You know". Yes, I do.

This prompted me to ask about the skills that a foreign language teacher should have, and she quickly answered that a teacher must have passion. Abi believes that passion provides the energy and motivation that is required to accomplish the job. She realizes that it cannot be the monetary compensation since teaching does not pay well, which drives many capable individuals away from the profession. Therefore, passion needs to sustain the heart of the teacher because students demand and deserve to be taught by individuals who love what they do. She said,

Kids don't want their time wasted. Students are going to respond to a teacher that is passionate and teaches them something new and innovative. A teacher that presents information, has them collaborate, and talks about what they think, their theories about what happened, and they have some homework but is not all based on worksheets. You must provide the opportunity for them to speak in the target language. No, you don't want to embarrass them. No, you don't want to insult them, but you need to keep them accountable for listening, paying attention, participating.

Abi tells me that passion is pivotal to her and that it is something that she repeatedly tries to inculcate in the teachers she mentors. Abi witnessed this passion as a student from her teachers and mother's practices, but passion is an intangible concept that is hard to represent or create in the self, much less in others. Perhaps it is only through sensing, receiving, or witnessing the doing of an activity with passion that a person can experience this feeling. Palmer (1999) writes,

Our strongest gifts are usually those we are barely aware of possessing. They are a part of our God-given nature, with us from the moment we drew first breath, and we are no more conscious of having them than we are of breathing. (p. 95)

Abi talks about teaching as innate, and Palmer agrees. Therefore, Abi's efforts to promote and foster passion for teaching is a noble and pivotal pursuit.

Abi is currently an instructional specialist. She is the only one in her district with world language and second language teaching experience. She came to the position after her predecessor retired and her school's administrators could not see anyone else but her filling it. As she detailed the duties of her position, I was overwhelmed. She oversees every world language and immersion program in a district that serves about 30,000 students. She travels weekly to every campus in the district to visit over 40 different teachers' classrooms and assesses their lesson plans. Abi attends weekly meetings with instructional specialist colleagues in which they discuss and prepare professional development that must be imparted every six weeks to all teachers in the district. She spends a couple of days of the week filling out the incessant paperwork where she provides feedback to teachers and documents the needs and requests for programs to administration. She also meets with counselors to prepare class offerings and oversees the acquisition of materials for teachers and district programs. Her spring semester is loaded with curriculum revision, rewrites, and development. Above all this, Abi is constantly answering phone calls, emails, and text messages from teachers and administrators all over the district requesting support, advice, and clarification regarding teaching practices and procedural classroom duties. She assured me that she enjoys her position. I believe her, but I think she did so to erase the worry from my contorted face.

Abi revealed that, a few months prior to our conversations, she took some time off because she fell ill, and the doctor recommend rest and avoidance of stress. She promised me that she works on being more aware and conscious of her health and diet, but she lacks time. She also acknowledges that she is very efficient and that maybe two or three people would be needed to do what her position demands. I felt the muscles in my forehead straining in worry. Abi reached across the table and patted my hand as she assured me that everything will be alright; I hope so.

Abi told me that she had been feeling a little anxious because she has always transferred to another campus or changed the courses she teaches every five years, and this will be the first time she goes beyond this mark as she stays in her current position. Abi strives to be the same type of instructor to the teachers she supervises as she was to her students. She wishes to support and facilitate their teaching abilities while modeling good techniques, applications, and objectives for the foreign language classroom. As an instructional specialist rookie, Abi admitted that she entered her positions with an unbending stand. She had an agenda and set goals she wanted to meet. She spent much time with her teachers in unit, lesson, and daily planning. She promoted the creation of activities for all modes of communication. Abi modeled classroom management that allowed for every student to practice and produce the target language. She knew that by engaging in these practices, students and teachers would be successful within the foreign language classroom because she herself had experienced it. Contrasting, Abi says that teachers she leads wanted exercises and daily practices they could implement in their classroom quickly. They searched and looked for advice and direction on how to best utilize the copious amounts of activities that come with the textbook and ancillary materials. They requested help with classroom management due to student behavior.

Abi shared her own version of strategies and promoted conversations with teachers to show them the possibilities and restrictions of just using the provided textbook and to value different approaches to learning the language. She works on empowering teachers as creators and innovators of curriculum since they are the experts in their classroom and were the only ones who could best produce activities that challenged their students. Abi, to a certain degree, personalized the professional development mainly to cater to individual's different personalities and openness for critique and feedback. Still, she feels and still believes she falls short in some of her duties. For example, she wishes to be a better resource to her immersion teachers and

promises to spend much of her summer growing her repertoire in this field. Abi wishes she could spend more time with her teachers who are completely alone at their campuses. She would prefer to divide her professional development among her tenured teachers and focus on the ones who are new to the profession. These are all examples of a dedicated leader, and Abi's efforts are commendable.

The mention of new teachers propelled me to ask her opinion regarding the state of foreign language as a profession in the United States. Abi told me that she sees it as a spectrum. She explained that many districts and teachers have bought into the importance of proficiency and communication as the goals for language learning and acquisition. Unfortunately, she thinks that most language teachers and programs are still stuck in a past that adores handouts and grammar. She said,

If you look at Teachers Pay Teachers, it is still conjugations, verb walls, games that focus on conjugating isolated verbs. Until people stop selling and buying this crap, we are going to be stuck in it. Because this is what my lazy teachers want; an easy handout students can fill-out instead of doing the work that is needed to get the students to speak the language.

Abi explained that many individuals are coming into the profession not at all prepared to teach. Her job is to develop these people's teaching potential, but many are unwilling or unable to learn, adapt, create, and understand the qualifications needed for the profession. Abi explained,

I think we have made a shift. I think when I came out of school, I went through my education classes, got certified, and expected to be a professional. But we are not at the level of pay that a profession demands. The incentive for the amount of dedication and work and focus it takes to do the work is not there. So now, we are getting technicians

that can perform certain parts of the job but cannot accomplish all the profession requires and demands. Also, we are parents, and partners, and care givers, we have full lives with short days. I think we are being treated as technicians but have the expectation that we should be professionals and it is frustrating.

She also recognizes that world languages in the United States are in trouble, “We are in the dark ages and that is how I described it earlier to my administrator. We are under the illusion that languages are not necessary. We don’t value them.” Abi said,

You can’t leave languages out of the school. Our languages are here with us; the culture is here in our communities. We can’t just build a wall because we are land connected to Spanish Speakers all the way south. All the way to the artic. We are going to need all those countries, and we are going to need to communicate with them. English is not the only language of importance. We must learn their language, learn their world.

The series of issues that Abi mentions are echoed by the concern laid out in the American Academy of Arts and Science (2017) report regarding the teaching and learning of languages in the United States. The report repeats and highlights the importance of every student in the United States learning to speak a foreign language but is conscious of the various issues that complicate the attainment of this goal. Similar to Abi’s experience, the report declares that “One of the biggest obstacles to improved language learning is a national shortage of qualified teachers. Forty-four states and Washington, D.C., report that they cannot find enough qualified teachers to meet current needs” (p. ix). Abi’s foundational goal for her classroom, as she has been telling me, is the main point of the report, which mentions the ability of language learners to communicate because it “is critical to success in business, research, and international relations in the twenty-first century” (p. viii). Another strong statement the report makes that emphasizes Abi’s comments is that “the United States lags behind most nations of the world, including

European nations and China, in the percentage of its citizens who have some knowledge of a second language” (p. viii). For Abi, it is imperative to prepare students in world languages because by doing so we are preparing them for “the beautiful things in life, like culture, art, and friendships.” She highlights that foreign language teachers are helping people be more human and kinder with each other while preparing potential future teachers as they sit as students in the foreign language classroom. The American Academy of Arts and Science (2017) report offers as a main goal for the field to “increase the number of language teachers at all levels of education so that every child in every state has an opportunity to learn a language other than English” (p. 31).

Abi believes that we must “repackage” our product and sell it in more exciting and useful ways. This comment unsettles me because I, personally, do not like to hear my efforts as a teacher being discusses as commodity. Gray and Block (2013) investigate the neoliberal agenda in language teacher education and write,

the purpose of education from the neoliberal perspective is to service the economy through the production of “human capital” In other words, education is reconstrued as ultimately being about the production of workers with the skills and the dispositions necessary to compete in the global economy. . . . Students are increasingly seen as customers seeking a service and schools and teachers are, as a consequence, seen as service providers. As this metaphorical frame has been imposed (and accepted by sufficient numbers of key players in education, the media and beyond) the *semantic stretching* of keywords from the world of business referred to earlier has become commonplace Thus terms such as “outcomes,” “value added,” “knowledge transfer,” “the knowledge economy” and above all “accountability” have become part of the day-to-day vocabulary of education. (p. 120)

Therefore, it is not surprising that Abi uses this type of vocabulary because it has permeated every crevice of the make-up of every teacher in the United States. ACTFL published a document title *Making language our business* (2019), that promote and advocate for the teaching and learning of a language with the purpose of economical advantage. Therefore, this issue requires evaluation and reflection, but unfortunately, I am afraid, it gets lost within all the other much more present and pressing topics a foreign language teacher deals with day to day.

Abi continues discussing the state of foreign language in the United States and says, “We are still beating people over the head with grammar, and we are not changing with the times. We need to remake our field.” Still, she hears the complaints from her teachers who tell her,

“Abi, I don’t have a social life. I can’t find a boyfriend. I can’t find a husband because I am constantly grading, writing lesson plans, and preparing.” I don’t know who told them that teaching was an 8 to 5 job. I guess as students they left the school and thought their teachers did too. If you want an 8 to 5, you need to find yourself another job.

Abi thinks that perhaps future teachers are not getting a clear picture of what the profession requires. She mentioned that her local university is not sending qualified language teachers to her district. She believes that the language program still focuses on literature and grammar and sprinkles in a bit of linguistics and theories that only confuse students because they never get to see how these theories and teaching methodologies work, or not, in the physical classroom. This gets Abi to question the necessity for future teachers to still be driven by their university programs to focus on theory and method. She wonders how to resolve this disconnect between conceptually learning to teach a language and the actual hands-on practice. Abi says,

I think future teachers don’t like to take education courses because they feel that these courses are not preparing them to be teachers. My local university is requiring a year-

long student teacher experience, but people can't afford it. Imagine a whole year in the classroom without pay. So, people avoid it.

Abi continued,

We are now hiring individuals to teach that have not had any pedagogy or education classes. Probably, they never even meant to be teachers. They are hired to teach a language because they can speak it, but they have never thought about the process of language acquisition. They have never even taken the language in school, so they have not even experienced the language classroom before.

Swanson and Manson (2018) explore and present a tactic that has been used to alleviate teacher shortage, and they write,

Another prominent recruitment activity has been recruiting foreign nationals, a practice that has been mirrored in other countries. However, a review of such programs has concluded that the recruitment of such teachers is inequitable and ineffective for students, teachers, schools, and the United States' educational system. (p. 253)

These words resonate in my head as I hear Abi level with me and tell me that, many times, she just needs to keep people in the classroom, even if they are not doing a good job. She clarified that there is an abundance of teachers who are excellent and help advance the profession greatly. Promptly, Abi told me about a couple of her teachers who are “rock-stars” and who she feels blessed to have at her district. She notes that she continues to learn from them every time she visits their classrooms. She particularly boasts about one teacher who has completely changed the attitude of her students towards language. Abi told me that this teacher has energy and passion and her students “that used to be very obnoxious” are now talking extensively in the target language. Abi wishes she could send this teacher to conferences and workshops where she can continue learning and growing in the profession but tells me that her budget is limited so she

cannot even afford it for one teacher. This teacher would have to pay out of her pocket just like Abi does for her own professional development. Abi remarked, “I wish every one of my teachers could hear Greg Duncan, Laura Terrill, Eileen Glisan speak; attend one of their workshops. But unfortunately, it is the money that stops some of them or the lack of interest from others.” I asked Abi if she could tell me about her teachers, and I did not know what kind of Pandora’s box I was opening.

Abi explained that there is a shortage of foreign language teachers in her region, which the literature supports (American Academy of Arts and Science, 2017). Due to this, her district obtained a grant from the state to hire individuals to teach languages, particularly Spanish. So, about one third of her teachers are not certified yet and have a period of five years to complete their emergency certification program. Abi said that she has a former dentist, social worker, foreign service officer, and a couple of veterans, to name a few who teach in her district and are seeking this emergency certification. Basically, she oversees several individuals who never thought about teaching Spanish before. Also, some of these individuals are new immigrants to the United States and must dedicate time to successfully prove their language proficiency in English to proceed with their certification program.

Compounded with this issue, Abi also has under her wing teachers who are certified in other fields but not in Spanish. Out of field teaching has been investigated widely (Ingersoll & Gruber, 1996; Ingersoll 1998, 2001, 2002, 2003) and presents a series of problems fundamentally rooted in the lack of mastery in the field the individual is embarking on teaching. Under these conditions, Abi is responsible for leading these various individuals’ situations and guiding them in their progress towards certification, charging her as the main source of preparation, training, and development of their classroom practices. In essence, Abi is tasked with introducing them to the entire field of foreign language education, and that is a colossal

task. Abi told me that she tried to caution her district about these hiring tactics, but again, Abi and the district needed teachers in the classroom regardless of their preparation, background, training, and certification status.

Due to the various needs of Abi's teachers, she has devised lesson plan templates that allow her teachers to think about all modes of communication in combination with the skills, the 5 C's, and state standards. She explains that, if teachers plan correctly, they would not only comply with what is requested from them, but they would also be practicing for part of the state examinations they must successfully complete to become certified language teachers. Abi delivers an array of professional development to her teachers that strives to cover the diverse aspects of the language classroom, such as, classroom management, language acquisition, unit development, creation of materials, just to name a few. She also does a great amount of modeling on an individual basis while visiting a particular teacher's classroom.

Besides providing practical teacher development, Abi also must manage the personal dynamics of her teachers. Abi said,

I find that my heritage language teachers from Texas, and surrounding areas, are not very patient and feel very uncomfortable with the native speaker teachers. Whereas, my second language learner teachers, who are Anglo and don't come from Hispanic/Latin background, are fascinated by the native speaker teachers. These Anglo teachers take them under their wing and help them. But I keep my new native speaker teachers separate during development because my veteran teachers show them bad habits.

The issue of native vs. non-native speakers teaching a foreign language has been, again, investigated deeply, but perhaps its most relevant researcher has been Kramsch (1997, 2006a, 2006b). She asserts that a native-like production of a language has become irrelevant because successful communication does not need or require this kind and type of production in our

plurilingual societies. Besides, sometimes, the non-native speaker may have a broader perspective of the language and culture as they move from one language to another (Kramsch, 1997).

Abi also explained that some veteran teachers share lessons and activities with the new teachers, but these activities only provide busy work for students and prevent the new teachers from tapping into their creativity and innovation. Abi says,

These veteran teachers are stuck in the past with their handouts and verb walls. They are still not promoting and focusing on communication in their classrooms. Their students act bad because they are bored to death and they are off task. Then, they wonder and complain about getting bad evaluations.

Abi's eyes wandered off as she tells me about her concerns for her teachers. She worries for her newly arrived native speaker teachers who lack patience with outspoken, unresponsive, rebellious teenage students. Abi is fearful that she will lose some teachers because they are not able to fathom the lack of respect they get from their students. She is also concerned for them because some are not developing their English skills fast enough, and they are going to run out of time regarding their certification process. Dunn (2013) comments on the cultural shock that many international teachers experience when they teach in the United States, highlighting that this is a great source of attrition for these teachers.

Abi worries for some of her teachers who must also coach a sport in addition to their teaching load. Abi tells me that she has a couple of coaches who would be amazing language teachers, but because they must divide their time between the field and the classroom, it is usually the classroom that suffers through lack of attention and effort. She thought of this wonderful "rock-star" teacher who provides amazing support to her beginner language learners. Sadly, this teacher has failed the Spanish language examination that prevents her from getting

certified, and Abi thinks that she will lose her position. Abi said, “I don’t need her to teach AP Spanish literature. I just need her to teach Spanish 1, and she is wonderful at that.” Abi told me about this other teacher who she does not think will return to the classroom because of health issues. Some of her teachers wish to move campuses because of the volatile and unstable student body, and this will leave classrooms without teachers. Abi worries that she will also lose teachers because they will be looking for better paying jobs. She tells me that some of her teachers have weekend jobs to make ends meet.

The retention of teachers is a critical topic for the development, sustainability, and success of any educational program. S. Mason (2017) presents a deep analysis of the attrition and retention of foreign language teachers. In her article, she asked three main questions, and the second question focuses on the reason why teachers leave or stay in their positions. Mason offers seven themes, “(1) teacher preparation, (2) transition to teaching, (3) teacher knowledge and skills, (4) workplace and employment factors, (5) value and belonging, (6) supportive workplace relationships, and (7) teacher personality traits” (p. 54). Abi’s teachers, and her fears of losing one or several of them, fall in each of these themes. I can see how some of her teachers may not be easily transitioning into the position or may not feel supported, highlighted by their loneliness as the only language teacher in their school, their personal expectations for the position, and perhaps not feeling that their work is valued. Abi faces daily a herculean task to support and keep her teachers from leaving the profession, and many of her efforts mentioned above work towards that goal.

Above all these issues, Abi is hopeful and knows that her efforts make an impact with some of her teachers. She knows that her work and support is developing, sustaining, and growing teachers in their practices. Abi said, “Some teachers send me messages telling all about

a good activity in class; how they can see that their students liked a task they introduced. This makes me happy. It helps me come back to my job tomorrow.”

I asked Abi about her summer. She told me that she will be trying to hire new teachers that she can't find. Also, she will spend much of the summer inquiring about teachers' progress in their certification programs. She also thinks that one day she will be back in the classroom because she misses teaching Spanish to students. For the moment, she will be helping her daughter choose a college not too far but not too close to home. She again reached across the table and patted my hand; my face was contorted with worry again. We stepped out of the coffee house, and Abi gave me a hug goodbye and told me to be careful on my long drive home through the vastness of the state of Texas.

Tana's story: Baptism by Fire

Our strength lies in shifting perspectives, in our capacity to shift, in our “seeing through” the membrane of the past superimposed on the present, in looking at our shadows and dealing with them.

(Anzaldúa, 2009, p. 138)

Tana is a mature woman with short salt and pepper hair. Her eyes are bright and wide open behind her glasses that she adjusts often with a quick wiggle to the side of one of the lenses. She sits up exceptionally straight directly across from me with her hands clasped and resting on the table completely attentive to my presence. Tana engages me with some small talk, and my trepidation about interviewing her quickly dissipates making room for comfort and calm. Tana's serene demeanor helps render these feelings and sets the tone for our chat. Her extensive career spans four decades, but now, after being a teacher and administrator in public education, she trains current foreign language teachers around the United States while enjoying her retirement.

She is also an accomplished author, and her work has significantly impacted the way foreign language is taught in the United States. Tana taught French for many years, but since moving into administration and teacher training, she has focused on developing teachers' perceptions, techniques, and approaches to teaching that directly impact and increase students' foreign language proficiency and performance. Even though Tana claims she is retired, she spends much of her time deeply involved with several local and national associations that are fundamental to foreign language teachers in the country.

Tana describes herself as naturally inquisitive and curious but also as an introvert, which I cannot believe. She commands the attention of rooms filled with hundreds of people who hang on each word she utters, and she does this without a hint of discomfort or nervousness. Tana's introvert dispositions, however, result in a need to guard her cherished alone and silent time away from the distraction of human interaction. She believes this derives from her nomadic childhood that took 20 different moves covering every corner of the continental United States. This many relocations stems from Tana's father's fluid job opportunities, which created a dual introverted/extroverted deportment. Tana presumes that her continuous encounters with new situations and experiences caused her to find solace from the constant newness of her daily life and made her treasure her solitude and quietness with herself.

Tana ended up settling in the Midwest, but this was not until college. Around this time, her parents were in the process of divorcing, and she decided to stay close to home to live with her mother and support her emotionally after the separation. Tana's father was a strong influence in her life and held high expectations for her. He was the one who suggested Tana learn French because of Tana's profound love of reading. According to her father, by learning French, Tana would be able to read great authors in their primary language. Still, her father was not very happy that Tana chose teaching as her profession. Tana said about her father,

He was very much of the thought that women should do what women want to do and women should be equal ... sort of ... in some things. I think he thought I was settling for a traditional women's role, and maybe I was. I mean, I don't know because I am right at the generation where there still weren't a lot of careers open for women ... I think he thought there was something else I could do, but I liked it, and I liked the kids.

Tana describes her mother as a deeply understanding and accepting person who was a stay-at-home mother and wife and whose opportunities were limited since she did not pursue a college degree. Tana, being witness to her mother's limiting roles, knew that she needed to have a college degree and a professional career. The importance of education trickled down towards Tana's husband who she pushed to attend college to acquire his degree. Tana did not want to repeat her parents' marital situation and the conflicts that arose due to one person in the marriage being educated but not the other. Tana's nuclear family is intensely important to her, but she does not offer much information about her two adult children, which reflects her introverted private demeanor.

Tana tells me that, in addition to facing the disappointment from her father when she decided to become a teacher, a high school counselor also told Tana that she should not pursue this profession. She says,

Yes. She said that to me, and that stuck with me. You know. You are impressionable, and she gave me two reasons: I was too shy, and I was too smart. Therefore, I would not have an appreciation for struggling learners because it came so easily to me. So, when I went to school (college), I did not even know what I was going to study, because I loved French, and I wanted to teach it, but here is this person saying don't teach.

Even after the counselor's ill advice, Tana decided to take a few education courses and proceeded to embark on a study abroad program that took her to France. Tana recalls this

experience as life changing and eye opening because she says, “I thought I knew French.” Tana recounts that she pushed herself to interact with native French speakers and practiced constantly with her roommates and classmates from around the globe who were also there to learn French.

Upon her return to the United States, Tana hastily completed her education and French courses along with her student teaching, which was peculiar. Tana detailed her student teaching experience,

I went back to the district where I had been a student. So, I was in a district where they used a very communicative method of teaching languages, under an excellent, very cooperative teacher; and it was a good experience. Unfortunately for her, she became seriously ill, or someone close to her, for four weeks while I was there. This gave me the opportunity to oversee the class and teach. The school hired a substitute to meet the legal requirements, but it was great because now I did not have someone telling me what to do and could try my own thing.

Tana holds this experience as pivotal to her teacher training, preparation, and education. Wright (2010) presents the work of Szesztay (2004) who argues “that teachers are most likely to develop their knowledge of teaching by engaging in teaching—an intuitive and contextual-sensitive process,” (p. 269) and adds that the knowledge acquired in formal preparation teaching courses is much less impactful than teaching experience. Similarly, Tana has strong opinions regarding this influential experience for teachers. She says,

The more internship teachers have, the better off they will be, but I think there must be a strong connection between the placement and the intern so that theory and practice can come together. I think that this is missing. We still don’t have a way to place our teachers into high quality classroom experiences. We used to have lab schools on campus, and we knew that if teachers went and observed there, they would receive best practices that

match theory and practice. Now, we are doing one without the other, and this does not work.

As Tana points out, the disconnect at many levels of this necessary relation problematizes the process of training and educating future and current foreign language teachers.

The necessity to offer and receive proper teacher training, preparation, and education caused Tana to reminisce about her early teaching days. She used the words “baptism by fire” to describe her first teaching job, which was in an elementary classroom at a Catholic school. Tana had absolutely no experience teaching this grade level, and her lack of confidence in her performance and proficiency of the language filled her with trepidation. Tana also recalls encountering difficulties balancing the teacher-disciplinarian roles. She tells me that her classes at the Catholic elementary school were divided by gender, so she had some classes exclusively with boys and some exclusively with girls. Quickly, she learned what worked for one class would not necessarily work for another, and she needed to adapt and shift according to students’ needs, which disrupted her preconceived teaching plan. To aggravate things, this school had no set curriculum or any materials to aid her in teaching French, so Tana had to prepare all lessons and manipulatives from scratch for her classes, which covered all levels of performance and proficiency of the language. Tana was the only French teacher at the school, which was isolating, but this also made her keenly aware of her responsibility to develop students’ language skills year to year. Tana said through laughs that she did not have other language teachers to blame for students’ shortcomings because if she did, she would only be blaming her own self.

Tana continues telling me about her experience at the elementary Catholic school and fondly remembers being deeply engaged at school, in the community, and in after-school activities, which provided her with a vast repertoire of interactive opportunities with her

students, but more important, it gave her the flexibility to perfect her teacher-student relationships. Tana said,

This teaching experience ultimately made me a stronger teacher. By the time I got into a new teaching position, I could write curriculum because I had done it before. I could establish and manage student relationships because I had practice. This experience was tough. By being the only French teacher at the school caused me to reach for professional growth because there was no one to talk to. This got me involved in local organizations, and that is where my path took two trajectories. I decided that I was going to be a teacher and that I also wanted to be an involved professional. Being the only teacher, I needed stimulation. I needed input because I knew I didn't know what I was doing.

This set of decisions places Tana, once again, in a forward-looking conversation that starts to question the validity of teaching as a profession exemplified by her desire to merge the practice with the craft of teaching, which can legitimize the profession. Tana view what seem divergent paths and wished to value and grow in both enable us to see the paradox of *Nepantla* at work.

Anzaldúa (2015) writes,

En este lugar entre medio, nepantla, two or more forces clash and are held teetering on the verge of chaos, a state of *entreguerras*. These tensions between extremes create cracks or tears in the membrane surrounding, protecting, and containing the different cultures. (p. 56)

The work of the *Nepantlera* is to find the thread, the similarities and nuances that connect opposite views that offer, produce, and advance knowledge; *conocimiento*. Anzaldúa writes about *conocimiento*: “*Conocimiento*, the more difficult path, leads to awakening, insights, understandings, realizations, courage, and the motivation to engage in concrete ways with the potential to bring us into compassionate interactions” (p. 19). Tana, in her search for

conocimiento, understood that these two divergent definitions of what teaching was, and perhaps still is, needed to converge. This issue regarding the disparate paths of teaching has been discussed for some time, and the literature in foreign language teaching does not propose any type of change or engagement in the efforts to support the practice of teaching to move into the profession of teaching; foreign language follows the fields of Education and ESL in any efforts to progress the practice into a profession.

Tana recounts her good fortune to then move to a job in which she worked under the leadership of a teacher who believed language was about communication, which was still not the approach to teaching a foreign language. It was in this district that, for the first time, she used a textbook and ancillary materials for her classes. At this moment, Tana realized that having the opportunity to teach in her previous job without the imposition of a textbook or a set curriculum allowed her to utilize her own creativity and innovation to lead and teach her classes. Tana says,

It was not a bad thing (the textbook). But thank goodness I had three years of thinking for myself. I still think that one of the main problems in teaching is that, once you are handed the book, you no longer ask yourself how to teach. The textbook shows you how and it becomes ingrained.

The role of the textbook in developing, supporting, and guiding the construction and delivery of curriculum has been investigated in many fields. Ornstein (1994) notes, “Many of today’s teachers, while better educated than their predecessors, sometimes lack the time or training to prepare new materials; thus, they continue to rely on the textbook and workbook. (p. 70). Ornstein continues,

The textbook is an acceptable tool for instruction as long as it is selected with care and is kept in proper perspective so that it is not viewed as the only source of knowledge, and it does not turn into the curriculum. (p. 70)

Tana agrees completely. and she reminds me that teachers must teach what students will use in daily encounters and that many times textbooks will not provide the teacher with what is necessary to accomplish this task. She also mentions that teachers should have a hand in creating curriculum for their classes and for their programs, but she adds,

If you are handed a textbook and you don't know how to teach, you will not know what to do with this tool. If you are handed a curriculum and you don't know how to teach, you will not know what to do with this tool. Therefore, we must focus on teachers being proficient at their craft.

I asked Tana about what knowledge would be necessary for a successful foreign language teacher to have in order to teach. She stares at me and reminds me that this question had been asked by experts for years without any real consensus. She is certain that knowing how to teach cannot be reduced to a list of best practices, but it would be more beneficial for teachers to understand core fundamentals of language learning and how they interrelate to produce language. She mentions that the StarTalk project has a list of seven tenets that teachers are encouraged to understand and analyze.

StarTalk is a project that was begun in 2006 by the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI) to promote the learning and teaching of less common languages. The efforts of this initiative are not surprising considering the United States needs to understand and communicate with nations and communities that speak Chinese, Arabic, and Urdu, among other languages spoken in regions of the world where the country had military and economic interest. A visit to StarTalk's website will show a rich reservoir of supportive materials for foreign language teachers, but monies for further pedagogical or language training and education is solely dedicated to teachers of less commonly known languages, leaving a lot of foreign language teachers out of these opportunities. Practicum pedagogical programs with supportive observation

are highly promoted but focus on teachers for less commonly known languages only. Tana comments that StarTalk teachers are provided with individual guidance about implementing good teaching behaviors in the classroom that are detailed on the website and in the TELL program (Teacher Effectiveness for Language Learning, n.d.). This is a framework with seven principles that combine will display “behaviors that model teachers exhibit” (n.p.).

Tana’s comments again on teachers’ need to witness good teaching and her relish for Lab Schools. Tana says,

Teachers don’t need to know everything about teaching to walk into a classroom, but they do need to know how to put a lesson together. I try to focus on that in my trainings. I focus on everything that surrounds a good lesson. You don’t have to write the unit, the curriculum, the lesson, but you need to be able to deliver a 30, or 60, or 90 minute lesson and make sure students are learning. Student learning is the critical piece.

Wilbur (2007), regarding the lack of teaching abilities, comments, “even equipped with a high level of L2 fluency, without the ability to engage students, all that remains is a subject area expert, not a teacher” (p. 88). Tana likewise raises the complicated association between teaching and learning. These concepts and their definitions are infinite. Teaching is described by hooks (2014) as a,

performative act To embrace the performative aspect of teaching we are compelled to engage “audiences,” to consider issue of reciprocity. Teachers are not performers in the traditional sense of the word in that our work is not meant to be a spectacle. Yet it is meant to serve as a catalyst that calls everyone to become more and more engaged, to become active participants in learning. (p. 11)

Jarvis and Holford (2003) describe learning as, “the process through which we become the human beings we are, the process by which we internalize the external world and through which

we construct our experiences of that world” (p. viii). This reciprocal act among participants, the alliance to create and understand the world, is where teaching and learning flourish. Still, this definition is constructed under a contentious and precarious foundation because after all, everyone has a unique perception and understanding of the world, making the process essentially difficult to explain, demonstrate, and validate its success or failure. For example, Tana tells me that, out of all those decades of teaching, she perhaps had 365 good and successful classes. Tana and no one will be able to verify the statistic she has of her teaching, but we are left with her sense, feeling, and perception of her teaching.

Tana notes that at about her 18th year of teaching, she had a class that was causing her a lot of trouble. Activities did not work, and students seemed demoralized, annoyed, and frustrated. Tana could not figure out what was happening. She had another teacher come to see her class, but nothing evident came out of the observation. Tana then began to look at her activities, gradebook, and sequence. She realized that she was not connecting her lessons to the needs of her students, and this made her reflect. Tana finds reflection pivotal to every teacher’s practice, and this comes up frequently in our conversation. She says,

You can’t reflect unless there is provocation, and our discipline is so isolated that only the best school and students can provide a teacher with the right amount of provocation and instability to need and want to reflect. The best schools create a certain level of tension on their teachers that demands teachers’ attention and reflection.

Unfortunately, Tana believes that teachers simply do not have time to reflect. Tana asserts that teachers are overwhelmed by the endless miniscule duties that the profession demands, and at some point, teachers are simply moving through the lessons without being conscious of what, how, and why they are teaching what they are teaching. Tana strategically implements pauses and asks teachers to take a few minutes to reflect on what they are discussing and learning during

her workshops. Tana tells me, “They have not thought about how to teach. They teach the book, or they teach how and what they were taught.” Tana believes the few minutes that she provides teachers to reflect during the workshop could be the only time some teachers were ever asked to think about their classroom practices. Tana also senses that many teachers can and do strive for perfection, and when these teachers reflect on their practices, they are very self-critical and focused on all the negative issues and not in the positive ones. Tana wants teachers to bring a balance into these two opposing spectrums. She is certain that the questions teachers should be asking themselves need to start with what is working in their classroom, why it is working, how teachers can expand on this success, what hurdles impede progress, and what tools are needed to produce and start change.

Tana is kindly aware of the difficulty of these questions and the necessary processes that must take place that eventually will provide answers. Tana tells me with deep urgency that many teachers may not seek or acquire the appropriate support to answer these questions. She says,

Many teachers are in districts that do not have a supervisor or any kind of person that can give them support, training, and feedback on their teaching practices. They could have a background on social studies who were given world languages responsibilities. Also, we (the field) are putting native speakers into language classrooms who have no background in teaching, pedagogy, or language acquisition. This creates real challenges for all involved: the teacher, the program, administration, the students.

Therefore, Tana advises that administrators, future language coordinators, and future language trainers must be in the classroom as much as possible before moving into leadership positions. These individuals must frequently observe diverse teaching experiences to gain perspective about what the profession demands. Tana recounts that, once she moved into administration, her learning curve was high, and she begged her supervisors for intense learning and evaluation.

Tana's administrative career began with her involvement in various committees and initiatives that made her administration notice her willingness and drive for professional improvement. Even though Tana had small children at the time, she took on the challenges of these new projects that eventually landed her in administration as language coordinator and later in a curriculum development position. She recalls needing to learn about TESOL and ESL since her positions demanded she lead and support teachers within these fields. She also learned and acquired knowledge from the field of education that broadened her pedagogical and practical application. Simply put, Tana widened her perspective of teaching. She had to in order to help the people she was to lead in the profession. Due to this, Tana had to look deep into her past experiences as a teacher and take inventory of the good, the bad, and the ugly and make sense of the impact her decision made on others. She recalls,

I was at a school board meeting talking about our new curriculum, and I said to them (the board), "so if you took two years of language and you can't speak the language, that was our fault. We (teachers) taught it wrong." At the end of the meeting people came to me and told me, "You just absolved me of my guilt about not being able to speak another language." This cannot happen; this is why we lose students from the language classroom.

Tana experienced and harvested the rewards of these crossings. She emphatically reminds administrators to allow teachers time to reflect, but she urges for them to provide foreign language teachers even more. She wants administrators to realize that preparation for foreign language teachers is essential since communicative teaching and learning requires continuous creation, innovation, and evaluation. What can be used in the language classroom one class period may not be relevant for the next class, let alone from year to year. She says,

When I was in the classroom all those years, I wished I would have known that, what they (leadership) was presenting as doable, is and was not doable. That realistically, with 180 plus students, it is not possible to implement certain initiatives. So, we need to be realistic and do what we can within the confines of what we have.

Tana is author of a key text in the field of foreign language in the United States that advocates for (de)(re)construction of curriculum and the creation and development of support materials, which she finds as a foundational practice for teachers since they are experts in what should and will happen in their classroom due to their knowledge of students' goals and expectations. Having read Tana's well-known text, I would describe her approach to teaching utilizing Crandall's (2000) words, "a reflective model by which teachers reflect upon, evaluate, and adapt their own practices" (p. 37). Attaining this panoramic view of teaching has taken Tana most of her career, and it is a great help for future and current foreign language teachers to read and understand her work so that it does not take our entire careers to accomplish perhaps only a sliver of what she has been able to realize and accomplish.

Tana emphasizes that teachers and students now have an infinite hub of information and resources to develop their language skills due to technology advancements and notes that is imperative for teachers to become in tune with what will capture students' attention and desire to know. Tana remarks that students' desire to communicate in the target language must be the main objective of the language classroom and asserts that this is doable at every level of acquisition. She thinks is imperative that language teachers remind their students that learning a language is fun and wishes that teachers create language activities that prove to our students that knowing a foreign language is enjoyable and essential to our lives. Tana asserts that teaching grammar rules and verb lists simply will not and cannot tap into students' interest and motivation to learn. She believes that if teachers do not change traditional ways of teaching foreign

language and do not adapt and transform their practices to meet the needs and capture the attention of students, the field of foreign language will be in great danger of becoming obsolete.

She says,

Our country is in trouble if we don't get these kids to change their thinking about global citizenship and the need for languages. We can vote, and we can do advocacy. We can try to contact our law makers, but our best advocates are sitting in our classrooms. If we don't change our practices, I don't care how many arms we twist, coding will be the new foreign language because we don't have a generation out there saying "What do you mean coding is going to take the place of learning a foreign language? How absurd! My life would not be the same if I didn't have my second language."

Tana's comment about coding references to ACTFL's (2017) announcement that stated the discontent with many state educational agencies that supported the replacement of a foreign language requirement with a computer science language. I ask her to expand on this topic,

I think we (foreign language field) are not appreciated and are undervalued in the education system as a discipline, but this is a broad statement. This is not only a problem that comes from foreign language teacher practices. I think they (teachers) lack administration that truly understands the complexity of the job. Some administrators have not been in the profession long, and it becomes easy for them to say when they have never really done it (teach).

This comment connects to what Tana already mentioned about the need for administrators to develop their practices by spending many years in the classroom before moving into administrative positions. She adds that many language teachers do not do a good job at guiding students to think about the process of acquiring a language.

Tana also thinks that this is because teachers themselves do not connect language acquisition principles to their practices. Tana reminds me that many foreign language teachers learn about how to teach the language as they teach it to their students. As teachers teach, they begin to see patterns in the construction of the language they had not noticed before when they themselves acquired the language. Tana believes that teachers need to capitalize on these moments and share their personal language acquisition moments with their students. By making this connection, students can become aware of their language acquisition and feel empowered as they learn more, not only the foreign language, but any other subject. Carter (2003) describes language awareness as, “development in learners of an enhanced consciousness of a sensitivity to the forms and functions of language” (p. 64). Wright and Bolitho (1993) write,

A linguistically-aware teacher will be in a strong and secure position to accomplish various tasks—preparing lessons; evaluating, adapting, and writing materials; understanding, interpreting, and ultimately designing a syllabus or curriculum; testing and assessing learners’ performance; and contributing to English language work across the curriculum. Indeed, we suspect that successful *communicative* teaching depends more than ever on a high level of language awareness in a teacher due to the richness and complexity of a “communicative view.” (p. 292).

Even if these two authors do not focus on foreign language, their findings confirm Tana’s words regarding the necessary preparation that teachers must have to teach a foreign language and highlight her reservations regarding native speakers without any formal preparation to teach the language.

These remarks prompt me to ask Tana about her own teaching training. She began by describing her French program as a traditional combination of language development and literature analysis and appreciation. Tana believes that soon to be teachers do not need to be

expert in language acquisition or linguistics, but she does not believe that a program that is literature-focused is appropriate to produce good foreign language teachers. Being enrolled in a program of this nature herself, she knows that she did not receive the necessary pedagogical experiences and support to be a successful foreign language teacher. Tana reminds me of the Modern Language Association stance that language teaching and learning should be matched with language usage in the workplace. The MLA (2007) *Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Language* says,

The standard configuration of university foreign language curricula, in which a two—or three-year language sequence feeds into a set of core courses primarily focused on canonical literature, also represents a narrow model. The configuration defines both the curriculum and the governance structure of language departments and creates a division between the language curriculum and the literature curriculum and between tenure-track literature professors and language instructors in non tenure-track positions. (p. 2)

Tana believes that literature helps students understand a country's culture and history, but non-fiction texts can bridge these components and provide students with a closer perspective of events. Tana adds, "I learned a lot in my literature courses, but I did not use this knowledge as I was walking around Paris. So, if it does not work in the streets of Paris, why are you teaching it?" She adds,

Literature is important. It is history and it gives you a perspective of the world at that particular time. Fiction is nice, but you must be able to read non-fiction to learn about the world. If we accept the research that most males are interested in non-fiction, then that could explain why so many males drop out of our language programs.

Tana wishes more undergraduate programs paid attention to the research and advice of national associations that encourage the implementation of major curriculum changes that decreases the

emphasis of literature and shifts its efforts toward usage of the language in the workplace by proficiency in communication. These gaps in the curriculum exacerbate the tension not only within department units, since every member of the faculty has interests and investments that pull in divergent directions, but also with future teachers who may feel underprepared and overwhelmed by the material they are being exposed to and how their program content does not support the target they must reach for teaching certification. These views and positions are a major issue within the field with no apparent solution.

I asked Tana to describe her curriculum goals and objectives of her workshops and training seminars. Tana explained that there are many conversations with the organizers of these training events about what they aim to accomplish. Each site has its own goals, and Tana must accommodate their request. Overall, Tana tries to instill in teachers the need to continuously assess what is valuable for students to do in and out of the classroom. For example, Tana interrogates the value of homework especially in a language classroom where communicative proficiency is the objective. Tana questions the type of homework that will have to be assigned to support this objective. She also questions the socioeconomical differences among students and how this trickles down to the successful completion of homework. She wonders if, by giving homework, teachers adversely help to widen the gap among students' success in school. Therefore, Tana encourages teachers in her workshops to work smart for themselves and their students. She says,

We know that millennials are coming in with a different set of expectations of what they want their career to be. There is a tendency to say, they (millennials) don't work as hard as I did, and they don't put as many hours, or they protect their weekends. Well, you know, maybe I should have done that too.

I asked Tana to tell me how her teaching has changed with time. She surprised me by saying that maybe she should have never become a teacher. She recounts how, at the beginning of her teaching practice, her language proficiency was not high and that she perhaps would have not been able to meet the standard now required for teachers to enter the language classroom. Garcia et al. (2019) investigated the passing rate for future foreign language teachers seeking expectation for the language in which they were seeking certification—perhaps explaining why some state certification officers opted to reduce, ignore, or replace the recommended standard” (p. 169). This creates grave issues because it is then difficult to tell who is teaching foreign language, at what level of proficiency, and what kind of support they need to grow in the profession.

Tana has had the opportunity to visit and spend a considerable amount of time abroad, which has helped to maintain and further develop her language proficiency. She also understands that this is an exception and sadly not the norm. Phillips (1991) supports this conclusion:

Teachers of foreign languages recognize that improving their proficiency in the target language is a never-ending process. Regardless of the skill levels they possess, new communicative tasks in the second language continue to challenge them. Recently, the advent of performance descriptions in the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (1986) has provided teachers with new ways of evaluating their language skills. As curriculum, too, emphasizes performance outcomes, teachers find they must be able to comprehend and convey messages in real world contexts larger than those of textbooks and carefully controlled lessons on vocabulary and grammar. Unfortunately, numbers of teachers find that they come up short when measured on this yardstick. Their inadequacies can often be traced to having learned the target language under different paradigms and for different reasons. (p. 2)

These words were written thirty years ago but Tana's experiences confirm that this issue still plagues the development of foreign language teachers. She suspects that perhaps the field is losing capable individuals who could be fabulous teachers, but since they don't meet certain skills, they are turned away. She thinks that there should be more opportunities to support foreign language teachers' development while at work, especially those in minority populations. Huhn (2012) cites the work of Glisan (2002) and relates,

some of the reasons for proficiency ratings of teacher candidates do not reach the Advanced level. She cited the fact that many postsecondary language programs still emphasize either language or literature content in isolation, many lack a well-designed study abroad requirement, and many do not require high levels of proficiency as an exit requirement. (p. 168)

The endless loop of (dis)connection that directly affects foreign language teachers' education, training, and development becomes palpable and evident as Tana shares her experiences and they are compared with the field's research.

I sit there quiet for a moment thinking about Tana's words, but sensing my trepidation over her words, she quickly tells me that she thought about leaving administration to get back to the classroom. It was harder and harder for her to find satisfaction in her position because she could not get the feedback that a teacher needs and gets from teaching students. Tana told me that she enjoyed supporting the teachers in her district, and she saw how her job was important, but her duties were repetitive, and they started to become unfulfilling. Assessing and evaluating her work now as a trainer is difficult as well, especially when some teachers in her workshops are there for what we, she and I, call "forced training." This "forced training" is when teachers are directed to take the training. Tana tells me that these trainings require a different approach than a workshop she would provide at a major conference. The "forced training" requires for

Tana to provide vivid and applicable examples of activities and language acquisition concepts teachers can perform and apply in their classroom right away. Tana recognizes that, at the beginning of her training career, she was “awful at adding to their (teachers) bags.” With time, she understood that just giving them activities that had worked for her will not necessarily help teachers in their practice. Therefore, Tana now presents opportunities in her workshops for teachers to reflect on what they are discussing and how this would look or even work in their classrooms. Tana knows it is not productive to send teachers back to their classrooms with an infinite number of activities because they may feel overwhelmed, which can deter them from application. Tana desires for teachers to consider again what they will be able to implement and advises them to take small steps toward implementation.

Crandall (2000) says, “However, neither traditional education nor training are sufficient; also needed are opportunities for teachers to reflect upon their beliefs and practices and to construct and reconstruct their personal theories of language teaching and learning” (p. 37). Tana reminds me that many foreign language teachers that attend her workshop are,

Dedicated language teachers that care deeply for their students and the profession, but there is a camp that does not want to change, does not see why we need to change, and that division hurts the field, and at the moment the field has momentum because more teachers are showing examples that changes in practice do work. Despite the efforts to reach all teachers, there are people unwilling to change.

Tana declares that the field of foreign language teaching is transitioning, and she does not doubt it is going in the right direction. She adds, “I think we can change the culture of the profession because I think we already have business on our side. We have parents on our side. What we don’t have is education, and that is sad.”

Tana's comment regarding not having the support of the field of education refers to the split between these two fields regarding the education, training, and development of foreign language teachers. Tedick (2009) quotes the words of Morain (1990) and writes,

“The two divisions of academe most responsible for the preparation of foreign language teachers—colleges of education and foreign language departments—often seem to represent separate cultures, each with a different worldview, a different set of heroes, and enough differences in tribal rites to generate authentic culture shock in a visitor from the other culture” (p. 20). Although this is an exaggeration, the lack of thoughtful coordination between these two camps that are jointly responsible for preparing teachers is evident. (p. 265)

Tana reminds me that foreign language is underappreciated and that we need to build connections with those fields that can best prepare teachers for the realities of the classroom. She tells me,

Teaching is hard. You must have a deep belief that no one is doing wrong intentionally. You (teachers) are doing the best that you know how to do with what you know in the moment. The trick is can you learn something new and change that? That is learning. Are you stuck? Why can't you change?

Anzaldúa (2009) says, “Our strength lies in shifting perspectives, in our capacity to shift, in our ‘seeing through’ the membrane of the past superimposed on the present, in looking at our shadows and dealing with them” (p. 138). Shifts and changes come with ups and downs, lows and highs, pain and happiness, and all are necessary. Tana knows that she is not alone in her efforts to improve the field of foreign language. Therefore, if she is unable to make a significant impact on her workshop participants, she is sure that she at least has offered a moment of reflection on their practices. Tana's peaceful contentedness with her work is visible and radiates

though her bright smile. I asked her about her plans for the next few months, and she rattles off a list of presentations and workshops around the country but reminds me that she is happily retired. I think we have different definitions of retirement.

Jinni's Story: Oops

There are many roles, or ways of being, of acting, and of interacting in the world. For me they boil down to four basic roles: bridge, drawbridge, sandbar, and island. Being a bridge means being mediator between yourself and your community Often the you that's the mediator gets lost in the dichotomies, dualities, or contradictions you're mediating. You have to be flexible yet maintain your ground, or the pull in different directions will dismember you. It's a tough job; not many people can keep the bridge up.

(Anzaldúa, 2009, p. 145)

From the first moment she utters a word, I cannot not keep my eyes away from her. She captivates my senses. Her voice is soft and inviting which alleviated my anxiety of having never met her before. Her laugh is short and has a deep tone that encourages me to smile. Her posture is that of a dancer. She sits perfectly straight with her shoulders open, and when she crosses her legs, she shortens the space between us as she leans forward providing me with her undivided attention. Her arms, hands, and fingers wave around helping accentuate her words and enlarge her small frame. But it is her eyes and expressive face that unveils her as a performer. With her gaze, she brings life to her words, emphasizes her questions, accentuates her propositions, and affirms her positions. Seeing her artistic body converse saddens me for her students who cannot indulge in her physical presence since, for a while now, Jinni has taught exclusively on-line.

Linguistics is Jinni's field of knowledge, as she holds a doctorate in Second Language Acquisition that she completed in her home state far from where she now calls home. She is an extremely busy person with enormous responsibilities since she oversees several programs

composed of students from all over the world that offer an array of advanced degrees in foreign language teaching. I met Jinni in three different cities in the United States, which exemplifies her busy schedule that is further complicated by being a single mother of two young boys. Her direct expertise in the classroom lies in teaching English as a second language, but her life experiences provide her with a wealth of information about language acquisition and foreign language teaching.

Jinni grew up in an English monolingual home. She studied a foreign language in high school and obtained college credit for those courses. She did not feel comfortable and capable to step into the advanced literature and linguistics college courses offered, and in hindsight, she wishes she would have made herself take the language courses again, create a better relationship with the faculty in the program, and expand to the fullest her language development. During her undergraduate work, Jinni had a study abroad experience, but it was to an English-speaking country. There, she got to meet people from all over the world, and her curiosity about other languages and cultures exploded.

After graduating college with a degree in theater, Jinni decided to go to a country in Europe and teach English for a couple of years. The organization that she enrolled to teach with provided English as a second language teaching and intercultural training to better prepare her and her classmates for the immersion teaching experience. A teaching practicum was also offered by this program, and Jinni remembers getting helpful and positive feedback about her classroom teaching skills, which augmented her willingness to embark in this quest. At the end of the program, she received her certification to teach English as a second language and promptly packed her bags and went off to start her teaching career in a European country. Jinni told me that she is not the adventurous type, but she felt no trepidation regarding this choice since it was

not going to be something permanent and she could end her teaching duties anytime and return home. Ultimately, she spent a little over four years teaching abroad.

During this period, Jinni was embedded in communities with very few English speakers, which helped speed up her second language acquisition. Also, the extension of her teaching duties and traveling through Europe gave her the chance to be in contact with and acquire different degrees of proficiency in many different languages: French, Italian, Polish, German, Serbian, Czech, Russian, and a bit of Spanish. I was impressed by Jinni's plurilingual skills, but I was amazed about the fact that she has also learned Arabic and Japanese, and one day she wishes to try her skills at Vietnamese and Korean. Collins and Muñoz (2016) cite several studies that argue "that the multilingual individual may become the model of instruction" (p. 141), because this person's metalinguistic awareness is heightened, and they have developed and utilized learning strategies that allow them to obtain and perform different languages, which can be enormously beneficial while teaching others a foreign language. Jinni then said,

Learning a language is like falling in love. You must fall in love with it and commit to it, just as you would with a person. If you are not in love with it, stop. Once you get going, you are going to seek out opportunities to speak that language, find people who speak it. You are going to want to experience it more. You are going to think about it (the language) when you are not speaking it. You are going to want to develop your understanding and awareness of the language. You can't be in love with four people. Therefore, stick to one and love it, know it, and then use the skills you acquired to learn that language and move to the next one.

Jinni's metaphor for learning a language as a relation founded in love exposes the emotional level that a learner of a foreign or second language requires to be successful at the acquisition process. Research regarding these emotional ties is lacking in the field of foreign language, but

much has been written about it in the fields of Linguistics, English as a second language, and in the field of Education (Barcelos & Coelho, 2016; Lake 2016). Jinni's words, encourage us to reflect on this emotional connection that requires investigation.

While abroad, Jinni only spoke English to her students, but knowing and speaking their language allowed her to establish solid and trusting relationships with them. Jinni, reflecting on her first year of teaching, thinks that she was not doing much teaching but instead huge amounts of learning. That first year, Jinni became hyperaware and conscious about her presence in the classroom. She worried about her body movements, her word choice, even her handwriting on the board. Being so young, in her early twenties, exacerbated her awareness as a first-time teacher and taught her something very important. Jinni tells me,

I had to get away from in front of the classroom. This was not going to be the Jinni show. I connected it to theater. Theater training has nothing to do with an instructor who stands in front of the room and tells you what to do. If that is what an acting teacher is doing, then they are not teaching acting. And if that is what a director is doing, they might be complete control freaks and not letting the actors perform their craft. The director's job is to make him/herself redundant. You still lead, but you are not the center of attention. This is key to a successful foreign language classroom since students must be provided with every opportunity to perform their language skills.

Jinni's classes were student-centered classrooms. She explained that on average her classes had around 30 students, and their proficiency levels ranged from beginner to advanced. For this reason, she had to engineer several lessons with materials that supported and appropriately challenged every student in the class, regardless of their performance level. Even if Jinni wanted to, she could not be in front of the class. She needed to move around and facilitate the different groups she created and assist each group with their individual queries. This led Jinni

to view herself more as a facilitator, or as she said a “tour director” who has clarity of the goals and objectives of the program, but ultimately, she would and could not travel everywhere with her students. Jinni said,

You, the teacher, need to understand that you are part of this long trajectory and this long process of learning. And when they, the students, are trying to use the language you can’t and won’t be there with them. You cannot be their translator. You can’t go into the classroom with them and see if they are teaching well. I must get out of their way.

Jinni presents a pivotal requirement for a foreign language teacher, or any teacher, which demands for the classroom to be student-centered while empowering students in their educational quest. Kissling and O’Donnell (2015) write, “Ideally in learner-centered instruction, students become agents in their own learning process and identify what they can and cannot accomplish through the language, which enables them to set their own goals and reflect on their own progress” (p. 284). This also correlates with ACTFL’s (2011) recommendations in the *21st Century Skills Map* on performance and proficiency, since foreign language teachers only have access to students’ performance experiences because proficiency is what a student can produce with the language outside of the classroom in their daily lives. Also, towards the end of Jinni’s statement, I am reminded of the versatility that her position requires since she moves, crosses, and leaps between her role as a linguist and a teacher educator. Jinni is an expert within these two fields of knowledge, and her daily and central task is to prepare teachers to teach in a second language.

Several authors have written about how hard is to marry the field of education with the field of foreign language (Bernhardt & Hammadou, 1987; McAlpine & Dhonau, 2007; Vélez - Rendón, 2002), but that is precisely what Jinni must accomplish. This difficulty of combining both fields derives from the traditional configuration of many universities’ foreign language

programs, which are organized into tiers or tracks that divide faculty's efforts. Long (2000) explains,

Many traditional humanities-trained professors of foreign languages and literature do not want to associate with Colleges or Schools of Education Those of us in foreign language departments who work in or collaborate with Schools of Education on foreign language teacher preparation are aware of this stereotype. Pervasive snobbery continues in foreign language departments, where some professors teach literature and others teach language, second language acquisition, and pedagogy. (p. 434)

Jinni understands this divide and what it causes because she experienced it. She received language training that was disconnected from foreign language pedagogy and only received formal teacher training much later in her educational and professional career. Her experiences pushed Jinni to develop the ability to cross the borders that these two fields have created and merge them to fully prepare her students. Jinni is building a new space that can successfully present the necessity to understand, accept, and value the impact that each field brings to the preparation of foreign language educators. Jinni anchors fundamental pedagogical, theoretical, and methodological concepts of both fields into her teacher preparation program exalting their structural intermingling, which supports the production of a successful foreign language teaching practice.

Jinni clarified that most of her students learning English would eventually become English teachers themselves. For this reason, she also understood that she was modeling how to teach even if that was not an integral goal for her classes. Vélez-Rendon (2002) asserts that "the experiences prospective teachers had as language learners were more influential on what they did in the classroom than what they learned in their education programs" (p. 459). Instinctively, Jinni

sought further pedagogical training and eventually returned to the United States and promptly enrolled in a linguistics master program near her hometown. Jinni told me,

When I went into my masters, I was not training to be a teacher trainer. When I went into my PhD, by then, I was choosing not to go out into the world as a teacher. I was choosing to go into academia and be a researcher.

She continued, “I did not mean to be a foreign language teacher educator. Oops. I meant to be a theater director, but I went overseas and taught and learned and enjoyed all these languages.”

Jinni exuberantly chronicled her experiences in both her masters and PhD programs that clearly exposed her deep love for linguistics and overall fervor for learning. For her master’s thesis and doctoral dissertation, she studied, observed, and wrote about classroom experiences of foreign language teachers, their students, their families, and the process of language production and acquisition. Unintentionally, this work prepared her for the job she holds today.

After defending her PhD, Jinni hit the job market with a sense of urgency related to family’s needs that demanded a job that could provide stability. She accepted her current position that required a linguist who could teach a variety of courses in language acquisition. The appointment also offered the opportunity to develop and grow a graduate program in foreign language teaching. The next few years were filled with the births of her children but also the ending of her marriage. These events were compounded by the fact that her teaching program had mainly morphed into a fully online delivery format. At this moment in her life, Jinni felt happy and relieved that her position did not require publication. Still, she told me,

I really feel bad about not being more engaged in scholarship. I miss it. I have like eight papers that are sitting in my body. I carry them around, waiting to be born. I don’t have time to write them. And if I had time, I would sleep.

Reminiscing over her work Jinni explained her research needs and regret because her career in academia has not quite provided the appropriate setting to involve herself fully in the opportunity to write and publish. Throughout our conversations, she is constantly thinking about research and the work that is unpublished, on hold, in development, and waiting to be written. Jinni describes to me some of the ideas regarding the articles she wishes she could write with such excitement and passion that her necessity to write becomes evident. Jinni says,

Right now, I feel that I need to make sure that the program is solid. I want to raise its visibility and make sure it is respected because of its caliber. But I feel that my own scholarship is important because if I am the director of the program, and people need to be able to read my research and have a sense of what the program can offer. The program is to create master teachers, but people and potential students need to see how I, we, connect pedagogy and research.

Jinni straddles her teaching duties, writing desires, and program development hopes and deeply wishes all would merge, but inevitably they contradict, collapse, and contrast her immediate and achievable goals.

Jinni explains that she has been at her position for about six years, she teaches completely on-line to students who are sprinkled all over the planet. She recounted her online meetings with a student in Japan. Jinni bragged about her Turkish student's research project. She complained about how students still cannot use some on-line tools and wished they would figure it out because she explained it a million times already. Jinni is clear that she is not a technology person, that she is a linguistic professor who has developed at least 10 different courses and pedagogical tools that support her programs. She has taught classes in language methodology, language acquisition, language concepts, culture, sociolinguistics, and reading, just to name a few. She has created appropriate tools for each course that facilitate the learning experience for

her students. Listening to Jinni detail her class design process is astonishing and allowed me to witness the emergence of Jinni the professor.

Jinni starts by articulating her objectives, which always highlight the importance of creating master teachers. She then moves to the countless textbooks that exist to support her classes and explained their pros and cons. Since Jinni never really finds one textbook that can completely support her teaching goals, she also creates her own video lectures and teaching modules. Jinni then goes into discussing the online tools that help support her diverse courses and again gauges their value and usefulness. She delineates the diverse assignments she allocates in the various courses and discusses their benefit and intended impact. She explains that teaching the whole student and developing master teachers drives her practices and goals for the programs. She says, “My view of learning derives from a sociocultural view and approach. Learning as participation. Learning as engagement with experts. Learning as transformative. Learning as identity.” Jinni explains that in Czech there is not a verb that translates directly to the verb “to teach” as we understand it. The verb for teaching in Czech really means that a person teaches their own self. Jinni insists that understanding the process of teaching the self-something is key for her students to embody and implement in their practices. She continues,

I have to create spaces for them (students) to do their own teaching of themselves. For learning to occur, the student must be present, must be part of their learning. We (teachers) have to create an environment that makes the space for learning to happen and help create what that space needs, could, and should be. Create the support needed for learning. Create the input for learning. But you (the teacher) cannot make learning happen. Trying to pour something into the learner’s head is not going to stick; that is not learning.

Jinni presents and opposes what Freire (2018) identified as “banking education,” which treats the student as a passive depository of information with no involvement or decision-making power about their educational path. Jinni desires to create space where students can (de)construct, (re)imagen, and (co)create their positions as life-long learners and classroom leaders. But Jinni does mention that she needs to create optimal input for her students to enter a reflective moment in which they can immerse themselves in an evaluation of their learner-educator quest.

Jinni is deeply aware that her students have spent time in the profession and that they bring preconceived interpretations of teaching, valuable personal and professional experiences, intuitive knowledge and values, have seen what works in the classroom, and have objectives and goals for their personal and professional development. Jinni understands that some of her students might teach over 150 students a day, that they have good and bad colleagues, and they may or may not receive the appropriate support from their administrators. Jinni emphasizes that perhaps some administrators do not understand the intricacy of teaching a foreign language and have no clue how they can support their language teachers. Also, Jinni knows that some of her students have been taught and received teaching training that has scared them away from applying language teaching theory or have rigid language acquisition frameworks.

Tedick (2009) notes,

Preservice teachers enter teacher education programs with preconceived notions about what constitutes language teaching. These have been established as a result of their many years as learners of languages in K-12 and postsecondary contexts The coursework and experiences to which they are exposed in teacher education programs reinforce these notions ... programs do not typically reflect on more current conceptualizations of language. (p. 264)

For this reason, Jinni tries to meet her students where they are and, to a certain extent, help them individualize the class and program to their needs in order to question and reflect on their (mis)conceptions of language teaching. Jinni's teaching goals aim at empowering her students to eloquently evaluate their teaching obstacles and inform others involved in the process of language teaching and learning the intricacy and commitment that is needed to learn and teach a foreign language. Jinni describes her aims:

Teaching and practicing with my students the level of awareness necessary to understand what is happening, what should happen, and what can happen in their classroom. Being able to say explicit grammar instruction instead of saying teaching grammar lessons. Translation bad. Textbook bad. They (students) modified this to say, material design is complicated, and I use the textbook as a resource, but the textbook does not drive my instruction. I want them to understand that teaching is not black and white, and I (teachers) can draw on my students' experiences, my resources available, and my teaching knowledge to accomplish language acquisition and production.

Jinni explained that she enjoys getting to know her students as people. Since her courses are taught on-line, Jinni mainly meets her students in the privacy of their homes and gets to know their children, partners, and pets while they conference. Due to this, Jinni struggles with the hierarchy of power that she holds and the unintended interactions that this causes. Jinni said that many times she ends up giving extensions on assignments because she worries about her students' wellbeing and sympathizes with their life events. On the other hand, Jinni has received feedback from her students that indicates that her students desire a space of separation from her because she is the professor, and they are the students. Basically, Jinni cannot be too friendly with her students because they want to feel that her words and wisdom are much more valuable

than theirs. Jinni values her students' comments but wishes they would question these hierarchies they want to impose between them.

This has also driven Jinni to question her own knowledge and leadership in the classroom, she and debates if it is enough to help train master teachers. Jinni tells me that only within the last couple of years she has felt comfortable about her voice and her authority. Jinni says,

I may not know everything, and I am willing to listen to you. Still, I know some things well, and you are going to listen to me on those because I know it. I must honor my own understanding and instincts that have allowed me to grow in my personal and professional life. This does not mean that I am not continuously learning, especially from my students. Still, in case of an emergency, I can always teach Zumba.

We burst out laughing about this wacky proposition as she adds that people at work may not even notice her being gone one day. This is a joke of course since Jinni is the backbone of her program, but she describes herself as a “desert plant.” Cookson (2005) writes, “One of the ironies of teaching is that it is one of the most social occupations, but it is also one of the most isolating professions” (p. 16). Jinni explained that teaching completely on-line and not having a big group of colleagues in her department leaves her feeling isolated. Due to this, she involves herself in many committees and projects around the university that can help her stay informed and provide her with connections and conversations with other students and colleagues on campus. Jinni's desire to help others combined with her intellectual curiosity compounded with her inability to say “No” creates an overwhelming agenda and workload for her. Each day she commits to learn how to say no to others' persistent requests and redirect her attention toward her teaching and students' work but still misses her mark.

I ask Jinni what she thinks teachers' need to know before they enter the classroom. She takes a deep breath, and she explains that, when she started to teach in higher education, she came with preconceptions about what teachers needed and should change or add into their practices to be successful. Those ideas and assumptions have changed, and now she believes that an individual approach may be the only way to support and help the growth process the of any teacher.

Jinni explains that teaching on-line gives her the chance to become deeply reflective about her practice because of the limited contact time with students, which demands exhaustive utilization of every encounter she has with them. Therefore, she had to modify her teaching practice, content, assignments, and even her grading. Jinni says,

My breakthrough with grading was that I started to tell myself a different story about grading. Now, I see grading as a conversation. I see it as a relationship with my students, and that is the locus of the influence that I have on their thinking and their teaching. Kohn (1994) writes, "Only by abandoning traditional grading and performance assessment practices can we achieve our ultimate educational objectives" (p. 38). Jinni is committed to giving meaningful feedback to her students' assignments and queries, but this task devours her time. She explains that she is trying to figure out better, more sustainable, and purposeful ways to provide feedback but cannot find a solution just yet. She is completely aware that her students also have this same issue in their practices.

Jinni reiterates that she models teaching, and this is another way that she could add relief to her workload and at the same time, provide ideas for her students to do the same. At the same time, Jinni learns from her students all the time and has added some of their practice tricks to her own repertoire. Jinni reminds me that most of her students have several years of professional

experience, which is the reason she continuously references to them as master students in our conversations, but she adds,

The hardest students are the ones that have zero teaching experience. They know they want to become good teachers but the only experience they have is learning the language. They have only seen how teaching works as student. They have a lot of language learning experience sometimes trained in very rigid grammar translation formats and see language as content. They don't know what a well-design textbook looks like. They don't know where to go for teaching resources. They do not even know what is supposed to be important to teach and learn.

Jinni then compares and describes these master teachers and says,

But the student that has 30 years of experience and they know what they want to change in their practices, the student that has questions about what and why has not been working in their classrooms, these students have a plethora of experiences and have been in training sessions and received input, and they are uncomfortable. They question if they have been doing it wrong all that time, and that hurts, and it is painful. Those are the students you can do something with because they want to teach differently and better. They are looking for input that will help them improve their practices.

I can see the excitement in Jinni's eyes as she describes these students.

Jinni continues,

The beautiful thing is that these students come with a framework. I can then help them take apart pieces and put the pieces back together in a new shape and help them become more flexible, more dynamic, more exciting, more effective in their practices. I am there to support their articulation of what they are doing in their classroom with their teaching goals and objectives. Their agency will be clear. They create room to continue to grow.

Jinni highlights the importance of seeing and witnessing good teaching as key experience to improve current and future teachers' practices. She told me that she implements exercises where a student teaches while others provide feedback and give advice about what could and should be enhanced or corrected from the lesson observed. She understands that this is not a new idea but one that must be part of teaching training and developing because all involved, even herself, benefits. She explained that this exercise requires reflection, which is a key component of becoming and being a good teacher.

Jinni's biggest grievance is lazy teaching and understands the importance of stopping it immediately. Jinni said that lazy teaching not only reduces the quality of learning but directly impacts students' perception of teaching and learning forever. Wilburn (2008) shares Jinni's position: "The importance of excellent methodological training for new foreign language teachers cannot be understated; how each novice learns to teach will affect hundreds of students for years to come" (p. 96). Jinni asserts that teachers must have a "kind of love" of learning that words cannot truly express but that can be seen. She explains it as an energy, optimism, and intuition that can be felt in a classroom lead by a good teacher. She says,

A teacher in their apprenticeship has their observation period and they take their language, content, and pedagogy courses. But neither of all those classes could necessarily teach you how to teach language. Then, as a student you have been witness to hundreds of hours of language teaching, and leaving those experiences is hard to do if you want to teach in a more dynamic way. So that is why I constantly in my practice try to unsettle their assumptions about what would, could, can, and should teaching be. Teaching is an action that requires continuous evaluation. It is never completely solidified. It demands endless change.

Jinni insists that teaching must be conceived as a progression and as a combination of various fields of knowledge. She applauds the efforts of many leaders and scholars in the field of language teaching and learning that bring attention to the important conversation and discussion regarding the junction of good teaching practices with language acquisition (McAlpine & Dhonau, 2007; McAlpine et al, 2007). She grows angry as she recalls hearing language professors steer students away from taking education courses because she describes as essential the knowledge that each of these fields bring to the preparation of her students as future and current foreign language teachers. Jinni cannot fathom that scholarship could go above teaching; instead, she believes that both must work in conjunction. This view reconfiguration is something that she tries to inculcate in her students as she encourages them to reframe their way of thinking of research as a purely academic task and instead as inquiry that is necessary to improve their teaching practice and that will ultimately benefit student's language acquisition, performance, and proficiency. Jinni declares, "Fine. I am a scholar of teaching. A scholar of teacher education." Her words echo in the large hall, and Jinni continues by explaining that we must acknowledge that teaching is a difficult profession (Schrier, 2011) that only gets more complicated by situations that go beyond teachers' reaches. As an example, Jinni asserts that language examination that is part of teaching certification requirements has gotten harder to accomplish and achieve. Due to this, the profession loses good teachers because some are unable to reach certification levels (Swanson & Mason, 2018).

Jinni reminds me again that many current foreign language teachers are alone in their practices, receive no support from administration, and see colleagues come and go from their schools. Jinni remarks,

This revolving door of teachers that are demoralized eventually teaches individuals that do decide to remain in the job to be as simple and consistent as possible because change

is painful. The only way to keep, year after year, in your planning and teaching is to change as little as possible.

Santoro (2011) reminds us that, “In the United States teaching attracts individuals who seek to do good work in spite of the profession’s relatively low status and pay” (p. 4). Jinni shakes her head side to side and tells me how teachers in many of the countries she taught and visited in Europe are regarded and compensated like any other highly value professional. Jinni and I agree that if the profession was better appraised and paid, future and current teachers could recast their views, performance, and expectations in relation to the position they hold. She adds that perhaps many teachers have never had a good idea, conception, or model for what it takes to be a professional teacher. She believes that many teachers do not have the clear understanding of the high level of planning, execution, effort, reflection, and evaluation that is needed to be a good teacher. Jinni explained that this only gets compounded by,

People who are currently in power and can make decisions about policy and can decide what can happen with foreign language programs [and] had negative experiences with foreign language learning themselves. So, they do not want to fund the programs because they think that students are going to have the same experience learning a foreign language as them. They did not enjoy it. They memorized, and they were not engaged with the language. They never acquire any kind of proficiency. That may explain why programs are going away.

Jinni remarks that well-developed research embedded in strong theory can produce a framework and the pertinent information to show and prove to administrators and other individuals involved in the maintenance and development of foreign language programs the changes, effort, time, and expertise needed of teachers to perform their profession. Santoro (2011) argues,

Good teaching is not only about cultivating individual teachers' dispositions toward good work but structuring the work to enable practitioners to do good within its domain. Such work requires a community of practice that can draw on the tradition of teaching. (p. 19)

The marriage between language acquisition and good language teaching pedagogy is foundational to reach these goals. Jinni said, "but this was 40 years ago, and now it is the same. Not much has changed. We are having the same conversations." Jinni wishes that the field of language teaching and learning could do a better job of educating people about the need to attain a second/foreign language but sees the fundamental problem of division in the effort. She explains that every language would be advocating for their own acquisition, Spanish teachers for Spanish, French teachers for French, and so on. This puts people against each other, and Jinni believes this will self-sabotage any efforts that can help the overall field. The words of García and Davis-Wylie (2015) resound in my head "the debilitating effects of being a disunited profession" (p. 32).

Jinni opens her computer to revise her schedule. Her eyes open wide, and she produces a low deep chuckle filled with worry. Did she miss the appointment with her student in Japan? She promptly produces a text and is polite towards me as she asks about my accommodations for the night. Moments later, her phone makes a chirping noise notifying her of a new message. She looks over the message quickly. Her body relaxes. Sitting back in the chair, she exhales deeply; she did not miss the appointment. I inquire about her summer plans, and Jinni excitedly tells me about a new research project. She is delighted to get going with the investigation but also needs to hire new faculty for her program and looks forward to finding someone who can alleviate a bit of her heavy workload. Jinni holds many roles: mother, daughter, partner, teacher, researcher, administrator, advocate, mentor, and more. She acknowledges that she has a lot on her plate but reminds me that if it all fails, I have an open invitation to her Zumba class. Again, we laugh.

Speaking a Different Language

One strategy brings together three different abilities—communicating, knowing, and doing which I represent in my hieroglyph of a left hand on whose palm are pictured a pair of eyes, a mouth, with a tongue hanging out and the writing tip of a pen at the tip of the tongue. Los ojos represent seeing and knowing which can lead to understanding or conocimiento It means looking in, looking from more than one direction at the same time. La lengua symbol for speech, for breaking silence by talking, communicating, and writing. The split forked tongue of a serpent is my signal for communicating bilingually.

(Anzaldúa, 2009, pp. 211–212)

There is a foot note at the bottom of the page where the words above are written that points to a revised version of this image. In the updated version of this picture, Anzaldúa adds an ear to her hieroglyph, which signifies theorizing. I employ Anzaldúa's hand hieroglyph as the image that connects the stories and narratives of these three educators' and trainers' work—their efforts that strive to help construct and transform teachers' practices to better the entire field of foreign language in the United States. Tana, Jinni, and Abi have had strikingly different teaching experiences. Still, when it comes to their professional lives, there is a web of connections that intertwines their experiences and that highlight interesting associations, as well as noteworthy, intrinsic discrepancies and worrisome trends that plague the field. In the next chapter, my analysis of their stories will focus on the items I found particularly insightful and helpful towards the growth of foreign language professionals in the United States.

CHAPTER 5: FRAGMENTED STATE

Coyolxauhqui represents the search for new metaphors to tell you what you need to know, how to connect and use the information gained, and, with intelligence, imagination, and grace, solve your problems and create intercultural communities.

(Anzaldúa, 2015, p. 143)

Figure 2 - Aztec Moon Goddess, *Coyolxauhqui*



For the Aztecs, *Coyolxauhqui* was the moon goddess who was dismembered by her sibling *Huitzilopochtli*, god of war, sun, and human sacrifices, when she tried to kill their mother *Coatlicue*, who was the earth-mother goddess. Seeing the figure of the *Coyolxauhqui* (Figure 2) helps interpret how Anzaldúa theorized this ancient narrative and proposed one of her final foundational concepts. For Anzaldúa, *Coyolxauhqui* depicts a person's ability to (re)(de)construct experiences, practices, and concepts that create understanding of the situated-self and the possibility to see and manage divergent messages. Anzaldúa (2015) writes, "*Coyolxauhqui* personifies the wish to repair and heal, as well as rewrite the stories of loss and

recovery, exile and homecoming, disinheritance and recuperation, stories that lead out of passivity and into agency, out of devalued into valued lives” (p. 143). Putting the pieces together in a different way to make new possibilities is the embodiment of the *Coyolxauhqui*. Anzaldúa’s notion of *Coyolxauhqui* is composed of other essential characteristics and concepts that together construct this powerful theory.

For Anzaldúa (1987), a foundational component of the *Coyolxauhqui* was the development and acquisition of a *mestiza* consciousness that allows an individual to move among borders, physical or metaphorical, and develop an affinity for ambiguity and contradiction. She writes about the *mestiza*,

She reinterprets history and, using new symbols, she shapes new myths. She adopts new perspectives She strengthens her tolerance (an intolerance) for ambiguity. She is willing to share, to make herself vulnerable to foreign ways of seeing and thinking. She surrenders all notions of safety, of the familiar. Deconstruct, construct. (p. 104)

Consequently, a person who has a *mestiza* consciousness is a border-crosser, a bridge person who connects people, ideas, concepts, and theories that at first could seem ideologically divergent. Anzaldúa (2009) said that, “To bridge means loosening our borders, not closing off to others. Bridging is the work of opening the gate to the stranger, within and without” (p. 246). It is not easy being the bridge that joins many crossings, that aims to connect and create new ways of knowing because it can be disoriented, confusing, and painful. Still these crossings are necessary, and much knowledge is acquired while experiencing these shifts that amplify an individual’s potential and drive them to become a *nepantlera*. Anzaldúa (2009) describes *nepantleras* as

the supreme border crosser They act as intermediaries between cultures and their various versions of reality They can work from multiple locations, can circumvent

polarizing binaries. They try not to get locked into one perspective or perception of things They serve as agents of awakening, inspire and challenge others to deeper awareness of awakening, greater *conocimiento*; they serve as reminders of each other's search for wholeness of being. (p. 293)

Anzaldúa explained that *conocimiento* connects and combines a person's awareness of self with individual, communal, and ancestral knowledge that constructs an individual's agency.

Conocimiento is fused with *la facultad*, which employs the person's intuition that provides guidance and necessary clarity to positively act in the situation. *Coyolxauhqui* engages all these concepts to make sense of the world as they work, develop, expand, and strengthen each other's intrinsic bonds.

It is necessary to remember that the purpose of this study is to capture the stories of foreign language teacher trainers and educators and contemplate their professional paths, which can provide a comprehensive perspective and understanding of the field of foreign language teaching and learning in the United States. Learning and interpreting foreign language teacher educators' stories will provide the field with a global view of the key roles, tasks, and functions these individuals perform and how these narratives impact the overall development of the field. I focused on Anzaldúa's usage and representation of this deity and argue that Tana, Jinni, and Abi are *nepantleras* who possess a *mestiza* consciousness as they bridge the positions, experiences, and *conocimientos* utilizing their *facultad* as they develop and train foreign language teachers to navigate and cross the numerous borders imbedded in their practices. Learning from these women's *Coyolxauhqui* ability can help us understand, create, and deliver better training and development opportunities for foreign language teachers in the United States.

The image of the *Coyolxauhqui* also serves as a visual depiction that can help us understand the field of foreign language in the United States. Looking at the figure of the

goddess, we witness her fragmentation with parts of her body dispersed in every direction but still unified as one entity that is reconfigured. The *Coyolxayuhqui* is at work when an individual changes and morphs as they (re)consider and (re)construct the self. Like the *Coyolxayuhqui*, the field of foreign language is not incomplete or misconfigured; it shifts, morphs, and adjusts to the enactment of new ways of knowing and teaching foreign language. In effect, the field gets (de)(re)constructed by each of us as we enact our teaching practices. The conundrum lies in that, within the field of foreign language, there are differing perspectives related to best approaches, techniques, guidelines, statements, proficiency, performance, methods, application, outcomes, and goals, all inheritably bound but also infinitely divergent. Therefore, our bonded practices that create the field, become incomplete, dismembered, and fractured from one another as we teach with different purposes and goals; this profoundly complicates the composition of the field, provoking inconsistencies that pull us away from the insights and benefits of the *Coyolxayuhqui*. Sandrock (1995) writes, “Reform can only occur when all elements of the system are changed in a common direction” (p. 181). Wilbur wrote in 2008, “Right now, it appears that a lack of consensus exists in the field about the *how* rather than the *what*” (p. 96), highlighting the conflictive narratives that exist within the field. Glisan (2005) notes of these rifts, “teachers who have chosen to remain on the periphery of the profession are clearly not as knowledgeable about, and most likely not as invested in, the direction of the profession” (pp. 269–270). Just by noticing the dates of these comments, we can see that cracks and splits in the field have existed for years, each arguing and focusing on different issues, dispersing, again, any effort to arrive at an applicable solution.

Abi, Tana, and Jinni’s narratives provide the opportunity to study and learn from their experiences as exceptional trainers and educators and witness how they grew in the profession despite many obstacles that still exist for future and current foreign language professionals. Their

stories supply us with examples, perspectives, and possibilities on how to improve the field and profit from their *Coyolxayuhqui* vision. In the next section, my purpose is to juxtapose these three woman's narratives and how their experiences and insights merge, diverge, combine, support, question, (re)invent, (re)produce, and (re)configure the field of foreign language teaching in the United States.

Taking Inventory

Her (*la mestiza*) first step is to take inventory. *Despojando, desgranando, quitando paja*
... . *Pero es difícil* differentiating between *lo heredado, lo adquirido, lo impuesto*.

(Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 104)

In the quote above, Anzaldúa explains that an individual uses the *mestiza* consciousness to evaluate and reflect upon the way they have obtained the knowledge they possess. She means to highlight this process to assess the (un)conscious ways we hold and value what we know. This is necessary to be aware of the ways we use and share that knowledge with others and avoid passing along oppressive, harmful, or preponderant ideas and concepts that perpetuate people's marginalization and subjugation. The concept of taking "inventory" epitomizes the stories of Abi, Tana, and Jinni; it allows us to investigate their growth as foreign language educators and trainers and to highlight their *Coyolxahqui* creative, inventive, and inspiring practices and concomitantly provides the opportunity to reflect on the overall state of the field of foreign language teaching in the United States.

Beginnings

As one can expect, the paths Abi, Tana, and Jinni took towards becoming teacher trainers and educators have distinct origins. Abi and Tana took a traditional path to starting their teaching

careers. They both were language majors and took a few education and linguistic courses. Both had experiences abroad, Tana particularly to study and Abi to visit family in her home country. Abi was the only one of the three who was also exposed to the target language at home as a heritage speaker. On the other hand, Jinni's major had no connection to language or education, and she did not have any study abroad experience. As a matter of fact, Jinni's first teaching experience was also her effort to live abroad for the first time. Jinni only received minimal training on how to teach ESL. Each mentioned having a lead teacher or support staff who were tasked with giving them support, but they explained how these individuals were distant or completely uninvolved in their teaching training. All described having to teach and carry the classroom load alone, utilizing the necessity of the situation to create curriculum and related materials as well as implementing teaching techniques and tactics that seemed to fit and helped the teaching situation. Jinni even spoke about having an array of levels of language proficiency in her classroom and having to teach several classes simultaneously. This is not unusual in the foreign language classroom, but issues pertaining to her limited training were exacerbated by it being her first teaching experience, turning this into a monumental challenge.

How each taught at first was influenced by their experiences as students, and in this way, they were teaching as they were once taught. Abi's mother, who was an educator, and Abi's 3rd grade teacher were instrumental to her goal of becoming a teacher and had immense influence in her teaching style. She spoke fervently about how she admired these two teachers' practices and mimicked many of their strategies. Tana also spoke of her high school language teachers and recognized how their teaching practices were filled with performance goals and objectives that put them in the *avant garde* of language teaching. Their mentors offered Abi and Tana a student-centered experience that allowed them to be creative and innovative in an environment where mistakes were welcome. This empowered them as students, and as teachers, they knew that this

was the best way to teach others. Jinni did not mention any mentors, but she did say that being young, living abroad, and thinking that teaching was short-term gave her a different outlook on her experience. Jinni utilized her training as an artist and her understanding of improvisation to help her in the classroom. She made clear that she knew that, as a teacher, she needed to follow, support, and provide for the needs of her students as a director would do for the actors in a play. Swanson and Mason (2018) quoted the work of Ingersoll et al., (2014) and asserted that, “Preservice education is vitally important in developing new teachers, the skills and knowledge they will need not only to survive in the field but also to thrive” (p. 256). The previous statement does not apply to Abi, Tana, or Jinni, since they had a limited and deficient preservice preparation, and still they blossomed under less-than-optimal circumstances.

Taking a closer look at their first classroom experiences, all women relied heavily on their student experiences, duplicating and utilizing what they remembered worked for them as students. It was not a particular pedagogical approach or method, but it was the memory, knowledge, and feeling of those experiences that served as foundation for their teaching practices. Abi and Tana mentioned that the way they were teaching was a rudimentary form of the communicative approach, but they were not completely conscious that this was even a theoretical framework utilized to teach a language. They commented that speaking was the most important task they desired to accomplish as students, and consequently, that is what they wanted to offer their students. Jinni was not a student of language, but her students’ objective of speaking the target language provided her a clear goal for her classroom.

Another similarity in Abi, Tana, and Jinni’s first teaching experience is the fortuitous lack of supervision and support they received. The struggle of being alone in the classroom allowed them the space to create and innovate curriculum and activities that satisfied their students’ needs without fear, embarrassment, reprimand, or feelings of ineptitude that can come

while being supervised. Experiencing success and failure in their classroom ignited the need to reflect and become conscious and take careful “inventory” of their practices. These actions were rooted in a deep sense of responsibility. Abi talked about teaching in small communities where she was the only one teaching a foreign language and feeling fantastic about being the expert, but this also became an immense responsibility not only to instruct her students but the entire community in the importance of and relationship between language and culture. Tana spoke about being the only language teacher and enjoying greatly the opportunity to create community with her students that expanded the walls of her classroom; she even had overnight activities with students and their families. This sense of responsibility to their students, classroom, and community is key and manifested with all women’s practices and serves, still, as a catalyst that propels them to develop further in their individual teacher preparation. This feeling of responsibility that sustains other fundamental pieces of their practices (innovation, reflection, creation) are intangible and intrinsic characteristics difficult to teach, particularly to adults. Despite of that, this is precisely what all three women suggest is what teachers should be learning and practicing.

Fundamental Teacher’s Qualities

Dwelling in liminalities, in-between states, or *nepantlas*, *las nepantleras* cannot be forced to stay in one place, locked in to one perspective or perception.

(Anzaldúa, 2015, p. 82)

The characteristics, qualities, and requirements that foreign language teachers need to be successful in their practices have been studied, but no consensus emerges from the research. Velez Rendón (as cited in García et al. 2009) created a list of “aspects” she deemed fundamental to assess during a teacher’s initial training/education. These were “the teacher’s previous learning experiences, the teacher education program and related pre-service practices, the

teacher's beliefs and instructional decision-making processes, the role of reflection, and collaboration between stakeholders as prerequisites to success" (p. 27). Wright (2010) similarly wrote about the pedagogical trends emerging in what he called Second Language Teacher Education (SLTE). These are,

1. An emphasis on the student teacher's LEARNING to teach and becoming a THINKING teacher.
2. This, in turn, means a great deal of REFLECTIVE ACTIVITY programmed into learning experiences, often with written records in the form of journals or diaries.
3. This also entails a commitment to student teacher INQUIRY—into one's own beliefs and narratives, and into the professional context of teaching and learning for which STs are being prepared.
4. It has resulted in the appropriation of pedagogies from adult education whose central idea is LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE. (p. 273)

The studies above describe goals and preferences differently, but they agree that teaching experiences as students and knowledge acquired under teaching training programs, combined with a heavy dose of reflection, can and will generate good language teachers. Focusing on a few words in the studies above (previous, learning, thinking, inquiry, experience, and reflection), combined with characteristics exhibited by Abi, Tana, and Jinni, (responsibility, curiosity, creativeness, and innovation), produces an amalgamation of difficult concepts to teach, acquire, and evaluate because of their intangibility. Still, these intrinsic characteristics are highlighted and emphasized as markers for teaching success. Interestingly, these complex attributes are also fundamental pieces to the *Coyolxayuhqui*, of which Anzaldúa highlights reflection as the most valuable.

Crandall (2000) writes, “neither traditional education nor training are sufficient; also needed are opportunities for teachers to reflect upon their beliefs and practices and to construct and reconstruct their personal theories of language teaching and learning” (p. 37). Tana argued that reflection is the most relevant and fundamental task to the apprenticeship, practice, and growth of teachers, but she also emphasized how little time teachers have to engage in this activity. Reflection has been discussed at length by many experts, but Reagan and Osborn (2001) delineate this process as follows: “Reflective practice can be best understood as a cyclical process moving from reflection-for-practice through reflection-in-practice and on to reflection-on-practice, which then leads on to new reflection-for-practice” (p. 22). Reagan and Osborn explained that teachers performed these forms of reflection while enacting their practices, but as time passes one form of reflection may take more importance over another. This is not a linear process like what the *mestiza* can experience when events and their circumstances send her to *Nepantla* to consider the impact of the experience at hand. *Nepantla*, a liminal place, offers safe harbor in which to discern confusing, contradicting, and unsettling feelings and thoughts that a *vivencia* (situation) causes. The *mestiza* moves in and out of *Nepantla* as required by the circumstances of the situation. *Nepantla* can be an uncomfortable experience, but the individual does not need to dwell here alone. Other *Nepantleras*, like Abi, Tana, or Jinni, are needed to guide people through the darkness of the unknown. *Nepantleras* ask difficult but necessary questions that can help the person make sense of the situation and prompt them to search for alternative ways of understanding. These master, mentor, *Nepantlera* teachers can guide future teachers through the experience of reflection.

In *Nepantla*, in a state of vulnerability, mentor and future teachers engage in a deep search for the elements of reflection described by Spark-Langer and Colton (1993, as cited in Reagan & Osborn, 2001) as, “the cognitive element, the critical element, and the narrative

element” (p. 24). Reagan and Osborn (2001) explained that the cognitive element focuses on the decision-making process of teaching, which is constant in the life of the teacher. The critical element is concern with the ethics and morality of the choices the teacher makes as they are enacting their practice. The narrative element relates to the stories that surface as teachers recount their teaching experiences. Reagan and Osborn (2001) explain that these narratives take many forms, as journals, logs, reports, or interviews, and they can be written by the mentee teacher or jointly by the mentor and mentee. The importance of these narratives is that they,

serve to contextualize the classroom experience for the teacher and for others, and by so doing, provide us with a much richer understanding of what takes place in the classroom and in the teacher’s construction of reality ... and there can be little doubt that they provide one of the most effective ways in which reflective practice can be encouraged.

(Reagan & Osborn, 2001, p. 25)

The narrative element is central to this writing effort and emphasizes the need to collect teachers’ stories and become witness to the complexity of their profession. Sandrock (1995) writes, “From our experience, we can facilitate the learning of others. Understanding this context and speaking of the journey we are taking, will help us realize our vision for foreign language education” (p. 168). He continues, “The journey should be characterized more as an archeological exploration than a guided tour: you get dirty and sweaty, involved in the experience, and the learning helps you to make sense of the present” (p. 170).

La mestiza counts on her consciousness, which is a combination of the cognitive and critical elements defined by Colton and Spark-Langer (1993), but also relies heavily on instinct and the combination of these appears as *la mestiza* enacts her *facultad*. Anzaldúa (2015) writes,

When we adapt to cambio (change), we develop a new set of terms to identify with, new definitions of our academic disciplines, and *la facultad* (the ability) to accommodate

mutually exclusive, discontinuous, and inconsistent world The future belongs to those who cultivate cultural sensitivities and who uses these abilities to forge a hybrid consciousness that transcends the “us” versus “them” mentality and will carry us into a nos/otras position bridging the extremes of our cultural realities, a subjectivity that doesn’t polarize potential allies. (p. 81)

La mestiza connects what seems unrelated and creates new possibilities, adapting to new forms since she welcomes change because morphing presents new ways of engaging the world. Reflection, or the lack thereof, will alter a teacher’s practice because contemplating one’s practices drives the individual towards change and adaptation, which is not always easy to reach and perform. Therefore, support must be offered to assure this activity becomes compulsory to the process of teaching.

Tana adds that reflection alone will not change or improve a teacher’s practice. She explained that teachers need to be provoked and challenged in a form that keeps them improving their craft. Anzaldúa (2002) called this the *arrebato*, which is a disruption of an individual’s situation that sparks a necessary moment of contemplation. Tana said that she could not create this provocation since she is not in contact with teachers daily, but a mentor teacher or a language coordinator, Abi or Jinni, would know and could search for forms of inspiring, provoking, and evoking teachers’ desire and need to reflect and find new ways to teach. Sandrock (1995) provides the insight of Evans’s (1994) work and highlights,

We begin by creating opportunities for “transformational” change for teachers ... enabling them to see, feel, and experience teaching and learning and leading differently. And we reconceptualized professional development so that it is continuing, intensive, and encourages risk-taking by both participants and leaders. (p. 180)

Tana raised the importance of lab schools as foundational spaces that could offer the support and development described above to shape and build teachers' future practices. Whitman (2019) indicated that these schools provided future teachers the opportunity to conduct research, study teaching methods and theories, and develop curriculum. These fundamental objectives of lab schools were also major triggers for their decline since the preparation of future teachers and research production would, in many cases, take priority above the education of attending students. Not having places like these lab schools, leads future teachers back to classrooms that depend in the leadership of seasoned teachers willing to offer and provide guidance. Abi, Tana, and Jinni did not have the benefits of the knowledge of this type of mentor teachers, but they all described relying heavily on reflection.

Tana recounted a particular moment in her teaching career where she knew—la *mestiza* consciousness spoke to her—something was not going well in her classroom. She applied some changes in her classroom: content, approach, assessment, but still could not pinpoint to the issue. Tana asked another fellow teacher to come observe her teaching, and she could not see anything wrong in particular. Still, Tana kept reflecting and started to write down her feelings, ideas, and comments from students right after each class. Finally, she saw that it was her; she was worrying about the content and needed to make changes so that she could enjoy the topics she was teaching. Making changes would challenge her, and this sprinkle of instability gave her a jolt of energy that reignited her interest and dedication to her students. This is what the *Coyolxayuhqui* does, arranges the pieces of the self and creates a new way of acting and being.

Abi mentioned that about every five years she changes positions and enjoys remaking herself again and again. Jinni is probably the one who changes the most of all three women. She must do this because she must guide her students in their research and educational endeavors that

keep her curious and learning as she supports them. Crandall (2000) quotes the work of Candling and Widdowson who wrote,

If language teaching is to be a genuinely professional enterprise, it requires continual experimentation and evaluation on the part of practitioners whereby, in seeking to be more effective in their pedagogy, they provide at the same time—and as corollary—for their own continuing education. (p. 36)

Abi, Tana, and Jinni agree on the need for teachers to stay curious about how to better their practices and seek opportunities to grow, but what the field of foreign language is focusing on diverges vastly from what these women see as necessary for teachers to acquire, understand, and develop.

Training and Development Disparities

ACTFL (2022) has produce a document titled, *Guiding Principles for World Language Learning*, that responds, “to the challenge to identify what is effective in language learning and provide guidance to educators and learners alike” (n.p.). These practices are:

- Facilitate Target Language Comprehensibility,
- Guide Learners through Interpreting Authentic Resources,
- Design Oral Interpersonal Communication Tasks,
- Plan with Backward Design Model,
- Teach Grammar as Concept and Use in Context, and
- Provide Appropriate Oral Feedback.

These core practices point to what teachers must be able to do in their classrooms to promote students’ language acquisition, but there is no mention of how teachers should go about learning how to do this in their classrooms. Also, these core practices focus on the mechanics and

classroom preparation needed and performed by teachers to present content and assess students' performance and proficiency.

ACTFL (2022) adds in the introduction to the core practices that it “welcomes ongoing discussion to update and refine these statements, informed by new research and experiences” (n.p.). Answering this call, Glisan and Donato (2017b),

presents an approach to teacher education and professional development that emphasizes carefully deconstructing fundamental instructional practices that are complex and often not visible through observation, definition, or brief explanation. Its goal is to assist teachers in learning how to enact specific practices, referred to as high-leverage teaching practices, deemed essential to foreign language teaching and situated in theory and research. (p. 50)

These high-leverage practices are:

- Facilitating Target Language Comprehensibility
- Building a Classroom Discourse Community
- Guiding Learners to Interpret and Discuss Authentic Texts
- Focusing on Form in a Dialogic Context through PACE
- Focusing on Cultural Products, Practices, and Perspectives in a Dialogic Context
- Providing Oral Corrective Feedback to Improve Learner Performance. (Glisan & Donato, 2017a, p. 3)

These high-leverage practices focus, similarly to ACTFL core practices, on the mechanics of what a language teacher is expected to deliver in the classroom to facilitate students' language acquisition. It will be imperative for any foreign language practitioner to study and learn these practices, especially since, as the authors mentioned, these are hard to spot by observation and are difficult to define and explain.

Having received training on these practices by Glisan and Donato and also studied the videos produced over each high-leverage practice, I can testify that these practices require experience—experience that comes from being in the classroom in contact with students’ inquiries while searching for ways to teach in an effective manner. These practices flourish in the way the teacher conveys and exposes students to the material and crafts the lesson. I fail to grasp how these skills are hard to observe and evaluate in a foreign language teacher’s practice. These practices are based on language skills, performance and proficiency levels, and the use of relevant, appropriate, and up-to-date content in the target language has been the goal of the foreign language classroom for at least a decade with the solidification of ACTFL’s (2012) proficiency guidelines documents.

Swanson (2013) warns, “Focusing solely on having *highly qualified* teachers has led to a narrowing of the curriculum” (p. 93). The work of Glisan and Donato (2017a, 2017b) is valuable to the field, but it turns teachers into technicians and presents an erroneous perception that, if foreign language teachers produce these practices, students’ language learning and production will occur. Swanson (2013) continues, “the highly qualified definition needs to be expanded to include other important teaching attributes” (p. 93). Abi, Jinni, and Tana talked about being in the classroom and trying innumerable tactics, activities, exercises, until they found what worked. There were a lot of trials and errors, but ultimately, they perceived what functioned and focused on perfecting those particular practices. These women did not talk about a theory, concept, or approach, but they did assess their success or failure in the effectiveness of their classroom, students’ achievement, and the connection of the feelings and emotions of all participants. This is how they acquired their *mestiza* consciousness, which I believe is what Glisan and Donato (2017b) talk about when they mention that it is difficult to see or explain these practices. I believe this is because it is an instinct, a *corazonada* (gut feeling), that can be felt as one moves

from the position of the teacher to being a student of teaching, paying attention and trying to capture and understand what is working, or not, in the classroom to better one's practice. Having a *mestiza* consciousness allows the teacher to see the crashing, clashing, conflicting narratives in a different light, which leads to a deeper understanding of the situation and prompts the individual to find atypical solutions. Still, the *corazonada*, *la facultad*, is needed to grasp the complexity, and search for a solution, to put old pieces together in new ways; a *Coyolxahqui* vision.

Developing Teachers' Skills: Gathering a Coyolxauhqui Vision

There are, in fact, a range of important skills and experiences needed to become an outstanding teacher—skills rarely acknowledged in colleges of education and never mentioned in schools. These are the subversive core of excellent teaching.

(Ayers, 2001, p. 123)

Previously, reflection, innovation, and creation were mentioned as catalyst qualities that Abi, Tana, and Jinni possess and that drove them to the positions and success they have as teacher educators. Reflection was discussed as the key component that is needed to feed teachers' curiosity that potentially drives the individual to search for better classroom practices. Teacher reflection has been researched extensively and is a practice that is implemented in teacher education and training programs (García et al., 2009; Wright, 2010). Innovation and creation are also crucial, but these topics are seldom discussed and taught to current or future foreign language teachers with no existent research done on their delivery or impact in the field of foreign language teaching. Ayers (2001) writes, "Teachers must become inventors and creators, thinkers and doers" (p. xiv). This quote describes the qualities that Abi, Tana, and Jinni developed and fused and that catapulted them into being teacher trainers and educators. Each of

them recognized and spoke passionately of their inventiveness in the classroom, but they did not categorize it as such. They explained that (re)creating and innovating their teaching practices was the inevitable next step since their students' learning objectives and goals required them to provide more for them. Ayers described teaching and wrote, "It is an activity that is intensely practical and yet transcendent, brutally matter-of-fact, and yet fundamentally a creative act (p. 122). The participants' responsibility towards their students generated the necessity for them to search for new ways to help them in their language acquisition journey.

Each of them designed their classroom curriculum from the beginning of their professional careers. They all said that it was not an easy task, and all mentioned the desire to apologize to their previous students because they know now and can see the terrible and embarrassing mistakes they were making when they were trying these tactics in their classrooms long ago. Tana mentioned she was further ahead compared to some of her colleagues since she had experienced the elaboration of materials and assessment for all those lonely years as she began her teaching career. Abi mentioned a list of activities, rubrics, and performance goals she created before ACTFL produced their list of proficiency and performance. She said that she needed to offer a way for students to understand their progress and that could serve as feedback for them and their parents. After learning about the ACTFL (2012) documents, she was assured that she had been in the right path to increase and support her students' language acquisition. It was impressive to witness Jinni's expansive knowledge of the materials that she utilizes, modifies, and creates to make her students' learning experiences unique and completely individualized.

Birkmaier (1971) wrote, "Adventurous thinking or imaginativeness, and insatiable curiosity, getting away from the main track, being open to experience, permitting one thing to lead to another, discovering, innovating, inventing—these are the components of the creative

process” (p. 345); this is also a summary of Tana, Jinni, and Abi’s approach to teaching. Implementing creativity in the classroom as introduced and described by the quote above, does not mention best practices, content knowledge, high-level practices; instead, it requires intangible behaviors and demeanors that are difficult to measure and explain. The issue is to find a way to implement, support, inculcate, and evaluate these intangible characteristics in current and future teachers. Brinkman (2010) writes, “A constellation of personality traits is associated with creative individuals. Some of those include the willingness to take risks, a tolerance for ambiguity, an intrinsic motivation, a sense of humor, a wide range of interest, and persistence” (p. 48). Brinkman explained that teaching others how to be creative is complicated and requires much support from seasoned teachers who can provide guidance when innovation and implementation is to take place in the classroom of a novice teacher. He reminds us that “creativity happens when expertise, creative thinking skills, and motivation overlap” (p. 48). Still, these attributes are fundamental for a successful teaching and learning experience. The characteristics listed by Brinkman are akin to Anzaldúa’s list of concepts and theories that make up the *Coyolxauhqui*, that weaves a person’s tangible and intangible knowledge allowing *la mestiza* to view the situation from different perspectives without dismissing any information and allowing her to arrive at innovative possibilities. Abi, Tana, and Jinni are these seasoned educators who can lead others towards innovation and creation.

A topic related to creativity and innovation that surfaced in the interviews was the use of acting in the foreign language classroom. Birkmaier (1971) long ago addressed the need to train and educate future foreign language teachers to conceptualize and create their practices beyond a textbook and a set of grammatical points. She called for implementation of techniques, training, and classroom support that develops and shepherds teachers’ innovative powers in the language classroom. She mentioned the “dramatization” (p. 351) of the language classroom where

imaginative role play and the acting-out of situations were essential to the acquisition of the target language. In a similar vein, Ayers (2001) utilizes the metaphor of teaching as acting to explain the skills that a teacher should possess. He explained how great actors must be dynamic, continuously searching for ways to connect with their audience. Also, he explained that actors must dig deep into their knowledge and experiences and construct a bond between the self and the public performance. This bond solidified by genuine curiosity for the material portrayed elevates the actor's performative role. Finally, he highlights that learning to act is never finished. With each role, performance, audience, the action of acting is always anew. Ayers's metaphor of teaching directly connects with Abi and Jinni's mentions of acting as foundational to their teaching. First, Jinni is a trained actress, and her performance experiences helped make sense of her teaching practice. She said that, as a teacher, she could not be the start of the show. She became the director of the play or film. She could guide, advice, redirect, but ultimately, the students were the performers, and she needed to stay away from their spotlight. Abi said that acting was her life. She explained how she would make her students stand up and talk in the target language, set up scenarios for them, ask them to pretend and encourage them to be funny and enjoy their moment of performance. Like Jinni, Abi said that she needed to help her students be as good as they could be in the target language while she shepherded their performance because she was not going to be with them when they would be asked to produce the target language. Tana did not mention acting as a tool she openly utilized in her practice, but when she described herself as an introvert, I could not believe her. She is outgoing, energetic, commands the room with her presence and insight—a great performer.

Utilizing drama in the classroom is a practice that has been well investigated. Angelianawati (2019) presents an extensive argument that delineates the benefits of using drama in the ESL/EFL classroom. Her literature review provides work dating back to the 1960's

asserting that “drama facilitates students of every level of education, advances their intellectual skills such as creativity, problem-solving, communication, socialization, and empathy, and it provides individuals the chance for self-actualization, teamwork and sharing their responsibilities” (p. 126). Even (2008) adds, “Drama pedagogy for foreign language learning is both a realization and an extension of communicative language teaching, aimed at developing communicative (Canale and Swain) and interactional competence (Kramsch) in the foreign language” (p. 162). She asserts that it also, “furthers the competence of the intercultural speaker ...; the ability to achieve the best with what the learners—linguistically and nonlinguistically—have available in any given situation” (p. 163). These two quotes summarize how Abi and Jinni use drama/acting in their teaching practices, also contains many of the language objectives that a successful foreign language classroom should promote and provide for students. What is missing is a conversation that examines the combination of these topics that have been studied and performed before but lack the potential of their fusing. Abi’s, Tana’s, and Jinni’s stories can serve as the spark that can create a conversation among these topics.

Transformation

Coyolxauhqui is your symbol for both the process of emotional psychical dismemberment, splitting body/mind/spirit/soul, and the creative work of putting all the pieces together in a new form, a partially unconscious work done in the night by light of the moon, a labor of re-vision and re-membling.

(Anzaldúa, 2015, p. 124)

Abi wonders about what the teachers she supervises have learned in their university language and teaching programs and is constantly amazed about the discrepancies of what her teachers expect and what they experience in their teaching practices. García and Davis-Wiley (2015) cite the words of Levine (2006) and highlight from his investigation that,

The nation's teacher education programs are inadequately preparing their graduates to meet the realities of today's standards based, accountability driven classroom, in which the primary measure of success is student achievement. [The study] concludes that a majority of teacher education graduates are prepared in university-based programs that suffer from low admission and graduation standards. Their faculties, curriculums and research are disconnected from school practice and practitioners. (p. 31)

This is one of Abi's consternations as a language coordinator since she does not want to lose teachers who feel discouraged by their experiences in the classroom and schools, ultimately driving them to leave the profession. As proposed above, a conversation among all stakeholders is necessary. Is important to hear from current and future teachers, supervisors, administrators, teacher trainers and educators, university language and education faculty, and state and national language organizations, in which each can present the issues and concerns that derive from their own positions. In a cacophony of concerns and preoccupations, new perspectives and solutions could arise. Abi's, Tana's, and Jinni's narratives provide a starting point to highlight some of the issues they perceived important from their own positionalities that combine, clash, and create new ways of framing foreign language teacher education in the United States.

Investigating Abi's initial concern regarding the education of novice teachers, Reagan and Osborn (2001), list content, pedagogical, and curriculum knowledge as foundational information for any foreign language teacher. They add,

The effective language educator must also have detailed and in-depth knowledge of learners, learning and teaching styles, and barriers of learning ... also know about and understand the broader social and cultural context in which she or he is to teach ... the language educator must be able to demonstrate a clear and adequate knowledge of

educational ends, purposes, and values, especially with respect to the teaching and learning of foreign languages. (pp. 19–20)

To achieve these goals, future and current teachers need to acquire vast knowledge in education, foreign language, and foreign language education. Tedick (2009) provides a solution:

Language and education faculty might join forces to challenge the bifurcation of language and content instruction still prevalent in language departments by developing content-based programs designed to prepare teachers. The bottom line is that if language education is to be transformed, so must language teacher education. Change is never easy and change within institutions or higher education is especially complex and elusive.

However, change is what we need. It is time for liberal arts and education faculty to come together to imagine the possibilities. (p. 266)

This is a basic but monumental transformation that would need to take place to create a foundational relationship that would assure the appropriate education for foreign language teachers.

Jinni focuses on teaching how to teach a foreign language and does not support or assess her student's language abilities. This may not even be something she can do, since she may not speak the language her students teach. Abi spoke about the necessity to have a perfectly balance curriculum that integrates both education and foreign language courses. She hesitated in completely supporting this combination because she knows that an individual would need more dedicated time in school to complete this course work. Abi noted that individuals must have jobs to pay for school, and being in the classroom for one or one and a half years observing and co-teaching is unattainable economically since future teachers do not get compensated for this practicum. Her opinion is solidified by her own student teaching experience. Abi became in charge of the classroom as she was student teaching because her lead teacher gave up on her and

on her students. This teacher just turned the class over to her and disconnected. Abi was doing all the work without compensation, and this obviously has had its impact on her perception of this experience. Many professional and technical careers demand a lengthy apprenticeship in which the future professional must be in a careful and dedicated relationship with a senior professional mentor. Engineers, doctors, architects, police officer, nurses, firefighters, etc., go through a period of close partnership with senior mentors while they are learning on the job after completion of their education programs. These professionals are paid while they are in this apprenticeship period.

In relation, Asención Delaney (2012) writes, “the belief that once teacher training is completed new teachers are fully qualified to face every professional challenge has proved to be detrimental to schools and students” (p. 184). This is obviously connected to Abi’s daily experience with the teachers she leads. Swanson (2012a) recalls the words of Semthem,

During this critical professional stage, novice educators are building and rebuilding their professional identity (the values, practices, and purposes that constitute their vocational identities) and find themselves most vulnerable These individuals need opportunities to observe and experience mastery early in the teacher-preparation programs. (p. 95)

The development of future and novice teachers’ identities is key for the acquisition of a *Coyolxahqui* vision, and as discussed before, this must be supported by *nepantleras*, like Abi, Tana, and Jinni, who can create the tension and support needed for growth. For this reason, it is imperative to keep master teachers like Abi and Tana in the classroom instead of locking them into lengthy language coordination positions, robbing teachers in their programs of their insights and knowledge.

Asención Delaney (2012) offered an in-depth study that gathers different perspectives and recommendations regarding foreign language mentoring. She quotes the work of Malderez and Bódoczky (1999), when they explained that

mentors need to go beyond simply being models of accomplished teaching, and they need to assume additional professional roles such as that of (1) acculturator of their mentees to the policies and practices of the school community, (2) supporters of emotional and cognitive processes in the development of their mentees' professional identity, and (3) sponsors of their mentees for full acceptance by the school community. (p. 187)

She does agree that mentor teachers must also help with the development of the mentee's language skills, technology usage, implementation of pedagogical knowledge, application of best practices, and creation of evaluative tools to assess teaching, but she also notes that there are not enough studies regarding the success of foreign language mentors in the United States. Asención Delaney (2012) calls for future research that can focus on how individuals can become mentor teachers, the type of training these individuals would need to support future teachers, their compensation, and other variables not yet predicted. After reading Asención Delaney's work, it becomes clear that not every seasoned teacher can and will be a mentor teacher since they perhaps lack the characteristics of what a mentor, *nepantlera*, teacher requires. Therefore, a *nepantlera* teacher, such as Tana or Jinni, can be hired to help teacher supervisors, like Abi, select, create, and implement in-house development and training. Entering an extended and enduring relationship can give Tana and Jinni the opportunity to become part of the team and create rapport with faculty and staff, which could produce sustainable and durable improvements in the language program while developing and training their teachers. Jinni mentioned that her main teaching objective is to help her students become master teachers. Her students can then be key players in the training, development, and mentorship of teachers in their programs.

Another topic that was important for Abi, Tana, and Jinni is the level of language production, proficiency, and performance that current and future teacher must have before entering the classroom. ACTFL's vision statement adopted in December, 2021, states that, "ACTFL envisions an interconnected world where everyone benefits from and values a multilingual and multicultural education" (n.p.). Brecht and Walton (1995) write,

America's language needs will increasingly be in the realm of "third" and "fourth" languages for the simple reason that individuals in educational settings simply cannot assume that the one language studied in school is a language that their lives will present them opportunities to use. (pp. 114–115)

This goal is compelling when globalization and the development of technologies that keep us connected is considered. Still, there are issues that complicate this goal and can be noticed by the time between Brecht and Walton's (1995) work and ACTFL implementation of their vision statement. García et al. (2019) emphasize that "40% of candidates were unable to meet required proficiency expectation for the language in which they were seeking certification" (p. 169). Tana commented that, when she began teaching, she would have not been able to pass the examinations needed today to become a teacher. She mentioned that she did not need a high-level of performance, forget proficiency, since she was teaching introductory language classes. Abi also comments on this issue, saying that she has wonderful teachers she supervises that she is afraid of losing since they cannot pass the examination needed due to their language proficiency level.

Kissau and Algozzine (2013) provide this solution,

For example, to be eligible to teach introductory-level coursework (Levels 1-2), teachers could be required to have at least Intermediate High proficiency. Conversely, to teach Level III, IV, or AP classes, a proficiency of at least Advance low would be required

Given that the majority of foreign language teaching positions involve lower-level instruction, such a change may help alleviate the shortage of qualified teachers. (p. 129)

This is exactly what Tana and Abi identified as a solution. This is not to say that the level of proficiency and performance of a language teacher is not important and will not have an impact in that teacher's practice, but sensible and applicable solutions need to be implemented to reduce attrition from the profession. Tana understood her shortcomings in her performance of the language and worked throughout her career to improve and maintain a high level of proficiency by traveling abroad, reading, and listening to the target language, and becoming involved with her local language organization. Burke and Ceo-DiFrancesco (2022) study the recruitment and retention of world language teachers, and in their investigation, they found that some teachers refrain from leaving the profession because of "opportunities their programs coordinators offered where they practice conversation skills to maintain and improve their proficiency, such as conversation hours, telecollaboration, and informal conversation groups" (p. 348). This is something that Abi could do in her district as a development activity and where her native speaking teachers seeking alternative certification could pair with seasoned teachers to combine language production with language pedagogy that can all be shared in the target language.

Moreover, Jinni is the perfect example of an individual who is capable of speaking several languages, again, not all at a high level, but this has given her insight, perception, and acuity on how languages are acquired, taught, and learned around the world. Jinni has taught in several countries in Europe, and she also teaches master and doctoral students all over the world since her program is completely online. Her students bring issues and perspectives that are particular to their sites but that can be relevant to what language teachers encounter in the United States. Jinni could provide us with insight on her students' experiences and what she learns from their encounters. Let me add here that the topic of being or becoming multilingual, translingual,

or plurilingual carries a lot of debate. This idea is by no means new to the field. Jensen et al. (2007) advocated and predicted its implementation as the single most important shift for the future of foreign languages in the United States. This investigation does not mean to dig deep into this issue, but it must recognize that language program's curricula, teacher training and education, teaching recruitment and retention, would be critically affected, and major changes would have to take place to achieve ACTFL's vision.

An Act of Love

A heightened consciousness or awareness that I call “conocimiento” and some call “love” ... initiates the relationship between self-knowledge and creative work.

(Anzaldúa, 2015, p. 40)

Future and current foreign language teachers will benefit from reading Jinni's, Tana's, and Abi's stories and making connections, imagining new paths, and hopefully, demanding and proposing new forms of development and training that can lead to major and imperative changes in their classrooms and enhance the learning experiences of their students. Moreover, they would be able to see the dedication and commitment to the profession. Swanson (2012b) wrote,

Teaching, much like other occupations, is “one of those rare jobs in which one's work is wrapped up in one's personality” (Royal Bank Newsletter, 2000). The choice of one's occupation is an expressive act that reflects a person's knowledge, ability, motivation, and personality. (pp. 521–522).

The (re)making of one's personality is the act of (re)configuring the *Coyolxahqui* that is intrinsically bound to the individual sense of self. Therefore, it is important to investigate what drives and draws individuals to pursue a career in teaching, understand how they morph to improve their practices, and what sustains them in the profession. Burke and Ceo-DiFrancesco

(2022) investigating the factors that motivate individuals to pursue a career in world language teaching and found three themes, “Motivation, Recruitment and Enrollment, and Retention and Persistence” (p. 314). They identified world language teacher candidates’

passion for learning language and cultures and their love of teaching language and culture as major reasons for pursuing WL teacher education as a career (Kissau et al., 2019).

Furthermore, findings in this study revealed that the passion and love for learning and teaching were cultivated by both secondary and postsecondary WL educators. (p. 351)

Tana asserted the importance of recruiting our students from our own classrooms. She pointed out that this was going to be the best way to keep our profession relevant because we would not only be recruiting future teachers but creating strong allies and advocates who could champion the importance and relevance of learning a foreign language.

The topic of love and foreign language teaching has not been fully investigated. Jensen et al. (2007) wrote when describing world language supervisors,

First and foremost, they are passionate and relentless in what they do. For world languages supervisors, this passion is critically important ..., [they] are viewed as innovators and collaborators with other curriculum areas; and are active members of local, state, and national organizations devoted to learning and teaching. (p. 48)

They add that, “supervisors support teachers in becoming lifelong learners focused on how to improve teaching and learning” (p. 54). Abi, Tana, Jinni not only exhibited all the characteristics mentioned, but in our interviews, they recounted and personified this passion and fervor for foreign language teaching and learning. Barcelos and Coelho (2016), talked about the importance of love in foreign language teaching practice. They quoted the important work done by Noddings (2018), and hooks (2014), regarding the necessity to create a caring relationship infused by love between teacher and students that establishes the indispensable, open, and safe dialogue that is

fundamental for learning. The authors highlighted the lack of the use of the word love in teaching, which is substituted by passion. Tana, Jinni, and Abi utilized this substitution to describe the emotional characteristics within their teaching practices, which they point to as imperative for teachers to possess. They avoided the word love and talked about passion, dedication, patience, commitment, sharing, inspiration, and many other terms that are fundamental to a loving and caring relationship.

Barcelos and Coelho (2016) quoted the work of Day (2004) who noted three main characteristics of a passionate teacher, which can be summarized as knowing the self, knowing the content of the subject they teach, and the willingness to collaborate with their students and colleagues (p. 133). Barcelos and Coelho also quote the work of Liston who wrote, “A teacher who loves teaching shares this love of learning with students and teaches students about it, trying to instill in them this love for the subject as well” (p. 134). Abi, Tana, and Jinni do this with the people they train and educate. Each of them recounted stories of specific instances and moments they had with students and other teachers; it was difficult to miss their genuine interest in the well-being of the people they were helping. Barcelos and Coelho presented Liston’s three types of love: romantic, transformative, and attentive. Romantic love would be when teachers do what the quote above explained, which is to inculcate students with their love for teaching and learning. Transformative love is described as the love that sustains teachers as they manage obstacles and impediments in their teaching practices. Attentive love is the desire to simply do good for students and a desire to meet students where they are and help them grow as individuals. These types of love relate to the motivational factors teacher candidates portray as mentioned in Jensen et al. (2007). Still, Barcelos and Coelho (2016) highlighted that embodying these types of love requires a high degree of vulnerability that sometimes may result in discomfort, confusion, and pain. They pair this concerning reality with the words of Freire

(2018) and write that “there is no education without love; those who are not able to love incomplete human beings are not able to be educators” (p. 135). The *mestiza nepantlera* knows that vulnerability is a necessary act to promote change. She has the liminal space of *Nepantla* to inhabit and make sense of the impediments, emotions, and knowledge that will provide an alternative path for self-realization.

Moreover, Barcelos and Coelho (2016) call for the implementation of professional development that requires the understanding of love, care, and compassion in the practice of foreign language teachers. This is an interesting and important recommendation since the implementation of curriculum that feeds and sustains the heart of the teacher will be fundamental. Palmer (2000) writes, “The connection made by good teachers are held not in their methods but in their hearts—meaning heart in its ancient sense, as the place where intellect and emotion and spirit and will converge in the human self” (p. 11). The *mestiza* knows and understands this definition of heart because it is present with her *facultad* that prompts her to “take inventory” (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 104), and safeguard the good, the bad, the success, the failure, without discarding any detail even if it causes pain which helps her put the pieces of the *Coyolxauhqui* together and make the self-anew each time. *La mestiza* knows it is necessary to continuously engage in this process to create and obtain hopeful and eminent transformation. Teacher development and training must open and disclose the fear, elation, sadness, loneliness, rage, and pain and talk about the innumerable feelings that teaching produces. Ayers (2001) tells us, “To teach is to choose a life of challenge ... [it] is an act of faith” (p. 137). Let us teach and learn in faith.

Into the F

uture

Good teachers have always been and will always be, and there are good teachers now.

The necessity henceforth is that fewer of them be accidents. The area of accident is reduced when there is a design which includes the education of teachers.

Reagan and Osborn (2001, p. 17)

Abi's, Tana's, and Jinni's stories show us that it is not an accident that they became great teachers. There were many twists and turns, some expected, but most of them appear to be serendipitous. This is a list that highlights these foreign language teacher educators' experiences and presents the possibility and potential of a *Coyolxauhqui* vision:

- a. Strength and support creativity in the foreign language professional.
- b. Merge and incorporate strategies used by the field of theater to enhance foreign language repertoire particularly related to oral proficiency and performance.
- c. Increase collaboration from foreign language and education programs to enhance pre-service teachers' development and preparation.
- d. Develop, support, and instill the necessity for reflective practices that must be essential to the practice of every teacher.
- e. Center the imperative importance of teachers' hearts in the curriculum of foreign language teacher preparation and development that strengthens and sustains professionals in the field.

Abi's, Tana's, and Jinni's narratives present an amalgam of experiences fueled by innate curiosity and rooted in creativity which led to deep introspective reflection that ultimately caused (re)(de)construction of themselves and their teaching practices. The telling of their stories opens an opportunity to learn from foreign language teacher educators and trainers who can provide us

with a different perspective of the field. This investigation's main purpose has been to present the important abilities and talents that teacher trainers and educators acquired as they helped others flourish in their teaching practices. It has also served to present the complicated state of the field of foreign language in the United States. What remains is the question of where we go from here. The main aspiration would be to collect the stories of foreign language teachers and capture their experiences to create better programs, techniques, and support for their retainment and recruitment. Consequently, this would allow for the opportunity to learn from each other's stories and create a sense of community from our particular but universal experiences that can help connect and propel us to start a conversation about our needs as foreign language teachers in the United States. The importance of embracing vulnerability as a key component of teaching is also fundamental. The combination of alternative sources of knowledge that can support and help define the growth of teachers is imperative.

I utilized the work of Anzaldúa (1987, 2009, 2015) to investigate Abi's, Tana's, and Jinni's characteristics and ways of knowing. Anzaldúa's *conocimientos* have personally helped me make sense of my teaching practice, and after studying and learning from these three women, I am mesmerized, but not surprised, by the array of attributes that merge to create an exemplary lead teacher. Listening to their stories highlights the necessity for training and development focused on the heart of the teacher, especially for those individuals who arrived at the profession through alternative processes. Also, it would be beneficial to question, investigate, and challenge the body of knowledge and process of certification that are required for foreign language teachers to acquire before entering the field. All these themes and topics can help us (re)create alternative pathways of education, training, and development for current and future foreign language teachers. These innovations can help us infuse current and future teacher practices,

which will also enhance students' learning experiences, which will maintain the field of foreign language teaching and keep it relevant and growing.

Anzaldúa (2015) writes,

During the whole componiendo y des-componiendo drafting phase you're in a state of extreme unease. To reduce the intolerable pressure, you remind yourself that confusion is a necessary stage of creating, that the disequilibrium brought on by disorganization and chaos forces you to use your imagination to right the balance and compose in a better order. (p. 107)

Abi's, Tana's, and Jinni's stories embody this (un)(re)making, a constant way of questioning and challenging what we know and hold dear, but by moving, adjusting, and changing, the birth of new possibilities is always present. Their *Coyolxauhqui* vision captures the complexity of these women's practices and exemplifies the dedication and commitment they have to the profession. The work of the *Coyolxauhqui* lies in the intersection of uncertainty and uncharted paths towards *conocimiento*, drenched in the willingness to learn. I will finish with this quote by Palmer (2000), which connects to the teaching of Anzaldúa and states, "Teaching always takes place at the crossroads of the personal and the public, and if I want to teach well, I must learn to stand where these opposites intersect" (p. 63). Anzaldúa teaches us that, by standing at the crossroad, *la mestiza* thrives, and even at this most vulnerable position, the *nepantlera mestiza* believes and prospers in faith and possibility. The work of the field of foreign language teaching in the United States is in progress, like the cyclical (re)inventing of the *Coyolxauhqui*. Having this vision is imperative to continue the work needed to solidify the importance and usefulness of our field in the future.

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Research and Creative Activity

ODonald, K., & Calderon, F. (2021). Comadreando: Entangling the web of our lives. In *Performing Maternities: A Global Perspective* (Vol. Performance and Communities Series). University of Brighton, UK: Intellect Books.

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Presentations

ODonald, K., Espinoza-Dulanto, M., & Calderon, F. (2022, October). *Testimonio and Inquiry done in Convivio: Reinveting ourselves*. *Curriculum and Pedagogy Conference*. State College, PA.

ODonald, K. (2022, July). *Spanish for all: How to include every student in our courses*. *AATSP Conference*. San Juan, PR.

ODonald, K., Calderon, F., & Espinoza-Dulanto, M. (2021, November). *Sold-out: Latinas struggling with self-promotion*. *The American Educational Studies Association*. Portland, Washington.

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