

UCLA

UCLA Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

"Connecting to My Roots": Filipino American Students' Language Experiences in the U.S. and in the Heritage Language Class

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/214494vk>

Author

Angeles, Bianca C.

Publication Date

2015

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

“Connecting to my Roots”:

Filipino American Students’ Language Experiences in the U.S.

and in the Heritage Language Class

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts

in Education

by

Bianca Cruz Angeles

2015

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

“Connecting to my Roots”:

Filipino American Students’ Language Experiences in the U.S.

and in the Heritage Language Class

by

Bianca Cruz Angeles

Master of Arts in Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2015

Professor Robert T. Teranishi, Chair

Filipinos are one of the biggest minority populations in California, yet there are limited opportunities to learn the Filipino language in public schools. Further, schools are not able to nurture students’ heritage languages because of increased emphasis on English-only proficiency. The availability of heritage language classes at the university level – while scarce – therefore becomes an important space for Filipino American students to (re)learn and (re)discover their language and identity. Using the lenses of language shift and language maintenance, this study aimed to explore Filipino American students’ language experiences broadly in the U.S., and in the Filipino heritage language classroom. Through semi-structured interviews, I find that the family is their frame of reference for collective language experiences. While language shift

occurred in families because of various societal pressures, they also described language maintenance practices that helped retain Filipino language learning in their families. At the university, the heritage language classroom was described as transformative space where students were able not only to (re)learn Filipino, but also find a curriculum that reflected their personal stories and allowed them to strengthen their ties to their families and to the Philippines.

The thesis of Bianca Cruz Angeles is approved.

Nenita P. Domingo

Teresa L. McCarty

Concepción Valadez

Robert T. Teranishi, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2015

DEDICATION PAGE

I dedicate this thesis

To my family, whose unrelenting support empowers me every day; and

To my students, who continue to teach me that being “Filipino American” takes on
hundreds of different, beautiful meanings.

Maraming, maraming salamat.

Thank you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
DEDICATION	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
INTRODUCTION	1
History of Filipino Migration to the U.S.	1
SIGNIFICANCE	2
Heritage Languages: Transmission and Loss.....	3
Bilingualism versus the English-Only Movement	3
Filipino American History in Schools.....	4
Filipino Language in Schools.....	4
RESEARCH QUESTIONS	5
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW	5
Living In-Between.....	5
Liminality in Language	6
Heritage Languages	7
Heritage Language Maintenance	7
Maintaining Language in the Home: Family Language Policy.....	7
The Heritage Language Class	8
SETTING	8
The Filipino Heritage Language Class	8
Researcher Positionality	9
METHODS	10
DATA ANALYSIS	10
PARTICIPANTS	12
Table 1: Summary of Participant Information.....	13
Vignette: Lipin Tayag.....	14
Vignette: Hide Navarro	15
Vignette: Zara David	17

Vignette: Terrie Fernandez	19
Vignette: Stephanie Domingo	21
Vignette: Christian Soto	23
Vignette: Allie Reyes.....	24
FINDINGS	26
The Family as the Center of Filipino Identity	27
Collective Language Experiences: Filipino Language and the Family	29
Language Shift	30
Language Shift and Generation	30
Language Shift and Experiences in Schools.....	33
Language Shift and Family Language Policy.....	35
Language Maintenance	39
Language Maintenance in the Family.....	40
Language Maintenance among Peers.....	42
Language Maintenance and Returning Home.....	43
“To Embrace America”: Lives in Between	44
The Filipino Heritage Language Class	51
Life Experiences Reflected in Curriculum	53
Strengthening Relationships with Family.....	56
Visualizing Selves as Filipino Speakers	60
CONCLUSION	64
IMPLICATIONS	67
APPENDIX	69
Appendix A: Top Concentration by Metropolitan Area for Foreign Born from the Philippines.....	69
Appendix B: Availability of Filipino Language Classes at the University of California.....	70
Appendix C: Availability of Filipino Language Classes at the California State University	70
Appendix D: Summary of Field Work	71
Appendix E: Level 1 Coding – Occurrence of Themes	72

Appendix F: Level 2 Coding – Coding Tree	73
Appendix G: Level 3 Coding – Code Book	74
REFERENCES	77

INTRODUCTION

History of Filipino Migration to the U.S.

Consistent with shifting demographics in the United States, Filipinos experienced a 38% population growth according to the 2010 Census, and they now comprise one of the biggest minority groups in America (“1.2 Million Filipinos Live in California,” 2011). As of 2013, there are 1,844,000 Philippine-born immigrants in the U.S., and they rank third in population among Asian immigrants after India and China (McNamara & Batalova, 2015).

As an American colony from 1898 to 1934 (Barkan, 1999), Filipino migration to the U.S. presents a unique case of fluctuating open- and closed-door policies. The *pensionados* were the first wave of Filipinos to immigrate. These men came from elite Filipino families, and were sponsored by the U.S. government to seek education abroad. Five hundred were initially sponsored in the early 1900s, and an additional 14,000 students became *pensionados* between 1910 and 1938 (Bautista, 2009). After obtaining their degrees, they returned to the Philippines and took on leadership roles in government and business.

A different demographic of Filipino immigrants settled on American shores after 1908, when Japanese workers were banned from migrating to the U.S. by virtue of the Gentlemen’s Agreement (Basa, 2004). To replace these workers, Hawaiian plantation owners looked to Filipino laborers, whose ambiguous status as “U.S. nationals¹” exempted them from immigration restrictions. Unlike the *pensionados*, these workers came from humble backgrounds in rural provinces (Bautista, 2009); most of them were illiterate and had left the Philippines to provide better economic opportunities for their families. In the context of anti-Asian immigrant

¹ While exempted from immigration restrictions, U.S. nationals were not allowed to become naturalized citizens. As such, they were not allowed to vote, establish business, hold political office, own property, or petition family members to immigrate to the U.S. (Bautista, 2009).

sentiment, these Filipino workers also filled labor shortage needs in California farms and Alaskan canneries (Basa, 2004).

In 1935, the American government passed the Tydings-McDuffie Act, which promised Philippine independence after ten years. This legislation also upheld an immigration quota of 50 individuals annually. In addition, as citizens of an independent nation, Filipinos consequently lost their status as U.S. nationals and the immigration protections that came with it. These restrictions were lifted during World War II, when Filipinos were recruited to serve in the U.S. military (Bautista, 2009). Military service eventually opened the door for thousands of Filipinos to acquire U.S. citizenship. The 1965 Immigration Act – with special provisions for medical professionals and family reunification – further opened up pathways for migration to the U.S. (Dela Cruz & Agbayani-Siewart, 2003).

In the present, Filipino migration to the United States continues. As of 2008, 26.5% of 1.7 million foreign-born Filipinos entered the U.S. in 2000 or later. More than a third of these immigrants reside in three metropolitan areas: Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York (McNamara & Batalova, 2015). Among the top ten destinations in the same report², five cities are in California: Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, Riverside, and San Jose.

SIGNIFICANCE

Considering the inextricable ties that historically and presently connect the Philippines to the United States, the experiences of the thriving Filipino community in America – particularly in California – merits attention from researchers. This study will focus on one facet of this continuously growing population’s experiences in the U.S. – language.

² See appendix for complete table on “Top Concentrations by Metropolitan Area for the Foreign Born from the Philippines.”

Heritage Languages: Transmission and Loss

Research indicates that within three generations, immigrants' heritage language is lost and replaced with English (Fishman, 1966; Veltman, 1983). This language shift presents a problem for psychological and social well-being, as command of a heritage language presents the following benefits:

- Retaining a distinct culture in the face of transitioning to life in a new country.
- Opportunity to gain recognition within one's ethnic group; and feelings of belonging that could lessen the damage of feeling like an outsider in the majority culture.
- Sustaining family relationships, as loss of heritage language has been cited as a reason for family conflict (Zhang, 2008).

Given these benefits, the argument for transmitting the Filipino language across generations is compelling. In the context of their lives in the U.S., how do Filipino Americans approach this language issue?

Bilingualism versus the English-Only Movement

In California – home to a majority of Filipino Americans – there are limited opportunities to practice or learn the Filipino language in schools. Overall, attitudes towards bilingualism in the U.S. have been historically ambivalent. The 1968 Bilingual Education Act was passed to set aside funding for supporting English learners in schools, but the influx of immigrants post-1965 also spurred support for the English-only movement (Zhang, 2008). In California, specifically, Prop 227 essentially eliminated bilingual instruction in favor of English-only classes (Hornberger, 2004; cited in Zhang, 2008).

Filipino American History in Schools

In teaching Filipino American history, however, recent progress has been made with the signing of Assembly Bill 123. Sponsored by Oakland's Rob Bonta, AB 123 requires school districts to offer courses at the K-12 level that

highlight the life and contributions of Cesar Chavez..., the history of the farm labor movement in the United States...[and] the role of immigrants, including Filipino Americans, in the farm labor movement (Bill Text – AB 123, 2013).

More recently in October 2014, the Los Angeles Unified School District approved Ethnic Studies as a high school graduation requirement (Gilbertson, 2014).

Filipino Language in Schools

While Filipino American history begins to find a place in the state curriculum, Filipino language classes remain scarce. At the K-12 level, these classes first appeared in California schools in Chula Vista in 1975, and in 2001, they were offered in 17 schools across 6 districts from the San Francisco Bay Area, Los Angeles County, and San Diego County. This was the most number of classes ever offered in the state (Lim, 2010).

At the university level, Filipino is offered at 6 of the 23 campuses of the California State University system, and 4 of the 9 campuses of the University of California³. Although difficult to find, students' participation in these heritage language classes become part of their language experiences, which are the central topic of interest for this investigation.

³ See appendix for table, "Filipino Classes Offered at CSUs and UCs."

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Given the continuously thriving Filipino population in California in the context of limited opportunities to practice and learn Filipino in public schools, this study aimed to examine the language experiences of Filipino Americans. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the language experiences of a select group of Filipino American college students?
2. How do these students express their experiences in the Filipino heritage language class (FHLC)?

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

The framework of understanding for this study relies on three concepts – firstly, the state of **liminality** or in-betweenness that Filipino American immigrants occupy in American society; second, **family language policies** in the home formed by their liminal experiences; and lastly, the potential for **language maintenance** in the Filipino heritage language classroom. I rely on these concepts as overlapping lenses to help visualize a narrative of Filipino Americans' language experiences in the U.S.

Living In-Between

Filipino American immigrants live in-between two cultures, at times resulting in ambiguity and an indeterminacy of identity (Huang, 2008). While Filipino communities continue to thrive in California, several researchers argue that they do so under the paradoxical pressures of assimilation and rejection. Regardless of status or generation, they must eventually confront the fact that they live in a society that will never fully accept them (Espiritu, 1994; Campomanes, 1995). For Filipino immigrants, the Philippines will always be “Home,” (Wolf, 2002) and as physical borders become easier to transcend because of globalization, sustaining ties with the

Philippines through emotional and material goods (Yeoh, 2005; cited in Huang, 2008) becomes commonplace.

Further, children of immigrants must negotiate these ties with their upbringing in the U.S. Even if they never set foot on Philippine soil, their parents' or grandparents' sustained connections with Home colors their understanding of their transnational lives. Wolf (2002) offers that this "emotional transnationalism" – a connection to Home defined not by physical presence, but by inherited emotions, ideologies, and cultural codes – further complicates identity formation.

Liminality in Language

Language is one terrain wherein ambiguity in identity plays out concretely. Negotiating between speaking Filipino and English is a crucial part of Filipino Americans' acculturation to life in the United States. Patterns in immigrants' language use, however, indicate that **language shift** – a change from habitual use of the dominant language (in this case, English) at the expense of the minority language – is quickly becoming the norm. The emphasis on learning English in schools accelerates this language shift, as the development and preservation of immigrants' home languages are neglected (Zhang, 2008).

Considering that close to two-thirds of Filipinos in the U.S. speak a language other than English (Cordova, 2000), this English-only policy takes away students' opportunities to build upon their home language and identities. Suppressing a multilingual environment also reinforces linguistic discrimination, and can potentially lead to lowered self-esteem and a sense of disempowerment (Leeman, 2011). Therefore, instead of reclaiming their home language and being able to use it in schools, students are forced to seek opportunities for heritage language (HL) learning.

Heritage Languages

A **heritage language** is a language other than the dominant one spoken in a given context (Kelleher, 2010). In contrast to a foreign language, a heritage language is one that is familiar to the learner in a variety of ways, meaning that they often have cultural ties to the language through their parents. Additionally, because of varying levels of exposure, speakers develop varying levels of fluency. For Filipino immigrants, they must negotiate competing pressures to assimilate to their new home country, or to retain their cultural identity, of which language is a crucial part. In the case of Filipinos in the U.S., shifting their language use from Filipino to English is beneficial, as it is the more powerful language that better facilitates inclusion into American society.

Heritage Language Maintenance

Several researchers have problematized the notion of heritage languages as deficiencies, and instead highlighted the many psychosocial benefits of heritage **language maintenance**, or the sustained use of a language despite competition from a “regionally and socially powerful, or numerically stronger language” (Mesthrie, 1999). Zanden (1999) proposed that HL maintenance allows immigrants to better control the rate in which they transition to the United States. As remnants of their cultural heritage, immigrants can hold on to their HL and hold on to part of their identity. For marginalized communities seen as perpetual foreigners, HL maintenance can help facilitate individuals’ assertion of their ethnicity, and therefore compensate for feeling out of place in American society.

Maintaining Language in the Home: Family Language Policy

In the home, one potential method of language maintenance is through explicit planning of language use among family members – what King et al (2008) and other researchers call

family language policy (FLP). Focusing on linguistic decisions made on the family's micro level sheds light on parental attitudes towards language, specifically towards bilingualism and the minority language's status in society. The decision to speak certain languages in the home, therefore, are informed by family members' negotiations between "social pressure, political impositions, and public education demands on the one hand; and the desire for cultural loyalty and linguistic continuity on the other" (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013). While one kind of FLP may prioritize HL maintenance, some may choose to emphasize the dominant language. Regardless, parental decisions regarding FLP greatly affect the home language's transmission to the next generation (Ghimenton, 2015).

The Heritage Language Class

In addition to FLP, heritage language classes can become spaces in which to access "linguistic and cultural knowledge and opportunities to explore [HL learners'] ethnic and cultural identities" (Cho et al, 1997). Many studies have explored the relationship between heritage language maintenance and ethnic identity. Among 1.5 and 2nd generation Korean Americans, Cho found that a higher competence in Korean corresponded with a stronger sense of self. Soto (2002; cited in Cho, et al) found that among bilingual Puerto Rican children, participants who were more proficient in Spanish also identified more strongly with their Puerto Rican identity. And lastly, Chinen and Tucker (2006; cited in Cho, et al) asserted that Japanese Saturday schools fostered a stronger sense of ethnic identity among its students.

SETTING

The Filipino Heritage Language Class

The introductory Filipino language class at West University is a year-long series that focuses on establishing or improving language proficiency. Filipino 1 in the fall quarter lays the

grammatical foundation for the course, emphasizing verb conjugation and sentence construction. Filipino 2 and 3 feature more challenging grammatical lessons. For the entire year, the grammar lessons are also contextualized in cultural lessons. Several cultural topics include Legacies of Colonization, Imperialism, Love and Courtship, and Indigenous Knowledge. Students learn how to read prose and poetry, and are encouraged to write their own. They also write the script, direct, and star in their own video projects at the end of each quarter. In addition to the course work, Filipino community leaders, activists, directors, and artists are regularly featured as guest speakers. Through them, students not only practice their language skills, but also learn about the Filipino community in the U.S. and in the world.

Most students who enroll are of Filipino heritage. For the 2014-2015 academic year, the enrollment numbers were: 89 students for Fall, 74 for Winter, and 70 for Spring. Lectures with the Professor met twice a week for a total of three hours, and discussion sections with Teaching Assistants met once a week for two hours.

Researcher Positionality

I approach this project with intersecting insider perspectives. First, as a Teaching Assistant for introductory Filipino, I had an existing relationship with the participants, although not as the instructor grading their work. My role as a TA also allowed me to more easily recruit participants for this study; I had access to their email addresses, and to an online forum that they actively participated in. With support from the Professor and my fellow TAs, I was able to send and-resend my call for participants in lectures, sections, and online.

As a TA, I was also inherently invested in improving students' learning experiences in the course. I initially intended to investigate students' motivations for taking Filipino as a foreign language with the goal of informing our team's teaching pedagogy. The interviews, however,

revealed students' rich stories and experiences with the language beyond the classroom, and I found these personal narratives to be much more compelling. Regardless, my position as a TA precludes my belief in the importance of the Filipino heritage language class.

As a 1.5 generation Filipino American, I identify very strongly with my informants' stories. I experienced the transition from living in the Philippines to the U.S. as a 14-year-old, and I see similar patterns of language loss and a need for language maintenance within my own family. It is through these intersecting perspectives that I present these students' stories in order to illustrate the impact of the heritage language class in their lives.

METHODS

I employed several qualitative methods for this study. I recruited participants from a convenient sample and used a pre-screening questionnaire to narrow down participants to a more purposeful sample. Through this questionnaire, I not only screened participants; I also used it to instruct them to bring a picture to the interview. I asked the students to bring a picture that they think represents what they think it means to be Filipino. Seven, 60-minute semi-structured interviews were conducted. In lieu of a strict interview protocol, I prepared a list of themes to discuss (Merriam, 2009), and I encouraged students to lead the discussion through their pictures.

DATA ANALYSIS

I began the data analysis process as I finished transcribing each interview following Saldaña's (2013) advice on pre-coding: "circling, highlighting, bolding, underlining, or coloring rich or significant participant quotes or passages...worthy of attention." Initially, I coded each interview by hand, but I found that using the Comments feature on Microsoft Word was more efficient, so I moved my coding process entirely to MS Word. I used my journal to reflect on the

codes that were emerging from the initial coding process⁴. After coding the first interview, I made sure to use the same codes on the following interviews if applicable; as expected, new codes continued to emerge with each participant's transcript.

I met with the participants after the initial round of coding to report back on the codes that I was creating. These meetings were crucial to this project, as the students provided insightful feedback on the preliminary themes I was visualizing. While many affirmed the codes, some also pushed back on how I was conceptualizing their families' stories. In describing Zara's second-generation family's experiences in the U.S., for example, I was using the term "assimilate." She challenged this term, citing its negative connotation, and that it was not as applicable to their situation; since her parents had moved to the U.S. as children, she argued that assimilation was no longer a salient issue for them.

With the students' suggestions in mind, I continued on to level 2 coding⁵. I used several coding strategies, including subcoding, in vivo coding, and process coding (Saldaña, 2013). Each coding strategy extracted different types of information from my data, and all were equally helpful in moving on to the creation of themes in level 3⁶.

Process coding allowed me to see common patterns in the participants' life histories, such as "losing Filipino proficiency," or "talking to extended family."

Using in vivo coding brought in the students' own words into the analysis process and allowed me to visualize their stories in metaphors; the title of this paper, for instance, was lifted verbatim from one student's interview.

⁴ See Appendix E for a table outlining level 1 codes.

⁵ See Appendix F for outlined level 2 codes.

⁶ See Appendix G for outlined level 3 themes.

Finally, subcoding allowed me to create preliminary themes. In the first iteration of my codebook, for example, I used the parent code “language loss vs. language retention.” Under this parent code, I had the following subcodes: “forgetting Filipino,” “family language policies,” “language retention strategies,” “recognizing Filipino proficiency,” “limited availability of Filipino courses,” and “feeling confused as a learner.” With feedback from peers, advisors, and instructors, these subcodes have been worked and reworked, and ultimately I use them as the thematic headings for the findings section.

PARTICIPANTS

The following short narrative profiles introduce the informants for this study. To some degree, each of them talked about being uncertain about their Filipino identity. Each vignette – drawn from anecdotes from the interviews, and from their final essays for the HL class – reflects how they continue to negotiate their Filipino ethnic identity with their life in the U.S.

At the time of data collection, all seven of my informants were enrolled in a year-long introductory Filipino language course at West University. They were recruited to contribute to this research project through class announcements and emails. In order to avoid any potential conflicts of interest, I approached students who were enrolled in the two sections led by two other Teaching Assistants. Several of my own students showed interest in contributing their own stories. I thanked them for their interest in participating, but explained to them that because of strict IRB protocol, it would not be possible for me to interview them.

I interviewed each of the following students for 45-60 minutes, and thanked them for their participation with a \$20 Amazon gift card. After transcribing their interviews and finishing the preliminary coding, I met with them for a second time and gave them a small gift of a \$5 West University Student Store gift card.

Name	Gender	Year in School	Generation	Self-Assessment of Proficiency	Place of Birth	Place of Residence	Ethnicity	Language Spoken to Parents
<i>Lipin</i>	M	3	2	Intermediate	Orange County, CA	Riverside, CA	Filipino	English, Ilocano
<i>Hide</i>	M	2	1.5 (immigrated at 12 years old)	Intermediate	Manila, Philippines	Oxnard, CA	Filipino, Japanese	English, Filipino, Japanese
<i>Zara</i>	F	2	2	Intermediate	Los Angeles, CA	Lake Elsinore, CA	Filipino	English, Filipino
<i>Terrie</i>	F	2	1.5 (immigrated at 4 years old)	Intermediate	Manila, Philippines	Monterey, CA	Filipino	English, Filipino
<i>Stephanie</i>	F	3	2	New Learner	San Diego, CA	San Diego, CA	Filipino, Guamanian	English
<i>Christian</i>	M	1	1.5 (immigrated at 6 years old)	Intermediate	Rizal, Philippines	Torrance, CA	Filipino	English, Filipino
<i>Allie</i>	F	2	2	New Learner	Long Beach, CA	Long Beach, CA	Filipino	English

Table 1: Summary of Participant Information

Lipin Tayag

Lipin⁷ is a third year transfer student and Linguistics major from Riverside, CA. He is a language enthusiast, and boasts varying levels of proficiency in French, Japanese, Filipino, and Ilocano.⁸ When he was growing up, he admitted that he was not sure why his family kept moving from one city to the next – his elementary school years were spent transitioning from one school to another in Tustin, Irvine, and Laguna Hills. In 7th grade, he made his biggest transition yet, when his parents decided to send him to school in the Philippines to learn Filipino.

“During that time, I was going through puberty, so I’m like, ‘Is this the right choice, for me to like, be surrounded by different people?’” Lipin reflected. He excelled in school and managed the linguistic transition well, even finding opportunities to practice his parents’ native Ilocano while learning Filipino. As a teen experiencing drastic changes in his surroundings, however, Lipin shared that at times, the change was overwhelming. “I kinda got really closed off and became so introverted,” he recalled.

After two years, they returned to California, where Lipin’s parents believed better educational and economic opportunities were available. Despite living far away, his parents’ lasting ties to the Philippines remain palpable, most evidently in the monthly remittances and boxes that they send to their relatives.

“They’re always sending money there,” Lipin said. “Like, tons of boxes. Every month. [They send] coffee, ramen, Vienna sausage, Spam..., and clothes – a lot of clothes.”

To use Lipin’s own words, his parents’ Filipino mindset is still intact, while he considers himself very much an American.

⁷ All names provided are pseudonyms.

⁸ A dialect spoken in the northern region of Ilocos in the Philippines.

“They talk about the Philippines all the time,” he said. “I can’t really talk about things in my life, because I’m growing up American.” I asked Lipin for some examples of these topics, but he said that they were too difficult to describe. He talked about yearning for a closer relationship with his parents, but a mutual frustration with each other’s cultures often got in the way.

Despite generational differences with his parents, Lipin’s own lasting connections with the Philippines were what prompted him to enroll in the Filipino heritage language class. Aside from the two years he spent in the Philippines, the schools that he attended from kindergarten to community college did not offer any Filipino language classes, so he was pleasantly surprised to see the class offered at West University.

“I just had to take it,” he said. “I think it all just boils down to identity and how you view yourself culturally in this world. Why would I just randomly choose Filipino, out of all the languages here? Because! It was part of me.”

Hide Navarro

Hide is a second year Business Economics major from Oxnard, CA, and he identifies as half-Filipino and half-Japanese. He grew up under his grandmother’s care in the Philippines, and he lived there until he was in first grade. He did well in school, especially in math, and he was scheduled to skip second grade altogether. The summer before second grade, however, his mother – who had been working in Japan for several years and had married there – made the decision to move Hide and his sister to Japan.

“I had to start all over,” Hide recalled. To add to the challenge of learning an entirely new language, he found that his teacher’s teaching methods did not match his learning style. Though initially poised to enter the third grade a year earlier than his peers, Hide had to go back to first

grade in Japan, and though previously confident in his math skills, he found himself struggling.

“Math was super hard,” he said. “I remember getting mad ‘cuz one time the teacher asked me – there was 3 eggs and 4 rows – and he asked me, ‘Is it 3 times 4, or 4 times 3?’ I picked the wrong one. I’m like, that’s the same thing!”

By the time Hide was 11, his mother remarried a Filipino American U.S. Navy sailor. Together, they moved their new family to Oxnard, where Hide’s school transition centered on fitting in with his predominantly Latino classmates. It was difficult for Hide to find his place, as he was expected to speak Spanish and understand his peers’ cultural customs that were foreign to him.

He shared, “My name in Japanese and Filipino is Hi-de.⁹ I had a Japanese name, but when I came here it became Hide, and then people [made] fun of me ‘cuz...in Spanish it’s inappropriate...I remember calling this girl out. I called her a *buta*. In Japanese [that means] pig. But then they thought I said [something else], so I got in trouble for that. Everyone speaks English, and then they expect me to know Spanish cuss words.”

Because being Filipino made him different, Hide started to hate his identity. He did not want to be labeled the “stereotypical Asian” – a character that he embodied and later resented when he brought rice for lunch.

“I liked to bring rice, but sometimes they made fun of me, so I didn’t bring lunch and I ate the school food that they had...which wasn’t that great,” Hide said while laughing. To fit in, he learned to adapt to what he called “Latino and Mexican culture” by learning Spanish and going to his friends’ *quinceañeras*.

⁹ Hide’s real name sounds similar to an inappropriate Spanish word.

Hide gladly shared these stories with me, and while he looked back on them with a sense of humor, he also openly admitted to hating being Filipino during this period in his life. A reunion with his grandmothers, both of whom moved to the U.S. around this time, was the one thing that kept Hide rooted in his Filipino identity. At home, they watched *telenovelas* together, and through their conversations, Hide was able to maintain some of his Filipino proficiency. His grandmothers inspired him to enroll in the heritage language class, and to some extent, to keep him connected to his identity.

Zara David

Zara is a second year Neuroscience major from Lake Elsinore, CA. She is the eldest of four children from a second-generation, suburban middle-class family, and among them she is the only one who speaks Filipino – the language that her parents still use to talk to each other, but not to their children.

In the David household, Filipino and English continue to coexist – and at times, clash. While growing up, Zara and her parents spoke to each other in Filipino, but when she was placed in ESL as a 5-year-old, they quickly realized that an English-only policy in their home reflective of the school’s was the best option for Zara and her siblings.

Within spoken English, there were several variations in their home, as well. Her mother had an accent, which she did not realize until her classmates noted it. They also commented that her father “sounded White,” which Zara attributed to his experience as an MBA graduate in a highly professional environment. Shifting away from Filipino at home was not complete, however, as both of her parents switched back when convenient. “It’s usually Tagalog ¹⁰if they don’t want my siblings to know what we’re talking about,” Zara said.

¹⁰ Filipino and Tagalog are two distinct languages, but I use them interchangeably in this study, as the students do.

In school, there were no opportunities to practice the language, as she shared that there were few Filipinos among her peers. Because the neighborhood was predominantly Latino, she was often the only Asian in her friend groups. Regardless, Zara embraced her role as “the Asian” and enjoyed growing up around a diverse group of people.

“I was the Asian, like that’s what my friends called me, even...[and] we liked to say when we sat down at lunch [that] it looked like the UN ‘cuz there’s just a little bit of everything,” she said.

West University was a completely different experience, however, and she remembered being culture shocked.

“It’s a lot of Asians,” Zara said. “Even for me...[I] grew up with it...[but] there was only like, a handful of them compared to here. It’s nice, and it’s also kind of overwhelming.”

Amidst her transition to college, she found a piece of home in the Filipino Club. General meetings reminded her of a “family party,” where “everyone’s here, and they’re loud, and they’re happy, and it’s great.”

It was important for Zara to find a home away from home, as family is very important to her. In her neighborhood, Zara’s family was one of three Filipino families. With pride, she described themselves as “the cool family,” as their house was always lit with the most beautiful decorations during the holiday season.

“A big part of what I relate to being Filipino is how we celebrate Christmas, ‘cuz I know it’s different for other cultures. Like the decorations, the *parol*¹¹ – I love that thing. I always get really excited when it gets hung up,” she said. They celebrated Christmas in the Philippines when she was in third grade, and she shared that her best memory was of the midnight mass,

¹¹ A star-shaped lantern; represents the Star of David that guided the three magi to Christ’s birth in Bethlehem. *Parols* are a common Christmas decoration among Filipino homes.

when the church was filled with people dressed in their Sunday best. For Zara, her understanding of her Filipino identity is rooted in her family's celebrations, specifically the closeness that it brings to them.

Terrie Fernandez

Terrie is a second year Psychology major. She was born in the Metro Manila area, and she and her family moved to the Central Coast of California when she was 4 years old. For Terrie, movement and transition are a way of life; since she was a child, she has moved from city to city 22 times.

She identifies as a Christian, and her faith is central to her Filipino identity. When she was an incoming freshman, Terrie recalled experiencing culture shock during orientation. She said, "I was shocked at how like, open people were – talking about sex, gender, and social issues too...I mean, we did talk about them in high school, but the openness here is like, really weird and different. But it's good because I feel like it's just better to be able to talk about anything."

As the daughter of two teachers, Terrie always pursued learning opportunities, especially for Filipino language. At home, English gradually became the only spoken language since it was the language used in school, and Terrie shared that her biggest motivation for enrolling in the heritage language class was to reverse the language loss she was experiencing. The shift to speaking only English at home was not absolute, however, as Terrie's parents constantly negotiated the importance of Filipino versus English through arbitrary language rules.

"They would have these phases," Terrie said. "[And] they'd be like, 'You have to speak Tagalog, or else you can't talk!' And I like, wouldn't speak for days."

When she got older, Terrie became more persistent about learning Filipino, despite being discouraged at certain times in her childhood. “I just don’t want it to die out, and like, be a Filipino American that doesn’t embrace the language that we have,” she said.

Throughout her life, Terrie sought to immerse herself in Filipino culture. As an undocumented immigrant, activities considered quintessentially Filipino like watching Manny Pacquiao’s fights or eating at Goldilocks¹² was her “overcompensation for not being accepted as an American.”

Despite this, Terrie was quick to contest the “Filipino American” label. Having known the United States as her only home, but at the same time having to live in the shadows as a second-class citizen, Terrie is neither Filipino nor American. She lives in between both cultures, but often she is forced to enunciate her identity – something she is not comfortable doing. In one such situation, Terrie recalled:

I took a Cultural Anthro class, and then we basically had to write about...what culture we identified with. And like, I think growing up, my parents were a bit like, ‘We’re not Filipino Americans,’ ‘cuz [of] that subconscious ‘I don’t wanna identify with the culture that rejects me,’ you know what I mean? So I had to write this paper about my cultural identity...and I didn’t wanna deal with it! I was just like, ‘I’m not Filipino American, but I’m clearly not Filipino.’ So I hesitantly wrote that I was Filipino American...because I am, but I wouldn’t willingly identify with it. I only identify with it because...literally, I am.

¹² A Filipino chain restaurant.

Stephanie Domingo

Stephanie Domingo is a third year Sociology major born and raised in San Diego, CA. She identifies as half-Filipino and half-Guamanian, and she grew up in a “typical Filipino household,” with her dad as the figurehead. She grew up around her dad’s 7 brothers and sisters, and through them she learned about Filipino traditions. Speaking fondly of her childhood years, Stephanie said, “We have such a big family, and they always use Tagalog with each other. Whenever there’s gatherings...our household would always be the hub of parties, so all of our extended family would always come over.”

To fit in with her dad’s big Filipino family, Stephanie’s mom learned to speak the language. Stephanie gauged her language ability positively, saying that her mom “definitely knows how to scold [her] in Tagalog,” and that she was able to keep up with the *tsismis* – or gossip – that her in-laws would talk about. As she was not fluent in her native Chamorro, however, Stephanie’s mom was not able to pass the language on to her children.

When Stephanie was 10 years old, she and her family relocated to Guam, giving her the opportunity to learn about her Guamanian heritage. She was culture shocked in the beginning, especially since life in Guam seemed to be more laid back than she was used to.

In school, “the curriculum was a year behind,” and Stephanie worried that she would be at a disadvantage if they ever returned to San Diego. Excelling in school had always been a priority for her, and as she shared her experiences in Guam, she weighed her parents’ cultures’ influence on her academics: “Filipinos really advocate good education – getting good grades, stuff like that. I feel like the Guamanian side is pretty chill and lax about it, so I didn’t get that much pressure from my mom...but more from my dad’s side to do well in school.”

The two years Stephanie's family spent in Guam were plagued with financial difficulty. Although they initially moved because her mom had been laid off, they experienced similar challenges in Guam.

"Finding work there was really hard for my parents," she said. "The labor market there is really saturated..., so it was definitely hard for my dad to find a stable job, and when he did, it wasn't really sufficient to support [our] family of five."

When they moved back to their old neighborhood in San Diego, Stephanie was disheartened to find that she had indeed fallen behind her peers academically. Because her friends were enrolled in advanced courses like AVID¹³, she felt the need to prove that she deserved a seat in those classes as well.

In a school that is close to 40% Filipino, Stephanie shared that while it was easy to identify with them, she did not restrict herself to being friends with only Filipinos. She took on several leadership roles on campus, but talked about Filipino organizations distantly.

"They have a club where they [have]...almost like a mini-PCN¹⁴. They would do performances...[like] the fan dance, so they would practice that after school. I would see them do that," she said.

Stephanie grew up in a rare situation, where her home environment is reflected in her high school. Thinking that she would learn everything about Filipino culture at home, Stephanie did not take advantage of Filipino language classes or Filipino organizations until she came to West University.

¹³ Advancement Via Individual Determination; "a global nonprofit organization...preparing all students for college and other postsecondary opportunities" (avid.org)

¹⁴ Pilipino Culture Night

Christian Soto

Christian Soto is a first year Business Economics major from Torrance, CA. He was born in Rizal province in the Philippines, and he lived there until he was 6 years old. His parents both held bachelor's degrees; his mother was an interior designer, and his father was an architect. Despite stable jobs, they did not foresee a bright future for their family in the Philippines.

“They weren't making a lot of money – even though they're both college-educated,” Christian said. “They kind of knew that there wasn't much room for upward mobility, not for themselves or for their kids. So even though it's hard...it was a sacrifice that they...were willing to make for their family.”

At a young age, Christian understood that it was important for him to do well in school. He was incredibly driven, but he was shy. He kept to himself and focused much of his energy into excelling academically and not getting in trouble. With regards to transitioning to a new school environment, he shared, “It's a good thing they always teach English in the Philippines, so it's not like English was too hard for me to pick up – but I definitely, you know, had an accent. I felt like I was different than the other kids.”

In his elementary school, Christian found it challenging to relate with his peers – most of whom did not have the same cultural or immigrant background that was crucial to his identity. Compared to his classmates, he also felt that his family was not as well off.

In seeking peers who could affirm his identity as a Filipino immigrant, Christian found that his definition of what it means to be a Filipino was not reflected in the people he met. There was a sizable Filipino population in the neighboring city of Carson, but in terms of identifying with them, Christian said: “They would dress differently than I did...I didn't feel like I was one of them, and I didn't think that that was the real Filipino that you would find in the Philippines.”

Dance is one of his biggest passions. Although he hesitated to join a dance crew as a freshman, he inevitably found his space in a crew on campus. He considers dance a unique part of his Filipino identity, and through it he connects with his fellow dancers in the Filipino heritage language class space.

Of the unique friendships he has formed through dance, he said, “[In] our section, we’re just having fun the whole time – singing, talking about dance. I think those are big cultural things that a lot of people don’t see...because that’s a huge part of Filipino culture as well – singing, dancing, performance.”

For Christian, the FHLC space is a means for him to connect back to his roots, and to regain his Filipino proficiency that he felt slip away when he was growing up. He shared, “As the years went on, I would hear other kinds of Tagalog – maybe on TV or someone else speaking, and I wouldn’t be able to understand anymore...I could still understand what my parents were talking about..., but the more I listened to other Filipinos speaking Tagalog, I wouldn’t be able to understand. That’s when I knew it was slipping away.”

Considering the language loss he experienced, Christian spoke very passionately about reclaiming his Filipino proficiency, and this goal extended to his future family, whom he would like to take to the Philippines and speak the language with.

Allie Reyes

Allie Reyes is a second year Biology major from Long Beach, CA. She is the eldest of three siblings, and as a second-generation Filipino American, she never learned to speak Filipino, but not for a lack of trying.

Throughout Allie’s life, she was always persistent about learning Filipino, and she always looked for potential mentors. On her high school basketball team, for example, she asked her

Filipino teammates to teach her how to speak. She said, “I even told one of my friends in high school – like, one of my close friends in high school – ‘Only speak to me in Tagalog and I’ll learn.’” Despite her efforts, Allie found that her tutors were not always patient with her progress. After a while, she said that her friend would exclaim, “‘You don’t understand me!’ [and] they [would] start speaking English.”

Firmly believing in the immersion approach, she approached her dad with the same request. Together, they watched “Halo-Halo” – a celebrity gossip show – every day after school. On some weekends, Allie and her siblings gathered around the kitchen table to learn about Filipino vocabulary words from their dad.

“My dad [would] get papers and...separate them, and then me and my brother and my sister – he’d point to his body and say it in Tagalog. And then we would take notes and he’d test us at the end,” she said.

Allie is even more fervent with her language learning today, as attending West University introduced her to opportunities that brought her closer to understanding her Filipino identity. Although she was surrounded by Filipino friends and family, being involved with the Filipino Club provided her with greater context about the Filipino American experience. Beyond stereotypes, Allie came to understand the legacies of colonization that contribute to Filipino identity formation.

Allie always wanted to learn Filipino, and because she started the class with zero proficiency, it was challenging to keep up with the class’ immersion model. Her struggle with the material, however, has convinced her to become fluent and teach her own children in the future, so they will not have to go through the same difficult learning process.

FINDINGS

The findings chapter of this study begins with a discussion of the importance of the family in students' understanding of their Filipino identity. Across all seven informants, family pictures were chosen to represent their image of what their Filipino identity meant.

In the same way that they related their Filipino identity with their family, students also related their language experiences with their entire families' experiences with language use in the U.S. The second section of this chapter analyzes the students' language experiences through the lenses of language shift and maintenance.

Language shift among this particular group of students can be attributed to: 1) generational status in the U.S.; 2) adhering to English-only expectations in schools; and 3) specific family language policies that encouraged English proficiency rather than Filipino.

In talking about practices promoting language maintenance, students attributed some retention of the language through 1) family members' teaching; 2) cultural and linguistic sharing with peers; and 3) physically returning home to the Philippines.

Following the pattern of negotiating between English and Filipino, and the United States and the Philippines established in the discussion of language experiences, the third section looks at the students' experiences in the U.S. more broadly. I argue that the students occupy an in-between state between their two identities, creating a hybrid identity that informs their experiences in the Filipino heritage language class.

The last section outlines the students' experiences in the heritage language class. Through the class, they 1) find a class in the university that affirms their lived experiences; 2) strengthen relationships with family through better communication; and 3) visualize themselves as Filipino speakers with sustained ties to the Philippines.

The Family as the Center of Filipino Identity

All seven of my informants regarded their families as the core of their Filipino identity. For the interview, I asked them to share a picture that portrayed their Filipino identity, and without exception, each student brought a picture of themselves with their families.

Lipin

In their most recent visit to the Philippines, Lipin's parents celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary, and the picture he chose was taken from the formal dinner reception that followed. At the bottom of the picture was a flower arrangement – differently colored flowers on the couple's table's centerpiece – and a light green backdrop with emblazoned "25's" framed the shot. Lipin's parents were seated at the table, and he and his sister were standing behind them with beaming smiles on their faces.

Hide

From his sister's Instagram account, Hide pulled up a blurry picture. Little else was visible, but the seven smiling faces squeezed together for a selfie was a remembrance from their family's past New Year's Eve celebration. Complete with confetti emoticons superimposed onto the picture, Hide admitted that the only thing missing from the picture were his grandmothers.

Zara

Zara shared a candid shot from her family's Christmas Eve – in the background, she, her younger siblings, and her mom stood by a lit Christmas tree and appeared to be in mid-conversation. In the foreground, her dad was setting up a digital camera on a tripod. Gifts wrapped in red, green, and gold were scattered under the tree, waiting to be opened.

Terrie

In their Monterey apartment, Terrie and her little brother sat across from each other at the table. The kitchen in the background is lined with cabinets, and a refrigerator laden heavy with magnets caught my eye. Terrie was leaned across the table, and was touching her forehead to the left side of her brother's head. In the black and white picture, they looked like mere shadows.

Stephanie

In a trip to Zambales, Philippines for her cousin's wedding, Stephanie shared a picture of her family's seaside vacation. The picture was of a hut on wooden stilts built on water. About 16 men and women posed on the hut's balcony; some wore swimwear, some men were shirtless, and some wore jeans and t-shirts. Below the hut – and in the water – Stephanie posed with three other people. She wore a lifesaver jacket, a snorkel, and goggles.

Christian

Pictures from his childhood in the Philippines reminded Christian of simpler days. For him, his brothers, and his cousins, each afternoon playing in their backyard was a different adventure. In a rare moment of calm and order, Christian and eight of his cousins sat on a long wooden bench to pose for a picture. Two of the youngest in the bunch were cradled on the laps of their *ates*¹⁵ and *kuyas*¹⁶. Christian, at age 4, sat second from the left with a big smile on his face.

Allie

Since starting college, Allie had not had many chances to go back home, so her breaks were dedicated to spending time with family. Huddled poolside under palm trees with her

¹⁵ Term of endearment for an older sister.

¹⁶ Term of endearment for an older brother.

parents and two younger siblings, Allie's family's summer getaway to Las Vegas was just one of many get-togethers with their entire extended family.

As evidenced by the unanimity of these students' responses to the prompt of, "Bring a picture that defines your Filipino identity," the family is central to their understanding of what it means to be Filipino. Being that they are physically far from the Philippines, their immediate family is most tangible connection to their Filipino side. Far from clinging to nationalist symbols like flags, maps, or prominent Filipino personalities, therefore, their families become their sole image of Filipino identity.

Collective Language Experiences: Filipino Language and the Family

In the same way that the students associated their Filipino identity with their family, they framed their stories about language through their families' collective language experiences. As told through the interviews, the students' and their families' language experiences in the U.S. have been punctuated with periods of language shift and language maintenance.

In response to pressures to speak English only, several students shared that their initial familiarity with speaking Filipino gradually disappeared to give way to limited bilingualism. For example, whereas Christian and Hide grew up speaking Filipino in the Philippines, they lost much of their speaking ability after moving to California and to Japan, respectively.

Despite a prevalent trend towards language shift – a common trend among other immigrant groups in the U.S., as well – students also shared their individual and their families' small acts of resistance to a complete loss of Filipino language ability. Whether through impassioned pleas to their parents to teach them the language, or through their parents' own strategic parenting styles, my informants and their families found ways to incorporate Filipino language learning in their lives.

The following section details the students' language experiences through the lenses of language shift and maintenance. These vignettes – mostly drawn from their life experiences before their enrollment in the Filipino heritage language class – emphasize the societal pressures that contribute to language shift among Filipinos in America, but also provide empowering examples of families' own strategic attempts to reverse language shift in their own homes. Language use is rarely a neutral act; whether immigrants choose to speak English over their heritage language is often reflective of their goal of better transitioning to society. Additionally, emphasizing Filipino language learning in the U.S. speaks of families' lasting ties to their home country, as well as an innate desire to preserve a cultural legacy.

Language shift.

All seven students indicated some degree of language shift in their families. Despite the different contexts in which language shift happened, three general categories emerged: language shift as a result of generation and length of stay in the U.S.; as a result of adhering to expectations in schools; and as a result of family language policies.

Language shift and generation.

Consistent with research indicating that heritage languages in the U.S. are replaced with English by the third generation (Fishman, 1966), Stephanie and Allie – two of four students who identified as second generation – were not as familiar with speaking Filipino while growing up. Although both of their fathers spoke the language with their extended family, listening to their relatives' conversations was the extent of their exposure to the language.

Allie: language use as a matter of convenience and confidence.

Allie grew up in a household where she always listened to, but never spoke, Filipino. In their family, language shift happened quickly. By the second generation, neither Allie nor her two siblings were able to communicate in their heritage language. She shared,

I never spoke Tagalog. My dad is fluent. He was born there. He only moved here when he was 16 or 14, so he's like native as native can be. My mom, she understands and can speak if she wants to, but she always used to say that she's embarrassed of her American accent when she speaks Tagalog, so whenever my grandma and grandpa speak, she'll respond in English. Like, if my dad tried to speak to her in Tagalog, she would respond in English, so they just spoke to each other in English.

Out of convenience and over time, English became the predominant language spoken in Allie's home. Because of limited exposure and a lack of practice, she never learned to speak Filipino, although she shared many instances when she asked friends to teach her, or asked her dad to speak to her entirely in Filipino so she could learn.

As 1.5 and 2nd generation Filipino Americans themselves, Allie's parents' language experiences also reflect the broader narrative of the language shift that happens over generations. From this story, examples of how language shift happens can be drawn to understand the process better. Convenience, for example, was one reason that Allie cited for their family's shift to English. In order to facilitate good communication in the family, her dad switched to English – the language that her mom was more comfortable with. Despite being proficient in Filipino, Allie's mom avoided speaking the language because she was conscious of her American accent. Feelings of self-doubt about language ability, therefore, also contributed to their family's gradual shift to speaking English.

Stephanie: exposure to the language does not equate to transmission.

Similar to Allie's family, the shift from Filipino to English by the second generation happened quickly for Stephanie's family as well. She grew up in what she called a traditional Filipino household, and her extended family was always complete at parties hosted in their home. While she identified as half-Guamanian, Stephanie had always been more closely connected with her Filipino side, in part because she shared that her mother had also assimilated into her husband's Filipino culture.

As she was surrounded by Filipino culture and language all her life, Stephanie learned the basics from a young age – although not enough to be able to communicate with her relatives in Filipino. Growing up, she said,

My dad would speak Tagalog with me, and he'd interchange it with English, so it was Taglish when I was little...and same with my aunts – we have such a big family, and they always use Tagalog with each other when there's gatherings.

Out of all seven students, Stephanie's high school was the only one that offered Filipino language courses, but she did not enroll in them because she believed she could learn everything from her family. Despite considerable exposure to the language, however, Stephanie was a frustrated learner; whenever her aunts spoke to her in Filipino, she could never answer back. She said,

[My aunt] assumes that I understand everything...I wanna just you know, converse back to her in straight Tagalog and say like, 'Yeah! I do understand everything that you're saying!'

Based on Stephanie's experiences, plentiful exposure to Filipino at home did not necessarily equate to transmission of the language. Evidently, there was a language barrier that

separated the adults from the children in her family, as Stephanie felt like she was not able to fully communicate with them. In our meeting, Stephanie shared that one of her motivations for enrolling in the FHLC was to improve her communication with her family. Likewise, her aunts' and uncles' persistent efforts to speak to her entirely in Filipino reflect the same goal. Regardless of this collective aspiration to communicate in Filipino, however, Stephanie still remained frustrated with her proficiency.

Allie's and Stephanie's stories reflected the narrative of heritage language loss and a shift to speaking English within three generations in the U.S. From their examples, we can understand that although Filipino can be spoken in the household, younger generations did not necessarily develop a speaking proficiency that they could be confident about.

Language shift and experiences in schools.

Among other students, language shift in their families happened in concurrence with their transition to schools. In context, bilingualism in schools has been a historically contentious issue. While it is beneficial for immigrant families to maintain their heritage language, English-only proponents contend that strengthening English proficiency is a step towards the worthy goal of "Americanizing" immigrant students (Hornberger, 2004; cited in Zhang, 2008).

In California, Prop 227 refocused the instruction of English learners from a bilingual model to one that relies on an English-taught curriculum. Foreign language proficiency among English learners, therefore, is treated as a deficit rather than an asset. Zara and Terrie's stories reflected the effects of these policies on an individual level.

Zara: the perils of a "bilingual situation."

In Zara's situation, her experiences in school directly impacted her family's decision to focus on speaking English rather than Filipino. She explained,

When I was growing up, I was speaking fluent Tagalog, but then when I went to kindergarten they put me in ESL, so English as a Second Language, 'cuz my mom had put that I spoke Tagalog and English... And then so my mom learned, she was like, "Okay, no. We need to primarily focus on English so you guys don't have to do ESL and stuff like that." ...I think that's why my siblings never picked it up, 'cuz my mom didn't want them to deal with having like, maybe a bilingual situation. They're like, "Nope. You're gonna know English, and if you pick up Tagalog, good."

Her placement in ESL, Zara recalled, was a mistake, and she was transferred out of the program after one week. Yet the meanings that came with being placed in this track were impactful for Zara's family to the extent that they rethought their family language policies in response. Specifically, they viewed Zara's ESL placement as a potential disadvantage for her in school, and they did not want the same disadvantage to be passed on to their three younger children.

Terrie: bringing the school's English-only policies to the home.

Like many immigrants, Terrie's parents valued their heritage language. Their jobs as teachers, however, required them to think and speak in English all day, and as a result, Filipino was spoken less and less in their home. "They just stopped altogether," Terrie said, "[and they] would only do brief Tagalog commands, so like 'Sit here,' or 'Eat.'"

Similar to Zara's early school experiences, Terrie's parents experienced a shift in preferred spoken language from Filipino to English because of the nature of their work. Considering that California schools emphasize English only, they worked in an environment that did not necessarily encourage multilingual exchanges not just between students, but among teachers as well.

At home, this shift to speaking English was sometimes disrupted by her parents' spontaneous language-related games. Terrie recalled,

I remember they would have these phases when they were like, "You have to speak Tagalog, or else you can't talk!" Like they would just [say], "You can't speak in English, so either don't say anything, or speak in Tagalog." And I wouldn't speak for days.

These phases excluded Terrie from communicating with her family, but perhaps more importantly, they showed her family's longing to reconnect with a disappearing part of their ethnic identity. They wavered back and forth between their normalized English conversations and these Filipino speaking phases, demonstrating how difficult it is to try to balance their Filipino heritage with their current lives in the U.S.

Through Zara and Terrie's stories, it becomes easier to visualize the individual impact of English-only policies in schools. As their parents encouraged them to do well in school, they realized that one way to ensure this success was by emphasizing English proficiency. The schools' priorities and attitudes towards foreign languages trickled down to the parents, and prioritizing English came at the expense of nurturing Filipino.

Language shift and family language policy.

The final category of language shift patterns involved students' families' conscious, planned decisions to speak a language other than Filipino. These family language policies reflected parental attitudes towards language, specifically towards bilingualism and the Filipino language's status in society (King et al, 2008).

In Hide, Zara, and Christian's examples, language shift was the result of their parents' strategic decisions to facilitate their transition into society. Their stories, however, also included back and forth negotiations with regards to language. For example, older family members were

privileged to speak Filipino, while younger ones had few opportunities to speak or learn it. These complex language rules further reflected the notion that language use is rarely a neutral activity; rather, it is embedded with an understanding of which language holds more value in different contexts.

Hide: collecting and losing languages in transition.

For Hide, moving from the Philippines to Japan presented several challenges in his school experience – for example, he found it hard to adjust to his new math teacher’s teaching style. In addition to making new adjustments in school, Hide also had to learn to communicate in a new language at home. He recalled, “Well, my stepfather was Japanese, so we only spoke Japanese so I forgot Tagalog.”

Hide picked up Japanese at the expense of his native language. Acquiring the language spoken in his new home was important since it allowed him to integrate into society; prioritizing Japanese over his native language, however, specifically came about because of his family’s concerted effort, or stated policy, to do so. In this new context, Hide’s father, as the traditional head of the family, dictated their collective language ideologies.

Hide continued his journey from the Philippines to Japan to California in the present, sharing that his mother’s marriage with his Japanese stepfather did not last long. In the U.S. naval base in Okinawa where she worked, Hide’s mom met his current Filipino stepfather, and together, they moved to California. Once more, Hide had to adjust to speaking a new language. Owing to his bilingual Filipino and English education in the Philippines, transitioning to speaking English was not a difficult task. English was reinforced in their home, although his parents were sometimes exempted from it. He said,

My dad and my mom speak to each other [in Tagalog], but she spoke to the children in English, and so there's Tagalog, but it's mostly English.

As Hide's family transitioned to another foreign country, their language ideologies followed accordingly. From his parents' point of view, speaking to their children mostly in English at home was a strategic decision, as fluency in English would ensure a better transition for Hide and his sister in school. The linguistic divide between parents and children, however, was crucial to the language shift that Hide experienced. Since Filipino was established as the language that only the parents would speak, it became less urgent for him to retain it. Coupled with his California education that he experienced entirely in English, Hide found fewer and fewer opportunities to practice his native language.

Zara: Filipino for adults; English for children.

Similar to Hide, Zara's parents reserved Filipino for conversations between themselves and communicated with their children in English. Since Zara grew up as a bilingual and was able to nurture her Filipino proficiency, she became privy to these exclusive conversations. While growing up, she said that when her parents spoke,

Sometimes it's English, sometimes it's Tagalog. It's usually Tagalog if they don't want my siblings to know what we're talking about... [My siblings], they don't know anything. I'm like, "You've been around Tagalog your whole lives. I don't understand why you don't pick it up."

Zara talked about a purposeful exclusion that happened when her parents spoke in Filipino. In this example that she shared, segregated language use was beneficial for her mom and dad's parenting strategy, presumably in situations where keeping their children separate from their conversations was necessary. Zara's subsequent reflections on her siblings' nonexistent Filipino

proficiency, however, also showed that this segregation hindered them from truly being able to pick up the language.

Christian: English and the promise of the American Dream.

In deciding between prioritizing English over Filipino, Christian's parents did not think twice. Their goal for their children was the fulfillment of the American Dream, and in their minds, it could only be attained if they embraced America entirely.

Having lived in the Philippines until age 6, Christian had a native control of the Filipino language, but it quickly disappeared once their family moved to the U.S. Of his immediate switch to speaking only English, Christian recalled,

I knew basically how to speak [Filipino], I just didn't know any of the grammar rules...but since moving to America, we just spoke English. My mom and dad would speak English to each other, unless maybe they were arguing or something. But they always spoke English to us. They hardly spoke Tagalog to us.

Similar to Hide and Zara's experiences, the prevailing family language policy in Christian's home was English only, with exceptions for the parents who could still communicate with each other in Filipino. This decision was not arbitrary; instead, it was a strategic parenting choice that would give Christian and his siblings the best chances of excelling in school. As evidenced in the stories of Hide, Zara, and Christian, the de facto English-only policy in schools was detrimental in nurturing their heritage language proficiency. For many Filipino immigrant families, succeeding in school is a crucial element of fulfilling the American Dream, and for these students' parents, losing their heritage language in the process is considered a small price to pay.

For Christian, however, losing his Filipino proficiency was a tangible loss that he felt. He pinpointed the specific instance that he knew he was experiencing language shift, and he said,

I would hear other kinds of Tagalog, maybe on TV or someone else speaking, and I wouldn't be able to understand anymore. So over time, I could still understand what my parents were talking about – they'd speak in Taglish or whatever, or they'd use the same words that they'd use in casual conversation. And then the more I listened to other Filipinos speaking Tagalog, like, I wouldn't be able to understand. That's when I knew it was slipping away.

In Christian's experience, being exposed to Filipino at home was not sufficient to prevent language, as there were few opportunities for him to practice his innate proficiency. His situation presented the phenomenon of experiencing drastic linguistic differences between his immediate family environment and other Filipino-speaking communities. While he understood his parents' Filipino, his listening abilities did not translate in other settings. Through Christian's example, we can understand that regardless of exposure at home, practicing with other speakers in different contexts can also prove to be crucial in preventing language shift.

In these three vignettes, the students had previous familiarity with Filipino, and they all indicated that they experienced some degree of language loss while they were growing up. As was evident in their examples, family language policies that retain Filipino language use among adults but discourage it among the children can help accelerate language shift. While there was significant overlap between these three categories of language shift, I chose to organize them in this way to focus on three tangible facets that can be addressed with policy recommendations.

Language maintenance.

In the face of perceived pressures to transition better into American society and the consequent language shift that followed, students also shared certain experiences and practices that contributed to their heritage language maintenance. Defined as “the continuing use of a

language in the face of competition from a regionally and socially powerful or numerically stronger language,” (Mesthrie, 1999) language maintenance among my informants happened through concerted efforts from family and peers.

Language maintenance in the family.

The processes of language shift and maintenance are not absolute. Rather, they can be considered as actions and reactions to the family’s experiences in transitioning to life in the U.S. Since language can be considered as one of the strongest facets of forming cultural identity, maintaining it within the family becomes an important goal for immigrant families. A gap rooted in the differences between the parents’ cultural practices and the children’s schooling experiences, however, makes it difficult to streamline language maintenance practices. Zhang (2008) explained it in this way:

In the course of acculturation, the immigrants are confronted with the task of forming a new cultural identity that is based on the individual’s choices between the home and host culture. Immigrant families bring to the second-generation children the cultural practices inherited from their home country, which are often different from the schooling practices in the dominant culture. There is great discontinuity in the lives of the immigrants and their children between the family and the larger society.

Allie’s story that follows exemplified coordinated efforts to bridge this gap and pass on the Filipino language to younger generations despite the language shift that had already begun to happen in their family.

Allie: teaching moments with family.

Understanding that speaking Filipino was a crucial part of her ethnic identity, Allie persistently sought opportunities to learn the language, whether from her classmates or her dad. For instance, she said,

I used to tell my dad, just speak to me in Tagalog, I'll just figure it out. So I used to have him just talk to me exclusively in Tagalog – like, I didn't know anything that he was saying, but I would hear him.

In addition to this immersion approach, Allie's dad's teaching moments also included vocabulary lessons every Saturday morning. Allie recalled that on those days,

We'd wake up early and like make pancakes, right? And then at the kitchen table when we're done eating, my dad will get papers and would separate them, and then [give them to] me and my brother and my sister. He'd like point to his body and say it in Tagalog. And then we would have to take notes and he'd test us at the end. And then we had to learn how to spell it.

Allie described two different approaches to language maintenance that took place in their home – instructor-centered language learning through immersion, and structured, student-centered tutoring sessions. Her persistence to learn was crucial in making these teaching moments happen, and her willingness to learn was rooted in her goal of feeling closer to her Filipino heritage. In addition, these teaching moments not only served as a way to maintain their heritage language, but it also brought Allie's family closer together. Although Allie wanted to continue learning, she shared that these weekend language lessons lasted only for a few months, as her dad became busier with work. While the family's efforts are crucial to promoting language maintenance, support from other stakeholders is also necessary to sustain them.

Language maintenance among peers.

Peers who shared the same language and cultural background also contributed to language maintenance efforts. In Hide's story, shared cultural and linguistic practices with his friends helped him reconnect with his Filipino heritage.

Hide: reconnecting through shared culture and language.

Hide always felt like an outsider in his school that was predominantly Latino, but among the few Filipino friends he made, he found that he could engage in conversations about culture and language. He said,

I remember I called one of my friends *Ate*, 'cuz she was older than me... and I just practiced Tagalog with her. We cooked Filipino food, and one time we had a literacy fair... [where you're] sharing your culture and stuff. So we shared Filipino culture by doing *tinikling*¹⁷. That was really cool. People were impressed since it was the only [Asian] culture that was shared.

Practicing the Filipino language and exploring other cultural traditions with peers allowed Hide to maintain some of his language proficiency, while at the same time sharing his culture with other students in his school. Since a similar kind of exposure to Filipino language and culture was not available in his home and in his classes, the connections that Hide made with other Filipinos in his school was crucial to his identity development. As a Filipino student in a mostly Latino school, Hide's identity made him an easy target for bullies, and he confessed that he started to hate his identity because it relegated him as an outsider. Having positive outlets like *tinkiling* to express his Filipino identity, therefore, helped to mitigate his self-deprecating understanding of himself.

¹⁷ Traditional dance involving the beating, tapping, and sliding of two bamboo poles.

Language maintenance and returning home.

In addition to language maintenance opportunities among family members and Filipino peers, students also shared creative strategies that their families employed to allow them to reconnect with the Filipino language. In the most hands-on approach to reconnect with the Philippines, Lipin's parents sent him back to the Philippines to learn to speak Filipino.

Lipin: uprooted to return "home."

Lipin, born and raised in Southern California, talked about a few confusing years during his adolescence when his parents decided that they were dissatisfied with his American education. He said that to this day,

I still don't understand my parents' thought patterns. After elementary school, my parents just decidedly [said], "Hey, let's go. You should learn Filipino, so go to school for a couple of years [in the Philippines]." And then during my time there, they kinda changed their mind. They said education and job opportunities are better in America, [so] go back there.

Lipin admitted that as a pre-teen, this was a challenging transition. Although he had visited the Philippines prior to this move, he was displaced from his home in Southern California to a foreign country that his parents spoke fondly of. Beyond the culture shock that it caused for Lipin, this drastic change was symptomatic of his parents' wavering feelings towards life in the U.S. They placed such a high value on Filipino language acquisition that they were willing to uproot themselves from their current home and return to the Philippines so that Lipin would have the opportunity to learn. Ultimately, however, the promise of better opportunity in the U.S. convinced them to return.

The students' stories showed different opportunities in which language maintenance could be facilitated in their lives. Although the family environment can be considered the home base for acquiring or sustaining the Filipino language, Allie's experiences have shown that families do not always have the time or resources to teach Filipino to younger generations. Seeking opportunities outside the family – through friends, peers, and even by returning to the Philippines for structured lessons – appeared to be crucial to supporting language maintenance among some of the students.

“To Embrace America”: Lives in Between

The students' exhibited experiences of language shift and maintenance are not absolute, and they reflect the constant negotiations their families make with regards to status and opportunity in American society. These language negotiations, therefore, are symptomatic of their broader experiences living in between their Filipino and American selves. As Filipino families transition to life in the United States, they face everyday situations wherein they weigh the value of maintaining Filipino cultural values and practices over American ways. While they see the importance of preserving Filipino ways of life, ascribing to Americanness presents several advantages – namely, well-facilitated inclusion into society, and better chances of economic success. Some students shared stories of concerted efforts to secure these advantages, while some spoke of a struggle to balance nostalgic ties to the Philippines with their lives in the U.S.

The following section details student vignettes about their families' lived experiences as “in-betweeners.” In addition to negotiating which language to speak in which contexts, my informants and their families experience the same push and pull phenomenon in other aspects of their lives. In this section, my goal is to expound on students' in-betweenness between two

cultures to contextualize their hybrid identities. This hybridity informed their language experiences that they also bring to the Filipino heritage language space – the impacts of which are discussed in the next chapter.

Zara

Zara's first experiences in school prompted her family to confront the issue of learning about what it means to be American. She recalled,

My mom and dad especially went deeper into American culture. I don't remember us celebrating Thanksgiving at all until I went to school because I'm like, "Mom, what's a pilgrim?" And she's like, "Oh. I don't know. Let's find out."

"Going deeper into American culture," as Zara described it, was a conscious choice. A learning opportunity arose for both mother and daughter in this situation, and thus learning to become American became a shared family activity. Zara's mother was especially invested in answering this question because knowing about pilgrims and about Thanksgiving would allow her daughter to socialize well in school.

Similarly, in their neighborhood, Zara shared an instance when her family tangibly grappled with their Filipino and American identities:

I remember my mom doing Bunco parties and Tupperware parties, like all those stereotypical mom things. My friends are like, "Wait, what are you? What did you eat?" I'm like, "What do you mean, what I ate?" "Did you eat like, sandwiches?" I'm like, "No." My food stayed very much Filipino because my mom didn't like sandwiches or Lunchables no matter how much I begged for one.

Tupperware parties rose in popularity among American housewives in the 1950s, but they did not enjoy the same popularity in the Philippines, regardless of the country's love for all things

American. The “stereotypical mom things” that Zara talked about, therefore, are stereotypical *American* mom things. Zara, however, understood the important juxtaposition of her mom’s Tupperware with the Filipino food stored inside it. With her friends who questioned her ethnic identity, she clarified that hosting an event like a Tupperware party did not classify her as absolutely American and therefore no longer Filipino. In fact, her identity is much more complex than the absoluteness of these categories.

Christian

While Zara’s stories exemplified her family’s negotiations between Filipino and American identities to better fit in to their community, Christian’s example presented a broader goal of succeeding in society. Like Zara, Christian’s parents considered his first experiences in American schools as the launching point for consciously ascribing to American values. Reflecting on his experiences as a 6-year-old transitioning to a new school and a new country, he shared,

Filipino parents, or at least mine, kind of wanted me to embrace America, to absorb everything so I could be one of them, so I could be successful...Instead of wanting me to just adjust to being [in school], to carve out my own path, they wanted me to be like how kids would be there. And I think that’s what pushed American values to me. They wanted me to be involved, to do this and to do that, and for me that’s more of an American identity.

In our follow-up meeting after his interview, Christian clarified that his definition of “American values” rests on society’s emphasis on competitiveness and individual accomplishments – both of which are hallmarks of America’s capitalist system. By encouraging him to excel academically, and later on to become heavily involved in extracurricular activities, Christian’s

parents were also encouraging him to live by ideals that American society holds in high esteem. He added,

I think when you want to succeed in a society, you have to buy in...you sort of have to assimilate into the same values, and I just felt that influence on me. Like, [my parents] didn't feel like it was as important to teach me about what makes you Filipino.

In Christian's viewpoint, his parents placed more weight on assimilating to American society more than on preserving their Filipino ideals, and they understood the concept of assimilation through a lens of either succeeding or failing in society. While it instilled a competitive drive in him, this all-or-nothing approach might have also distanced Christian from his Filipino side.

Lipin

Contrary to Christian's story, Lipin's upbringing was defined by constant struggles between his parents' nostalgia for the Philippines and his own diverging cultural allegiance. Lipin regretted that cultural differences put a strain on his relationships with his parents, as he was "growing up American," and therefore his parents could not understand his experiences.

"I can't really talk about things in my life," he said. "I'd have a problem that's American, but they would just be like, 'What? What is this? What's going on?' And that frustrates me all the time."

In addition, the generational and cultural gap between Lipin and his parents was also evident in their parenting styles. While taboo in American society, spanking is a common practice in Filipino households, and it was Lipin's dad's child-rearing method of choice early on.

"My dad used to spank me," Lipin confessed, laughing. "But then...it didn't really work. I would just still be bad! [He's like,] 'Okay, whatever, he's American.' So he just quit."

Although at times critical of his parents' unbridled nostalgia for the Philippines, Lipin understood that Filipino culture was the only one that they knew, and therefore it informed how they chose to raise him.

Allie

To sum up Allie's understanding of her ethnic identity while growing up, she said, "I felt Filipino, but I wasn't Filipino." As the second generation daughter of a Filipino American and a Filipino immigrant, Allie had considerable exposure to the culture – family parties were plentiful in their home, and she associated her devout Catholicism with being Filipino. With regards to the language, she listened to her dad speak Filipino with her grandparents, but she also witnessed her mom struggle with the language and ultimately give up. While she was surrounded by what she understood as her Filipino identity, she was distant from it at the same time.

Fifteen minutes away from their home in Long Beach, Allie's cousins lived in what she called the "Filipino neighborhood." In that area, Allie shared,

My cousins were all fluent and stuff because they grew up with it...and I was just farther away from that so I didn't really hang out there as much...I don't know, I was just like, coming in...like whatever.

While Allie held on to symbols of her identity – like her family's parties and her Catholic beliefs – she felt distant from her Filipino identity because it was not grounded in a personal understanding of what being Filipino means for her as an individual. Because her family hosted parties and went to church regularly, she participated in the same events. It was not until she came to West University and explored for herself what being Filipino meant that she was able to more comfortably take ownership of her identity.

Stephanie

Whereas Allie was physically distant from her Filipino identity, Stephanie grew up in a traditional Filipino household in San Diego – a city with one of the biggest concentrations of Filipinos in the country. With their home as the center of all of their family’s parties, Stephanie and her two older brothers were always close to their extended family.

“I grew up living with my grandparents – my dad’s parents – so they’re the Filipinos,” she shared. “They were always there and they kind of taught me, I guess you could say Filipino mannerisms...like how to respect elders and things like that.”

Like Stephanie, her Guamanian mother also learned about Filipino culture and language from their extended family. Her entire family lived in Guam, and since she did not know how to speak Chamorro herself, she assimilated into her husband’s Filipino family. Because of this, Stephanie grew up only identifying with one side of herself; it was not until her family moved to Guam that she discovered more about her Guamanian side.

Unlike the other informants, Stephanie’s school environment from K-12 was different in that her family’s culture was easily reflected among her peers, and even among teachers and administrators. She described her high school as “40% Filipino..., [and] everyone pretty much stayed with their group of people – whatever your ethnicity was, you kinda stuck with [that] group.”

Stephanie, however, did not limit her friend circle to Filipinos; indeed, she distanced herself from Filipino clubs and the Filipino language class in her high school, observing that Filipino immigrants were more likely to be involved in those circles.

Hide

In contrast to Stephanie's school environment that reflected her life experiences at home, Hide found himself struggling to fit in among his peers in Oxnard. As one of a few Asians in a predominantly Latino school, Hide stood out; his Japanese name that was phonetically similar to a Spanish swear word attracted bullies. Understanding that he was the outsider, Hide felt that he had to adapt to his classmates' culture in order to fit in.

"The transition was hard," he said. "But then I adapted to them, you know. I adapted into their culture, and...the name callings and stuff like that – [I got] used to it."

To adapt into "their culture," Hide started with little things like eating the same school lunch.

"I used to bring rice to lunch just 'cuz I wanted it," he said. "But sometimes they made fun of me, so I didn't bring rice to lunch and I ate the school food that they had...which wasn't that great," he said while laughing.

Although this small gesture on Hide's part may have fended off his bullies, it came at a huge cost. Being constantly labeled as the outsider developed feelings of inferiority in Hide, and he started to hate his Filipino identity, blaming it for his school troubles.

"In middle school, I started to hate my identity," he confessed. "Like, the Filipino [identity]. 'Cuz I don't know...it was really weird, bringing rice to lunch. I'm like, 'Why do I have to like rice?'"

Terrie

Like Hide, Terrie struggled to understand what it meant for her to be Filipino. Born in the Philippines but raised in California from age 4, Terrie did not feel comfortable labeling herself

Filipino. Yet her status as an undocumented immigrant hindered her from calling herself entirely American as well, as she did not want to identify with the culture that rejected her.

In college, Terrie explored different student Filipino American spaces, but she shared that she had not felt entirely comfortable in any of them, partly because she contends with the universality of the “Filipino American” identity. Even in these spaces, she felt like an outsider, and that her personality did not fit in with her peers whom she considered to be “too Filipino.” She reflected,

I don't always feel like I belong there [in the Filipino Club], which is weird...I don't know if it's my personality or like, the ways in which Filipino American culture has developed in West University or like, in California...I feel like maybe my experience growing up was different, but I don't really know how. But I think the culture, like their culture – the Fil Am culture – and how I view things...I don't know why I don't mesh, but...I always feel kind of, still an outsider.

In the process of sharing their language experiences, my informants also shared situations wherein they tangibly felt the liminality of their Filipino American identity. They contested this very label, indicating that it did not encompass the complexity of their own experiences, or that it did not match with how they understood their own lives. Regardless, these contested, hybrid identities – formed by their experiences as Filipinos in the U.S. – are what they bring to the heritage language class space.

The Filipino Heritage Language Class

In the face of competing pressures to both assimilate into American life and to hold on to their Filipino identities, and in the context of language loss in the home, the heritage language class becomes a space in which students can reconnect with the Filipino language. To reconnect

with one's language, and therefore one's identity, is to actively resist competing outside pressures that facilitate language shift.

Further, their hybridity as in-betweeners between their Filipino and American identities informed their experiences in the FHLC. From a K-12 education system that discouraged their bilingual backgrounds from flourishing, they transitioned to a class that centered on reconnecting them with Filipino while also celebrating their life experiences. From their experiences on the fringes of their parents' Filipino conversations, they transitioned to building improved language proficiency, and consequently, stronger relationships with extended family. And lastly, from the imagined connections with the Philippines that they inherited from their parents or retained from early childhoods, they transitioned to Filipino Americans with determined plans to continue their language learning and form sustained ties with the Philippines.

The following section presents my informants' testimonies about their experiences in the FHLC. Through the class, participants

- 1) found personal affirmation in curriculum that reflected their life experiences;
- 2) improved their Filipino speaking proficiency and subsequently strengthened relationships with their families; and
- 3) visualized themselves as fluent speakers with sustained ties to the Philippines and the Filipino community.

These three categories broadly encompass the students' descriptions of what they have been able to take away from being enrolled in the class for an entire year; it is important to note, however, that not all of the students talked about each category.

Life experiences reflected in curriculum.

Despite the ever-growing presence of Filipinos in California, Filipino history and language classes are scarce at the K-12 and postsecondary levels. For many students, the Filipino heritage language class at the university is their first and only exposure to a class that centers its curriculum on their personal experiences.

Lipin

Lipin recognized the absence of Filipinos in the history he learned in high school and community college. Despite being one of the state's largest minority group populations, the long histories that connect the Philippines with the U.S. are never discussed, as though Filipino mass migration to America happened without context. In speaking about the glaring lack of recognition of the Filipino American experience in schools, Lipin said,

I don't feel like America has a big emphasis on Filipino history, so it's not really included in textbooks. I guess like in high school, just open a history textbook and there'd be like, tons of pages on other countries, but the Philippines would just be like, one page.

Accustomed to the lack of availability of any courses relating to the Philippines, Lipin was surprised to find that a Filipino language class was being offered at West University. It was not widely advertised, as he did not recall seeing it on pamphlets or any websites he had accessed as a new admit; instead, he learned about it from his circle of friends.

I just had to take it! 'Cuz it's available – like, it's a thing! And that's what interested me about this class...it's unique, [and] I didn't know about it existing here in America.

Through the simple existence of the FHLC, Lipin was able to see himself reflected in the university. The FHLC is unique, and for someone like Lipin who never saw his people's history discussed in his school environment prior to college, enrolling in the class is a rare opportunity.

Allie

Born and raised in Long Beach to second-generation Filipino immigrants, Allie didn't know what she didn't know about her Filipino ethnic background, and lessons on the Philippines' colonial history came as a shock to her. She shared that one of the most poignant parts of the class for her was Filipino history, and she explained,

I only really knew that we were a colony of the Spaniards and then the Americans came and took us, but I didn't really know that like, they basically did us dirty! They carved us up and they're like, "No, we're gonna name you this." I didn't really know any of that because even in World History, like I took in high school, we don't really talk about the Philippines that much.

Since the Philippines is largely omitted from American textbooks, students like Allie were deprived of knowing about their people's history. For Filipinos in America especially, the colonial history that connects the two countries is crucial to understanding why millions have settled in America in the first place. Allie's realization of this truth led to this defiant reflection – one that recognized that so much of her people's history, and therefore her identity, had been kept from her for so long. It is because of this that participants recognized the importance of having a class at the university that reflects their personal identities and their families' experiences.

Christian

Christian cherished his Filipino identity and shared fond memories of growing up as a carefree, adventure-loving child in the Philippines. Once he and his family moved to Torrance, however, his focus shifted to his academics. He acknowledged that his parents encouraged him to do well in school, as they considered it his best chance at succeeding in American society.

Christian described himself as a quiet student who just really wanted to do well in school; in all of his school experiences, however, he shared that the Filipino heritage language class was the first space where he felt that he could

Just be able to have a side of me that I wouldn't otherwise be able to enjoy, be able to learn about, be able to express. And that's my Filipino identity...If it were any other class, it's kind of hard for those sides of you to show, or it's very easy for it to be overlooked. I [found] out a lot of things about myself that [are] actually cultural things. You don't really think about it, but like, so many things are cultural aspects of you – even things like when Professor was talking about concepts of love. I think my vision of how I view love is also a cultural thing. Filipinos, they're very romanticized about things, you know, their courting process, all their love songs and stuff. Even the way I view love, it's very different than I would say, how Americans view love in general.

For Christian, the Filipino class was more than just an opportunity to learn the language he had begun to forget; it also presented an opportunity to contextualize his experiences in history and cultural lessons. Finding his personal beliefs reflected in the class' texts was a powerful moment of self-affirmation for him, especially in the university's competitive environment where many 1.5 generation immigrant students like himself may struggle. In a major like Business Economics, Christian may never be presented the opportunity to learn about his heritage in his pre-requisite courses. Having the FHLC where his people's history and his own life stories are discussed at the center of each session, therefore, humanizes his university experience and altogether affirms his presence on campus.

From their experiences at the K-12 level, participating in a class centered solely on their heritage language and life experiences was a breath of fresh air. In Lipin's words, Filipino

language classes are “unique,” but his surprised reaction at its availability at West University speaks to the lack of emphasis on the Filipino language and experience in the rest of his educational experiences. These students, therefore, grew up in an education system that placed more value on English, ultimately influencing their attitudes towards their own heritage language. Their affirming experiences in the heritage language class, however, helped them see the value in their own lived experiences.

Strengthening relationships with family.

Previous research has indicated that failure to maintain the heritage language among second-generation children can negatively affect familial relationships, and at times it can result in intergenerational conflict and disconnected families (Zhang, 2008). Among my informants, enrolling in a heritage language class mitigated these potential issues, as their improved Filipino conversational skills strengthened their relationships with family. Communicating in Filipino demonstrated to their parents that they were intent on learning about their heritage. Their newfound, or newly sustained proficiency also helped them transcend geographic borders to (re)connect with family abroad.

Stephanie

Stephanie recounted that while growing up, she was very much exposed to Filipino culture. Their home was the hub of family gatherings, and during such occasions, she recalled, “One of my aunts, she speaks to me like, in straight up Tagalog, and she assumes like I understand everything. One day, I wanna just like, you know, converse back to her in straight Tagalog and say like, “Yeah, I understand everything that you’re saying!” So I think it’s more of a personal thing, just to learn the language to be able to be more connected to my family in that sense.”

Stephanie considered this language barrier her personal challenge, as well as an opportunity to show her family that she was invested in sharing in common cultural practices. Although her aunt knew her well and therefore knew her limitations with speaking Filipino, she continued to use it solely to talk to Stephanie, reflecting expectations to maintain Filipino use in the family. In that moment, the language barrier separated Stephanie from her relatives not just linguistically, but emotionally as well. To overcome this separation, she understood that it was imperative that she learn to speak Filipino.

After eventually gaining some familiarity with the language, Stephanie started practicing it with her family. She said,

Sometimes I try to use it at home with my dad, and my dad just gets a kick out of it. He enjoys it. And then my brother just like, laughs at me. He's like, "You're trying so hard!"

I'm like, "Yes, I am!"

Small victories in Stephanie's language learning came in the form of her family's affirmations. Each conversation brought her closer to her dad, but because she was the only one of three children to actually take steps to learn Filipino, her brother did not share the same enthusiasm for her improvement. Language shift happened quickly in their family, as by the second-generation, Filipino had been lost. Evidently, Stephanie and her brother approached this language shift differently, and their attitudes may prove to be the difference between language loss and maintenance.

Zara

Zara echoed Stephanie's sentiments of wanting to be more included in her family's conversations. Although she understood Filipino, she recognized that she was not able to contribute to conversations as she wanted. In visualizing her goals for the FHLC, she said,

I'm hoping to be better at conversing by the end of the year, and I have noticed that I'm able to come up with common phrases more while I talk to my family – though my mom still laughs at me when I try. I'm like, "Yeah, I know. I'm working on it mom!" (Laughs)

As a Neuroscience major, the heritage language class was different from any other class that Zara took; the content was close to her personal life, and she was able to practice what she learned immediately. Further, she became even more motivated to learn because of her visible improvement. Practicing with her mom brought them closer together, but perhaps more importantly, their conversations created ongoing teaching moments that can support Zara's language learning beyond the classroom.

When challenged by the course content, Zara relied on her family for support. Like many of my other informants, Zara remained connected with extended family abroad through social media sites like Facebook. On a particularly difficult translation assignment, she canvassed her relatives' expertise and posted the questions on their private Facebook page. She said,

I'd put up a sentence and I'd see all the various translations. I mean, they're all right, but none of them are right! (Laughs) And they're like, "What do you mean none of these are correct?" And then...after I go figure it out and I'll send them the correct answers, they're like, "Well yeah, that's one way of saying it!"

Zara's resourcefulness showed her dedication to master the language, and her relatives were equally invested in her learning. Thus, while students were enrolled in the FHLC as individuals, their entire families were involved in the learning process – whether through emotional support, or through more structured tutoring sessions. Cultural transmission and family cohesion rested on students' ability to acquire or maintain Filipino; therefore HL maintenance becomes a matter of urgency not just for the students, but for their families as well.

Hide

Initially, Hide did not intend to enroll in Filipino; instead, he wanted to relearn Japanese, a language that he had not spoken since he was in elementary school. Since Japanese was in high demand on campus, however, Hide was not able to secure a seat in any of the sections. In order to fulfill the university's foreign language requirement, Hide enrolled in Filipino. He reflected,

I'm glad I did it, 'cuz [even] if I take Japanese...I'm not planning to go back anytime soon. And [Filipino], I could use it here to other native speakers, and I could use it with my grandmas. I could use it with my families in the Philippines...so I'm glad I took Filipino.

Although Filipino was his second choice, it was one he did not regret. He rationalized that he would not be losing anything if he took the class, especially because it would allow him to talk to his grandmothers. He explained,

The biggest reason [why I took Filipino this year] instead of waiting for next year to take Japanese, it's because I just decided that oh, I could speak to my grandmas more if I take Tagalog, so I'm just gonna take Tagalog.

Hide grew up with his maternal grandmother, but they were separated for several years before reuniting in California. Since his parents stopped talking to him in Filipino, English became the dominant language at home, but his reunification with his two grandmothers was in fact one of the triggers for his slow but sure approach to language maintenance. With renewed interest in Filipino language and culture, Hide placated his feelings of self-loathing that developed when he was bullied for being different. He became more comfortable with his identity, and he owed it to his grandmothers. He shared,

Without my grandmas, I don't think I'll regain...my Filipino identity back in high school. I think I would have just called myself American and adapt to [Latino] culture...So without my two grandmas..., I wouldn't be interested in Tagalog or going back to the Philippines.

Because of the language shift that the students experienced – whether through forgetting over generations, or being encouraged to focus on their English proficiency rather than Filipino – they were subjected to living in the margins of their older relatives' Filipino conversations. Stephanie and Zara were both frustrated with their inability to jump into their families' conversations as they pleased, and Hide's parents spoke to him in English regardless of his Filipino proficiency. Although their parents only had their success in American schools in mind, perhaps they were not able to consider the emotional barriers that would be put up as they encouraged their children to speak only in a different language. The students' slow but sure approach to proficiency through the FHLC, however, proved to cut across the barriers that had been built between them and their family.

Visualizing selves as Filipino speakers.

Beyond the present, the participants' learning experiences in the FHLC inspired them to visualize their future selves – and their future families – as proficient Filipino speakers with sustained ties to the Philippines and the Filipino community.

Allie

Allie took pride in her persistence to learn Filipino even as a child. Often, she would ask her dad to speak to her in Filipino, and she would just “figure it out.” She made similar requests to her Filipino friends and basketball teammates, and while they humored her request, Allie said that they would give up quickly.

In the beginning of the Filipino course, Allie was shocked to realize that the class would be taught mostly in Filipino, and that many of her peers were intermediate, if not native speakers. As a “zero proficiency” learner, Allie admitted to being intimidated and frustrated with the amount and difficulty of the material. She called home to ask her family for help, and in these conversations, she shared that,

I told my mom before – this was when I really hated Filipino. I was like, “This is too much work!” And I was just like, “You know what, I’m gonna learn this so that with my kids, I’ll just teach them and they don’t have to go through this!”

While resolved in a moment of frustration, Allie’s earnest intent to pass on the language to her children is perhaps just as important as her drive to learn the language for herself. In her story, we can visualize how the Filipino language fleetingly disappears, is maintained within the family, and then passed on to future generations. By imagining herself as a fluent speaker with future intent to teach the language, Allie demonstrated that even though her initial goal was to fulfill a foreign language requirement, the heritage language class had a considerable impact in her family’s future.

Hide

Likewise, Hide initially took Filipino to fulfill a requirement and because as an intermediate speaker, the class would not be as challenging as taking a language completely foreign to him. While his improved speaking proficiency helped him connect with his grandmothers, Hide also rediscovered a desire to return to the Philippines to reconnect with his roots. Tasked to write an essay about the place where his family is from, Hide commented that

Ever since I wrote that essay about going back to the Philippines, I really wanna see where I lived – the church in Manila that my grandma and I used to go to. I wanna go back and do the stuff I listed, especially visiting where I grew up.

Far from simply checking off a box in his requirements list, taking Filipino class helped Hide imagine himself as a Filipino American with sustained connections to the place where he grew up.

In the course of the life history he shared with me, Hide's relationship with the Philippines was constantly changing. Living comfortably in Japan helped him contextualize the poverty and hardship that surrounded him in Manila, and he grew to be skeptical of progress in his home country. Then, as a middle school student in Oxnard, CA, Hide's Filipino identity became a liability. Because he was different from his mostly Latino classmates, he was teased and bullied, causing him to revoke emotional ties to his identity. The turning point in his story, however, came from his reunification with his grandmothers, who encouraged him to maintain his heritage language and culture, and eventually, his own feelings of self-worth.

Christian

Christian looked back fondly on his years growing up in the Philippines, and although he had been far removed from that life, he pictured himself returning after graduating. He shared, I always dreamed about just one day, maybe after college, after a few years of working, just coming back to the Philippines for a few years – just getting back to my roots, just being able to understand things, [and] speak more to people there. I always tell myself, I wouldn't even mind if I ended up in the Philippines again, but I know things are better here, so I figured it'd only be a temporary stay.

In describing his efforts to (re)learn more about Filipino culture, Christian consistently used a metaphor of roots, implying that he visualized himself as a tree uprooted from its source. In search of better opportunities, Christian and his family moved to the U.S., and since he was young, his parents had always encouraged him to do well in school, as it would be their ticket to success. In Christian's story, it is significant to note that before talking about returning to the Philippines, he imagined himself fulfilling his parents' goals for him of finishing college and finding secure employment.

This scenario accurately represents the fact that Christian lived in between two worlds – the Philippines, with which he had emotional ties; and the U.S., where he understood better economic opportunities existed. Moving forward, however, Christian envisioned himself as a Filipino American with the knowledge and ability to better negotiate between these two boundaries that he grappled with while growing up. While he knew that he would raise his future family in the U.S., he vowed not to let his children forget where they come from. He said,

My kids, I want them to understand where I came from. I want to teach them about Filipino culture, even if they can never learn the language...I want them to be accustomed to...what makes them who they are.

Depending on their generational status, my informants had varying degrees of connectedness to the Philippines. Hide and Christian both immigrated as children, and they have fond memories of their childhood there. However, Allie, who was born in California, lamented never having visited the Philippines, but she spoke of a strong desire to return to her parents' home country. While Hide and Christian's connections to the Philippines are tangible – meaning that they have connections with the country through personal experience and through relatives and friends – Allie's connections are more imagined. Regardless of these subtle differences, the

impact of the FHLC on their desire to reconnect was palpable. Their plans to continue their language learning were concrete, and they were envisioning themselves as adults who could potentially live in the Philippines and even teach their children the Filipino language. From imagined connections, or ones forgotten by time, these students transitioned into Filipino Americans confident in their own hybrid identities and intent on sustaining their ties to their home country.

CONCLUSION

This study sought to understand the language experiences of a select group of Filipino American college students. In this process, I was privileged with hearing not just the stories of individuals, but the stories of their entire families as well. Through these stories, I have found that their language experiences are intertwined in several different ways:

- Students framed their stories about their language experiences through their families' experiences of transitioning to life in the United States.
- Some students experienced language shift because of their families' explicit emphasis on developing English rather than Filipino proficiency.
- Some students discussed language maintenance practices facilitated by their families' teaching efforts or other strategies like returning home to the Philippines to study the language.
- Students' improved Filipino proficiency through the heritage language class strengthened their relationships with family members.

In sum, this study has endeavored to address the following research questions:

Research Question 1: What are the language experiences of a select group of Filipino American college students?

From the narratives of the seven students, I learned about their families' migration stories that consequently impacted their language experiences.

In Hide's case, for example, living in three different countries necessitated learning and forgetting three different languages. When he moved to Japan, his family prioritized his Japanese language acquisition at the expense of his native Filipino; and when he moved to California, his family prioritized English among the children in order to give them the best chances of succeeding in school.

For Stephanie, moving to Guam from San Diego allowed her to understand more about her Guamanian identity. Although taking Chamorro was a requirement in school, her linguistic transition was not as drastic as Hide's, considering that English is also the language of power in Guam.

All seven students also indicated some degree of language shift in their families. The students who self-identified as second generation were further removed from Filipino than their first and 1.5 generation peers. For example, Allie and Stephanie each had one parent who spoke Filipino in their home; despite considerable exposure to Filipino-speaking adults, however, their comprehension abilities primarily improved after enrolling in the heritage language class.

Because of some of the parents' goal of facilitating their children's academic success, they prioritized speaking English at home at the expense of nurturing Filipino. Zara's placement in ESL was an unsettling experience for her family; because they believed that being labeled as an English deficient student would hamper Zara's schooling, they actively chose to only speak to their younger children in English.

Similarly, Christian's parents spoke to their children mostly in English, regardless of the fact that they were native Filipino speakers. Filipino did not entirely disappear from their home, however, as it was reserved for the parents' conversations.

Alongside their experiences of language shift, the students also shared practices within their families that encourage language maintenance. Terrie, for example, was always persistent with learning Filipino, and as she was growing up, she sought teaching sessions with her parents. Allie also enjoyed learning vocabulary through structured tutoring sessions that her dad prepared for her and her siblings on weekends.

In addition to family support, peers who shared the students' cultural and linguistic background were also instrumental in ensuring that the Filipino language was not completely lost. The friends that Hide made in his high school's Filipino Club not only helped him reconnect with the language; celebrating their Filipino culture collectively also mitigated his feelings of self-hatred as an outsider.

In sum, these students' language experiences were defined by transition, movement, and back and forth negotiations between retaining or letting go of the Filipino language. Despite the reality of language shift in their lives, they continued to find ways to incorporate language learning in their families.

Research Question 2: How do these students express their experiences in the Filipino heritage language class?

Three categories emerged from students' discussion of their experiences in the Filipino heritage language class. Firstly, the class was an affirming space that had thus far been unavailable to them throughout their entire educational experiences. At the university level, they

were engaging with subject matter that was personally pertinent to them, as the curriculum reflected their life stories.

Second, their improved Filipino proficiency as a result of their participation in the FHLC strengthened their relationships with family. Zara and Stephanie both expressed a frustration with their inability to craft sentences to respond to their family members who spoke to them in Filipino. When I interviewed them during the second quarter of the three-quarter long series, they indicated that they were much quicker with understanding and responding to their families.

Finally, the students' learning experience in the FHLC is one that they hoped to sustain for a lifetime. In Christian's interview, he visualized himself as a fluent Filipino speaker who would be able to teach the language to his future children. Allie also expressed the same goal; since she struggled with mastering the grammar as a new learner, she vowed to personally teach her own children so they would not go through the same struggles.

IMPLICATIONS

While drawn from a small sample, what we understood from the language experiences of these Filipino American college students in this study can potentially help transform approaches to multilingual education.

Shifting Focus: From English-Only to Heritage Language Maintenance

This study has argued for the maintenance of heritage languages. It has been understood that keeping these heritage languages alive in immigrant families has the potential to: 1) anchor immigrants' sense of self as they transition to life in a new country; 2) allow individuals access to their ethnic community and its resources; and 3) prevent family conflicts (Zhang, 2008). The climate in schools, however, is not an encouraging environment that allows bilingual students to

nurture their heritage languages. Instead, emphases on “Americanization” and the rise of high-stakes testing have paved the way for English-only instruction.

As evidenced in some of my informants’ experiences, schools’ English-only standards influence bilingual parents to prioritize English over their heritage language. Filipino parents have exceedingly high academic standards for their children (Maramba, 2008), and if English proficiency will help them succeed, emphasizing it over Filipino at home can be considered a worthy parenting strategy.

Considering the profound impact that parents’ family language policies have on children’s schooling and the maintenance of a heritage language (King et al, 2008), collaborative partnerships between schools and parents must be established in order to facilitate heritage language maintenance at an early age. In an increasingly globalized world, educators’ and policymakers’ view of heritage language proficiency is rapidly becoming outdated. America’s quickly evolving demographics – especially in California – also merit another look at policies like Prop 227 that focus on English-only instruction.

In the same vein, parents must be included in conversations about language instruction in schools. Their attitudes towards language have a direct impact on language transmission (Ghimenton, 2015); in the case of Filipino parents, an unchecked perception of Filipino as an inferior and insignificant language in the U.S. may trigger language shift in their families. Cooperation between schools and families, therefore, is crucial to transforming the conversation on heritage languages in the U.S.

APPENDIX A

Top Concentrations by Metropolitan Area for Foreign Born from the Philippines

(McNamara & Batalova, 2015)

Table 1. Top Concentrations by Metropolitan Area for the Foreign Born from the Philippines, 2009-13

Metropolitan Area	Immigrant Population from the Philippines	% of Metro Area Population
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA	289,000	2.2%
San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward, CA	160,000	3.6%
New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA	154,000	0.8%
San Diego-Carlsbad, CA	95,000	3.0%
Urban Honolulu, HI	80,000	8.3%
Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN-WI	80,000	0.8%
Las Vegas-Henderson-Paradise, NV	64,000	3.2%
Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA	62,000	1.4%
San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA	60,000	3.2%
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-W	47,000	0.8%

Source: MPI tabulation of data from U.S. Census Bureau pooled 2009-13 ACS.

APPENDIX B

Availability of Filipino Language Classes at the University of California (UCs)

<i>Campus</i>	<i>Classes Offered?</i>
Berkeley	✓
Davis	
Irvine	
Los Angeles	✓
Merced	
Riverside	✓
San Diego	✓
Santa Barbara	
Santa Cruz	

Table 1 Source: UC Course Catalogs

APPENDIX C

Availability of Filipino Language Classes at the California State Universities (CSUs)

<i>Campus</i>	<i>Classes Offered?</i>
Bakersfield	
Channel Islands	
Chico	
Dominguez Hills	
East Bay	✓
Fresno	
Fullerton	
Humboldt	
Long Beach	✓
Los Angeles	
Maritime Academy	
Monterey Bay	✓
Northridge	
Polytechnic Institute, Pomona	
Sacramento	
San Bernardino	✓
San Diego	✓
San Francisco	✓
San Jose	
Polytechnic Institute, San Luis Obispo	
San Marcos	
Sonoma	
Stanislaus	

Table 2 Source: CSU Course Catalogs

APPENDIX D

Summary of Field Work

<i>Who?</i>	FIL STUDENTS		LIPIN	HIDE	ZARA	TERRIE	STEPHANIE	CHRISTIAN	ALLIE
<i>What?</i>	Lecture	Lecture							
<i>Participant Observation</i>	Lecture 1/8/15 (pre-IRB approval)								
<i>Participant Observation</i>		1/22/15 (pre-IRB approval)							
<i>Interview 1</i>			2/5/15 Library						
<i>Interview 2</i>				2/10/15 Library					
<i>Interview 3</i>					2/15/15 Library				
<i>Interview 4</i>						2/19/15 Library			
<i>Interview 5</i>							2/19/15 Library		
<i>Interview 6</i>								5/4/15 Library	
<i>Interview 7</i>									5/8/15 Library
<i>Artifacts</i>									
Students brought pictures to the interviews. Prompt: Bring a picture that you think best represents your Filipino identity.									

APPENDIX E

Level 1 Coding: Occurrence of Themes

<i>Who?</i>	Nico	Hide	Zara	Terrie	Stephanie	Christian	Allie
<i>What?</i>	Int	Int	Int	Int	Int	Int	Int
<i>Migration Stories and the American Dream</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Language Loss</i>	X		X	X		X	X
<i>Desire for Language Acquisition and/or Retention</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Assimilation to the United States</i>		X	X			X	
<i>Family</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Ties to the Philippines</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Experiences in Higher Education</i>	X	X	X	X	X		X
<i>Involvement in Filipino Community</i>	X	X	X	X		X	X
<i>Negotiating Ethnic Identity</i>	X	X	X	X	X	X	

APPENDIX F

Level 2 Coding: Coding Tree



APPENDIX G

Level 3 Coding: Code Book

CODEBOOK: FORMING FILIPINO ETHNIC IDENTITY THROUGH HERITAGE LANGUAGE LEARNING		Brief Data Sample		Association with Other Codes
Number	Code	Content Description	Category: <i>Negotiating Filipino Ethnic Identity with Assimilation to the United States</i>	Source ID
1	ADJUSTING TO SPEAKING ENGLISH	Becoming used to speaking English in the US; could also include participants' attitudes towards Filipino accents	My dad has been living here for like the longest time, since he was like 30, and he's like 50 now. And he still has a very thick accent. And his job requires him to speak to customers in English, and he's been doing that for years, and he still... My mom, though, actually has really good English. But, I don't know what my dad's problem is. (Laughs)	A negative attitude towards a Filipino accent might fall under "EMBRACING AMERICAN CULTURE."
2	EXPERIENCES OF BULLYING	Being made fun of in relation to students' Filipino identity	But in junior high and high school I liked to bring rice, but sometimes they made fun of me, so I didn't bring lunch and I ate the school food that they had.	This code is fluid, and could fall under the second category of identity loss in the context of the school.
3	DISTANCING SELF FROM FILIPINOS / THE PHILIPPINES	Purposeful distancing from the Philippines or from other Filipinos	(Question: Do you have plans to go back to the Philippines?) I used to not to, but I think I will, just to visit my family and where I – 'cuz since that, since, 'cuz I really hated the Philippines, the country itself 'cuz I felt bad whenever I visit in Japan. I really, like, since I was growing up, then I realized that this heila problems at Philippines, and I didn't like that, and I just try to like, ugh, no.	There might be a positive relationship between this code and "EMBRACING AMERICAN CULTURE." The more Filipino families embrace American culture, the more likely they might be to distance themselves from other Filipinos.
4	CONTACT WITH FILIPINO COMMUNITY	Exposure to and relationships with Filipinos in the US	(Question: Were there a lot of Filipinos in your neighborhood?) Yeah, in my first neighborhood there wasn't a lot, and then when we moved to Lake Elsinore, there was one, there were two families – three families, actually... Only one of them was Catholic, like the other two were Christian, and they celebrated [Christmas] differently, but the Catholic one, they weren't as deep into it as like my mom and dad were, so like, it wasn't the same. We ended up getting really close to them anyways because we all went to the same schools and stuff.	I define this subcode as the informant's immediate surroundings, and not necessarily their voluntary association with Filipinos. The voluntary association caveat distinguishes this subcode from "DISTANCING SELF FROM FILIPINOS / THE PHILIPPINES."
5	BACK AND FORTH NEGOTIATIONS	Back and forth negotiations that occur within the self and the family; which language do I speak? Do I send my children to school here or in the US?	[My parents] would speak English all day teaching and stuff, and it was just, subconsciously, oh it's like easier to just like, think in one language. And sometimes, like I remember, they would have these phrases where they were like, "you have to speak Tagalog!" like, "Or else you can't talk!" Like they would just make me like, "You can't speak in English, so either like, don't say anything, or speak in Tagalog." And I like, wouldn't speak for like, days. (Laughs)	This is the crux of this parent code. I should think of renaming this.
6	GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES	Students shared disagreements with their parents about cultural differences	a lot of the times when I grew up, I would be frustrated with my parents because, okay, this is like not about language, it's more about culture. It's that I can't really like, talk about things in my life, because I'm growing up American. And they're, their culture is super Filipino, so like I'd have a problem that's like American, but they would just be like, what? What is this? Like, what's going on? And that frustrates me all the time	Nuances the "EMBRACING AMERICAN CULTURE" subcode; one generation might be more likely to do so than another.
7	EMBRACING AMERICAN CULTURE	Students describe their families "going deeper into American culture."	my mom and dad especially went deeper into like, American culture. Like, I don't remember us celebrating Thanksgiving at all until I went to school because I'm like, "Mom, what's a pilgrim?" And she's like, "Oh, I don't know. Let's find out." And then we started celebrating Thanksgiving and all these other things.	This subcode - alongside "DISTANCING SELF FROM FILIPINOS / THE PHILIPPINES" could be sub, subcodes for "BACK AND FORTH NEGOTIATIONS."

Category: Filipino Language and Identity Loss in the Context of the School			
8	AVAILABILITY OF FILIPINO CLASSES	Students note a lack of Filipino classes in K-12. They realize how unique it is to have a Filipino class at the University, and note that this is one of the reasons why they take it.	And that's what interested me about this class is that it's unique in that I didn't know about it, and that it's existing here in America and I um, well, hmm I guess you could say when I was at community college, when I was looking at colleges, I couldn't - like when I was Googling Filipino majors, there wasn't like, any in California that showed up, except for like in University of Hawaii, which I really wanted to go to, but that's like in Hawaii. But um yeah, I just had to take it.
9	ADAPTING TO PEERS' CULTURE	Students talked about having to adapt to their peers' culture (primarily Latino) while growing up.	It's like, everyone spea English, and then they expect me to know Spanish cuss words, which was very weird (Laughs). And the transition was hard, but then I adapted to them, like some, you know. Yeah, I adapted into their culture, and I just took, you know, the name-callings and stuff like that, used to it.
10	DE FACTO ENGLISH ONLY POLICY	Can include ESL policies and how these are perceived by Filipino bilingual families	I was speaking fluent Tagalog, but then when I went to kindergarten they put me in ELS, so English as a Second Language, 'cuz my mom had put that I spoke Tagalog and English. And then I went there and I was talking to them and they're like, "Wait, why are you here?"
			LT, p. 7, Lines 293-299
			HN, p. 5, Lines 206 - 210
			ZD, p. 9, Lines 380 - 384
			This subcode ties in with the previous category of "NEGOTIATING ETHNIC IDENTITY WITH ASSIMILATION TO THE US." Assimilation does no necessarily have to mean assimilation to White American culture.

Category: Filipino Language and Identity Loss in the Context of the Home			
11	FAMILY LANGUAGE POLICY: NO FILIPINO	Specific instances when participants were not allowed or encouraged to speak Filipino at home.	Well, my stepfather was um, he was Japanese, so we only spoke Japanese so I forgot Tagalog.
12	FILIPINO FOR THE PARENTS; ENGLISH FOR THE CHILDREN	Parents spoke to each other in Filipino, but spoke to their children in English. In some households, a different dialect replaces Filipino.	Cuz my mom and my dad speak to each other, but she spoke to the children in English, and so there's Tagalog, but mostly English.
13	FORGETTING	Denotes previous knowledge of Filipino and a loss of the language without practice	I wanna be able to speak it, and um I do understand a big majority of it, but speaking it was always like, hard for me, and my parents didn't like, really talk to me in Tagalog growing up.
			HN, p. 3, Lines 133-134
			HN, p. 4, Lines 157 - 159
			TF, p. 8, Lines 345 - 347
			Might be considered in relation with "FORGETTING" subcode.
			Consider possible relationships between this subcode and "GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES" subcode in first category.
			Might be considered in (causal) relation with "FAMILY LANGUAGE POLICY: NO FILIPINO" subcode.

Category: The Filipino Heritage Language Class as a Space for Language and Identity Reclamation					
14	STRENGTHENING FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS	Speaking Filipino strengthens participants' relationship with their families.	I want to learn how to speak it 'cuz I do wanna have that ability to converse with my parents, or my dad, and like, my aunts and uncles. Like I'd think it'd be very impressive for them to see that like, I'm being proactive with my culture.	SD, p. 12, Lines 529 - 532	This subcode is related to "LEARNING FILIPINO FROM EXTENDED FAMILY." Maybe speaking to them strengthens relationships, but the extended family members in turn teach the participants more about the Filipino language.
15	IMAGINING SELF AS FILIPINO SPEAKER	Participants talk about their future selves as fluent Filipino speakers.	I wanna speak Tagalog. I want to not be one of those Filipinos that has a family and their kids don't know Tagalog...so I just don't want it to like, die out, and like, be like an American – a Filipino American that doesn't embrace the language that we have.	TF, p. 8, Lines 344 - 349	Associated with "I WANT TO GO BACK" and "CONNECTING TO MY ROOTS."
16	"I WANT TO GO BACK"	Participants talk about their desire to physically return to the Philippines - whether as tourists or as more permanent residents.	ever since I wrote that essay about going back to Philippines, I really wanna see where I live, the church in Manila that my grandma and I used to go to, yeah, that essay.	HN, p. 18, Lines 791 - 793	Associated with "IMAGINING SELF AS FILIPINO SPEAKER" and "CONNECTING TO MY ROOTS."
17	"CONNECTING TO MY ROOTS"	The heritage language classroom spoken about as a space where students can connect to their roots.	ever since I took this class, it's like been a way to, I don't know, kinda connect back	LT, p. 2, Lines 72 - 73	Associated with "IMAGINING SELF AS FILIPINO SPEAKER" and "I WANT TO GO BACK."
18	PERSONAL AFFIRMATION THROUGH CURRICULUM	Students speak about the importance of a class that reflects their personal identity.	Like I knew when I was growing up, like we would visit like, relatives in San Francisco or something, and they'd just be like old Filipino, like old Filipino relatives and they would just like, talk in Tagalog, and like feed me food, and like – that was probably one of my favorite moments, like growing up, of like the Filipino background, like, pertaining to my culture, just like listening to all the stories and like, how they would laugh and like. It was so like, raw, you know? Like, raw and fulfilled my sense of identity, too. So it was just like, it's just really nice to hear. So I think I always, like, strove to um, learn it	TF, p. 9, Lines 404 - 411	Assuming that there is a lack of classes that affirm participants' personal identity, this subcode might be related to "AVAILABILITY OF FILIPINO LANGUAGE CLASSES."
19	COMMUNITY IN HERITAGE LANGUAGE CLASS	Students create communities with other students in the heritage language classroom.	the fact that I'm taking classes with people that I know I'm able to use the language with them when I'm outside of class.	SD, p. 13, Lines 587 - 589	Associated with "LEARNING FILIPINO FROM PEERS."
Category: Other Opportunities for Filipino Language and Identity Reclamation					
20	LEARNING FILIPINO FROM EXTENDED FAMILY	Students shared that some extended family members would teach them how to speak Filipino.	So when my grandma came, my step grandma came here, I learned a lot of Tagalog back	HN, p. 4, Lines 161 - 162	This subcode goes hand in hand with "STRENGTHENING FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS" in the previous category.
21	LEARNING FILIPINO FROM PEERS	Practicing and retaining the language by speaking with their peers (outside of heritage language classroom).	my peers would say, or my peers who are already natively, um native speakers, they would say how much better I've gotten since I've taken this class. And that's really uplifting.	LT, p. 8, Lines 372 - 374	Might be related to "STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS" in situations when they teach other about cultural practices.
22	STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS	Students speak about the impact of student organizations on their Filipino identity reclamation.	this year since I'm living with Filipinos, I guess the friends of their friends became my friends, so my circle, my circle of friends changed to Filipino. And I'm participating in Tinig and SPCN	HN, p. 10, Lines 420 - 422	
23	ETHNIC MEDIA	Relying on ethnic media to learn or review Filipino language.	when I was like in middle school, high school, I was like pursuing Tagalog as a language, and I would like ask them to buy like TFC [The Filipino Channel], and like speak to me in Tagalog.	TF, p. 8, Lines 377 - 379	

REFERENCES

- 1.2 Million Filipinos Live in California – New American Media. (2011). Retrieved November 5, 2014, from <http://newamericanmedia.org/2011/07/12-million-filipinos-live-in-california.php>.
- Barkan, E. R. (1999). *A Nation of Peoples: A Sourcebook on America's Multicultural Heritage*. Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Basa, A. C. (2004). *Intra-ethnic distinctions and divisions: Intermediary identification of 1.5 and second-generation filipino americans* (Order No. 1421947). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses A&I; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (305124529). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/305124529?accountid=14512>.
- Bautista, J. A. (2009). *Generational differences in remittance practices of Filipino Americans* (Order No. 1472261). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses A&I; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (305181130). Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/305181130?accountid=14512>.
- Bill Text – AB-123 Pupil instruction: social sciences: farm labor movement: Filipinos. (2013). Retrieved November 4, 2014, from http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201320140AB123.
- Campomanes, O.V. (1995) Filipinos in the United States and their literature of exile. In V. Rafael (Ed.), *Discrepant Histories: Translocal Essays on the Filipino Cultures*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

- Cho, G., Cho, K. S., & Tse, L. (1997). Why ethnic minorities need to develop their heritage language: The case of Korean Americans. *Language, Culture, and Curriculum, 10*, 106-112.
- Cordova, J. (2000). The language situation of Filipina/os: Diversity and complexity. In S. McKay and S. L. C. Wong (Eds.), *New immigrants in the United States: Readings for Second Language Educators* (pp. 333 – 351). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Curdt-Christiansen, X.L. (2013). Family language policy: Sociopolitical reality versus linguistic continuity. *Language Policy, 12*, 1-6.
- Dela Cruz, M., & Agbayani-Siewart, P. (2003). Filipino Americans: Asian-Nation: Asian American History, Demographics, & Issues. Retrieved November 5, 2014 from <http://www.asian-nation.org/filipino.shtml>.
- Espiritu, Y.L. (1994). The intersection of race, ethnicity, and class: The multiple identities of second-generation Filipinos. *Identities, 1*, 249-273.
- Fishman, J.A. (Ed.) (1966). *Language loyalty in the United States*. The Hague, The Netherlands: Mouton.
- Ghimenton, A. (2015). Reading between the code choices: Discrepancies between expressions of language attitudes and usage in a contact situation. *International Journal of Bilingualism, 19*(1), 115-136.
- Gilbertson, A. (2014). LAUSD requiring ethnic studies for graduation | 89.3 KPCC. Retrieved from <http://www.spcr.org/blogs/education/2014/11/19/17572/lausd-requiring-ethnic-studies-for-graduation/>.
- Huang, S., Yeoh, B. S. A., & Lam, T. (2008). Asian transnational families in transition: The liminality of simultaneity. *International Migration, 46*(4), 3-13.

- Kelleher, A. (2010). What is a heritage language? Retrieved from <http://www.cal.org/heritage/pdfs/briefs/What-is-a-Heritage-Language.pdf>.
- King, K. A., Fogle, L., & Logan-Terry, A. (2008). Family Language Policy. *Language and Linguistics Compass*, 2(5), 907–922.
- Leeman, J., Rabin, L., & Roman-Mendoza, E. (2011). Identity and Activism in Heritage Language Education. *The Modern Language Journal*, 95(4), 481-495.
- Lim, E. (2010). *Filipino, Pilipino, Tagalog: Status of Filipino Classes in the U.S.* Presented at the 2nd International Conference on Filipino as a Global Language. Retrieved from <http://larc.sdsu.edu/images/larc/Lim-Filipino-Pilipino-Tagalog-Status-of-Filipino-Classes-in-the-US.pdf>.
- Maramba, D.C. (2008). Immigrant families and the college experience: Perspectives of Filipina Americans. *Journal of College Student Development*, 49(4), 336-350.
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Mesthrie, R. (1999). Language loyalty. In B. Spolsky (Ed.), *Concise encyclopedia of educational linguistics* (pp. 42-47). Oxford: Pergamon.
- McNamara, K., & Batalova, J. (2015, July 20). Filipino Immigrants in the United States. Retrieved from <http://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/filipino-immigrants-united-states>.
- Saldaña, J. (2013). *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Inc.
- Wolf, D.L (2002). ‘There’s no place like “home”’: emotional transnationalism and the struggles of second-generation Filipinos’, in P. Levitt and M.C. Waters (Eds.) *The Changing Face*

of Home: The transnational lives of the second generation, New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Zanden, V. (1999). *American Minority Relations*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Zhang, D. (2008). *Between Two Generations: Language Maintenance and Acculturation among Chinese Immigrant Families*. El Paso: LFB Scholarly Publishing, LLC.