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Edgar Mauricio Vargas Blanco

December, 2015

HISPANIC FAMILIES' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THEIR HERITAGE LANGUAGE
IN HOUSTON AND ITS SUBURBS

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Department of
Hispanic Studies at the
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

The following study explores the attitudes of 40 Hispanic families towards Spanish and their ethnic community in Houston and its suburbs. The research participants included 20 Colombian families and 20 Mexican families. A mixed methodology using quantitative and qualitative methods was used. Through family's observation, surveys and interviews to the members of the family, the researcher examines from different angles how these attitudes towards the heritage language help to the maintenance of shift from the minority language to English.

The data collected showed that the majority of the families decided to transmit the heritage language at home using several strategies. Although the parents expressed various types of motivation to maintain Spanish, the majority of them believe that is was needed for professional purposes. When comparing and contrasting the parents' attitudes, in most of the cases, mothers' positive attitudes towards the transmission of the language were more noticeable than the fathers because they have a more instructional and stricter role at home. In addition, the Mexican families have more relatives than the Colombian families to support and motivate the maintenance of Spanish. The participants who do not have any extended family tended to find other ways to mitigate the lack of connection to their relatives by using internet communication technology or relating with other Hispanic people in the area.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, I would like to thank to all the staff of the department of Hispanic Studies at the University of Houston that has been very supportive. I am grateful for the doctoral fellowship that I was offered during my four years in the program to become a doctor in Hispanic Linguistics. During the years that I was studying, I received a lot of bright advice especially from the committee members of the dissertation. My learning process has been enriched in Dr. Manuel Gutiérrez's classes. His encouraging, engaging and helpful personality in the department is always present. I was blessed to be able to participate in his lectures that were always well organized and prepared. His classes in History of the Spanish Language and the Spanish in the United States opened my eyes to new approaches to study linguistics. As a recognized professor of the department who is flexible and approachable, he was ready to guide me in the classroom or in his office providing excellent ideas to improve not only in my work as a student but also as an instructor. He has been without a doubt one of the best professors and a great model to follow in the future.

Dr. Marta Fairclough is also a magnificent professor who is willing to offer guidance when is needed. Although I just took her class in Heritage Research, this experience was a pleasant surprise that make me understand better the situation of heritage learners in countries such as the United States. Dr. Glenn Martínez was an excellent mentor who nurtured my process of learning. His classes of Spanish for the Professions and Language Policy and Planning in the Spanish Speaking World were very challenging and productive. I really appreciate the time he spent with me talking about the different projects of the class or about the proposal. He was a fundamental to get

ideas to develop this dissertation. Dr. Pedro Gutiérrez has always been very supportive in all my decisions and he has always be there to offer a hand.

This dissertation could not have been done without my family and their constant support along the way of my education. My parents have been the best instructors of my life teaching me how to love my own culture and inspiring me with wise advice. They have provided the money and time for education because they see it as essential for all my family members. To all my friends in Houston and around the world who have helped me to find participants for this study and for your excellent ideas. Finally, I would like to thank all the institutions and families that have participated in this project. It has been amazing to listen to your stories and I hope this helps many families in maintaining the heritage language.

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Dedication

A mi madre Rosario que siempre estuvo a mi lado acompañándome con sus sabios
consejos y escuchándome pacientemente.

To develop a harmonious bicultural identity
the society must integrate multiculturalism
as one of its values (Hamers and Blanc,
2000, p. 214)

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

Hispanic population has been growing constantly in the United States; the number of people is not only increasing because of high natality rates but also due to the continuing immigration from Spanish speaking countries. According to the 2010 Census Bureau, Hispanics are now the biggest minority group and as of 2011, make up 16.7% of the national population, or approximately 52 million people. It is projected that their population for 2050 will be 132.8 million people (30.2% of the total population of the USA). What can be surprising is not only that states such as Texas, New York and Florida have a huge number of Hispanics, but also demographic changes are occurring in Louisiana, Maryland and Kansas.

Taking into account this situation, it is normal that many eyes are paying attention to this population, and it is not strange that little by little more Hispanic voices are heard in politics, sports, music, science and other fields. Thanks to the increase of the population, Spanish is the second language most spoken in the United States. Beaudrie and Fairclough (2012) indicate that this situation is not only happening in the USA but

also across the world where there are approximately 350 million speakers, so Spanish is becoming the third most widely used language.

The growth and relevance of Spanish in the United States is recognized in the media, business and education. Spanish language commercials, soap operas, movies, TV channels such as CBS Telenoticias, Telemundo, Mundo Fox, and Univision, which are targeting the Spanish speaking audiences in the country, are increasing. Major publishing companies are also printing Spanish versions of their editions. Students have moved their interest from popular languages in the past such as French and German, to learning Spanish in public school and universities. Alonso (2007) reveals that there is an explosion of enrollments in the Spanish departments of higher education institutions where these numbers have led to the creation of a separate department from other languages.

Although the situation of Spanish in the USA seems very encouraging, there is also the situation of the heritage speakers in the country. According to Valdés (2000) a heritage speaker is a person “who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, who speaks or merely understand the heritage language, and who is to some degree bilingual in English and the heritage language” (p.1). In general, those speakers use the heritage language at home and after a few generations its learning is incomplete or suffers attrition when they have to live away from their families. Fishman (1964) proposes a model that points out that in the third generation immigrant families become monolingual in English. This model says that speakers in the first generation learn English and they have a functional bilingualism. In the second generation, individuals reach a high level of bilingualism but this conservation stops from the third generation. Veltman (2000) claims that rates of language shift to English in native-born children are

so high that all heritage languages are abandoned making the dominant language the preferred one. The preservation of the minority language is not an easy task and there are several factors that influence the shift.

Despite the fact that the Hispanic population is reaching high numbers, heritage speakers of Spanish who move to be monolingual in English are increasing too. Bills (2005) explains that the situation of Spanish is different from the other heritage languages and it cannot be explained using the Fishman's three generation model. The author argues that Spanish possesses an important status because of the large population, and the factors affecting its maintenance are complicated. Research towards Spanish as a heritage language continues increasing because it is a relatively new field of study whose target population is growing considerably, as is the interest in the many benefits of bilingualism (Beaudrie and Fairclough, 2012). Some of the heritage speakers are bilingual and are able to use both languages almost with the same degree of ability. On the other hand, there are other speakers whose abilities fluctuate according to the exposure to Spanish received where they were brought up. In the case of those who did not have opportunities to use the language, it is possible that they have acquired receptive abilities but their productive skills will not allow them to express their ideas in complex or even in the most simple situations.

The maintenance of a heritage language is not an easy task for many families in the United States. As a member of the community of Houston and its suburbs, I have had the opportunity to meet a good number of people in the area and listen to their experiences towards Spanish. Interacting with several of the families, I have seen that some parents decide to maintain the language as an important part of their identity. Most

of them establish Spanish as the language to speak at home and use external institutions to help reinforce the learning in places such as bilingual schools, private language institutions or churches. For other families, the teaching of Spanish is not so relevant because they consider that English is the language that should be spoken in the United States. Behind these decisions, the attitudes that family members have towards the heritage language are affected by different circumstances that they experience.

Sometimes relevant choices on language policy and planning are made by the parents. Factors that affect these decisions are people's backgrounds, the number of children they have, the place where they live and the relatives they are in contact with. Changes in these decisions can happen according to their particular situations. According to Barron- Hauwaert (2004), when parents encourage bilingualism, children in these cases seem adaptable to changes, familiarize themselves to new situations and they can take advantage of enjoying both cultures. Attitudes play an important role in the motivation to learn any minority language.

Research on attitudes towards heritage languages is scarce in the United States. Hinton (1999) explored the loss of the heritage language using students' autobiographies that were written during classes in the University of California in Berkeley. Some of the participants stated that one of the motivational factors to learn Spanish was the need to speak with their relatives, especially their parents. Hinton reports that there are two vital elements in the transmission of the language: the chances to use it in different circumstances to achieve a conversational level and the parents' approach towards Spanish.

Velázquez (2009) examines the beliefs of bilingual adults in El Paso and the vitality of Spanish in the community. In the study, the author interviewed several families and observed their attitudes towards the heritage language. Although the families had a positive attitude for the preservation of the language, efforts did not translate in investments to maintain the language. Some parents believed their children would learn Spanish because of the bilingual environment where they lived. Other families thought that learning Spanish could be an obstacle for learning English. They assumed that their children would keep an accent speaking English when they used the heritage language. As the two examples of research done by Velasquez and Hinton, I faced similar situations while living in the Houston area and its suburbs where families' attitudes towards Spanish can be surprising and interesting.

This study will focus on the families' attitudes towards the heritage language in the city of Houston and its surroundings, a city with a large Hispanic population. Spanish learning can be altered according to the parents' or children's attitudes towards the heritage language or the Hispanic culture. Parents play a critical role in the learning of Spanish and their decisions are determined by different factors such as their academic and cultural background, age, motivations etc. This research analyzes the differences between families' attitudes from two Hispanic countries (Colombia and Mexico) that can be affected by length of stay in the country and cultural experiences. Moreover, the members' perceptions about the heritage language and its speakers in the United States will be studied.

As it is impossible to read the minds of the people to know their attitudes, I used a mixed methodology in which surveys and interviews were prepared carefully. To collect

the data, it was necessary to move to certain areas where these populations tend to live. As the Colombian population is not big in Houston, it was easier to contact the Mexican families. For this purpose, it was necessary to visit many places of the city such as churches, educational institutions, restaurants, universities or personal friends to contact the families that participated in this project.

In the subsequent pages of the first part of the study, the following content will be developed. First, the research questions used in this project will be presented. Then, the limitations and importance of this study will be explained. Finally, an overview of the research will be described by chapter.

1.2 Research Questions

The following are the questions that the study intends to answer:

- 1) What are the parents' and children' attitudes towards the heritage language at home, in the church and in the school?
- 2) What similarities and differences are there among the fathers' and mothers' attitudes at home?
- 3) How different are the attitudes about Spanish between the Colombian and Mexican families?
- 4) How do the children's attitudes change according to their age and gender?
- 5) What are the families' attitudes toward the Spanish dialect and the Hispanic community in Houston and its suburbs?

1.3 Limitations of this Study

Although this dissertation reached the objectives and the goals proposed at the beginning of the project, there were some limitations that were impossible to avoid. The participants of this research were only a small group of families (compared to the total population of Houston and its surroundings) from different areas of the city and as a consequence it was not possible to generalize the results obtained in this project. Larger number of people should have participated in this study to be able to have a better picture of the situation exposed in this study. First and second generations of Hispanics in the United States take part in this study; therefore the results are not valid for families of other generations. Although all the families were very helpful, it is possible that several answers were modified when they were next to an observer. For that reason, some of the results could be altered for this situation. As I developed this project, it was impossible not to have certain subjectivity. It would have been better to have two or three people participating to have more objectivity.

1.4 Importance of the Study

Being in contact with Hispanic people in cities such as El Paso, San Antonio, Austin, Dallas, and Houston has given me the opportunity to be in contact with families and explore their experience in the United States. Some of their stories showed the importance of the preservation of Spanish and the causes of their loss. For this reason, it was relevant to elaborate a study with focus on the Hispanic families' attitudes to recognize their own experiences and to discover the different strategies used to transmit Spanish.

Research related to heritage speakers is still growing and it is a relatively new field of study. According to Beaudrie and Fairclough (2012), it was in the 1990s that research on this area started to gain power in the United States. Therefore, one of the goals of this dissertation is to contribute to the knowledge in this area. In this case, this project will offer information about an area of Texas where these types of studies have not been elaborated, especially in a place like Houston and its suburbs where there is a large Hispanic population that can benefit from the observed results. One of the principal objectives of this study is to inform the community about the situation of the immigrant families who raise children in the United States and how their attitudes can affect the maintenance of the heritage language or the shift to English.

The results obtained from this project will also benefit other families who want their children to maintain their heritage language and to know various strategies used for the parents to protect their roots and their ethnic language at home. One of the purposes of this research was to discover the positive and negative attitudes that families had towards Spanish and its speakers to understand better the situation of the maintenance or loss of the heritage language in the United States. Moreover, it was central to illustrate how the families' attitudes can be altered by their environment and different institutions such as the school, church and other places that surround them and the role that these entities play in their communities. This project will also elucidate why parents decide to give up on teaching Spanish to their children and the difficulties that many face to preserve the language.

The current study is also expected to add important information about the lives of families living in Houston and its surroundings. Focusing on their attitudes towards

Spanish, the research will present some of their everyday practices and the different events that are available for them to be a part of the society of the United States. Taking into account this knowledge, institutions can understand and provide services that are appropriate to the ethnic populations that are part of their cities or states. The results of this investigation can be significant for heritage language educators and curriculum planners, a community that is expanding more every day because of the growth of the population. The data provided can help to provide ideas of the situation of the heritage students and tools to improve their teaching abilities with this specific community. In addition, this research can be meaningful for instructors who teach different ethnic groups in the United States. Although the situation of all the ethnic communities is not the same, this study will help educators to recognize the language needs and the real situation of these communities, enriching their approaches to teach these type of groups.

This research will bring relevant insights that can be used for society and academia. As the Hispanic community has become the biggest minority in the United States, one of the most important motivations to create this project was to encourage people in embracing their Hispanic roots. Thanks to the results provided in this investigation, I hope that language education needs can be addressed in a better way and curriculum planning may be elaborated carefully following the requirements of these particular ethnic groups. The intent of this type of study is to inform other academics about the situation of Spanish in Houston and its suburbs and to provide ideas for new projects designed for the conservation of the heritage languages in the United States and in other countries.

1.5 Overview of this Dissertation

This dissertation contributes to the fields of Bilingualism and Language Policy and Planning within Sociolinguistics. It was designed to determine the attitudes of 40 Hispanic families that live in Houston and its suburbs. This study is organized as follows:

- **Chapter 2.** It presents the literature review used in this dissertation. These pages provide important definitions such as *heritage learners* and *attitudes*. This chapter also reviews several studies developed around attitudes related to the family connected to the purpose of this dissertation. Finally, it offers a summary of some of the studies developed for other languages such as Chinese, Vietnamese or Arabic that analyzes the families' attitudes living in other areas of the United States.
- **Chapter 3.** It focuses on the methodology used in this project. First, it provides an explanation of the pilot study elaborated to determine how to organize this research. This chapter explains in a clear and concise manner the way the participants were contacted and a description of the location where the subjects lived. Next, it illustrates the mixed methodology for which qualitative and quantitative methods were used. This chapter also describes the participants and the instruments like the survey and the interviews. Finally, it explains the way the results were analyzed.
- **Chapter 4.** It illustrates the results obtained from the analysis of the data collected from the families participating in this project. In the first part, it explains the family's policies and planning at home and also their attitudes in the house, in the church and in the school.

- **Chapter 5.** A comparison and contrast among the parents' attitudes is done taking into account their decisions in the house about the heritage language. After that, the changes of children's attitudes according to their ages are analyzed.
- **Chapter 6.** It compares and contrasts the Colombian and Mexican families' attitudes towards the heritage language in the city and its suburbs. Finally, it examines the families' attitudes towards the Hispanic community and the Spanish language used in Houston and its suburbs.
- **Chapter 7.** This dissertation ends with the conclusions to synthesize the results with respect to the questions indicated in this study. It also offers suggestions based on the data and recommendations for future studies similar to this one.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Languages are fundamental for the functioning of societies and they reflect social realities in many fields and situations such as politics, education and social sciences. In other words, languages play a crucial role because they facilitate the communication and interaction among people from the same or different nationalities. In the case of the children of this study, the development of the heritage language is not only going to help them to have a better relationship with their relatives, but also to have a better understanding of who they are themselves. Then, it is important to know the family members' attitudes towards Spanish to identify strategies to maintain the heritage language in Houston area and in the United States. Although there are studies about the families' attitudes in other communities around the United States, there has not been done any research about them in the city of Houston and its suburbs. Chapter 2 will start with the definitions of heritage speakers and their characteristics. Then it will address different studies about attitudes and other topics related to this research.

2.1 Heritage Speakers

The definition of *heritage of speakers* is complex. Many authors have defined them in their particular way but there is not a common agreement. Wiley (2001) explained that researchers are applying a single label to a complex definition that has not been established. Fishman (1967) took the theory from Ferguson (1959) about diglossia and extended it to two languages that are different, rather than two varieties of the same language. Fishman's model was applied to different studies of heritage speakers and

especially to his research “Bilingualism in the Barrio” about bilingual Puerto Ricans in the city of New York. Valdés (1978) reported that the Spanish from the bilinguals in the United States lacked some of the features of the formal variety. Silva-Corvalán (2001) claimed later than the concept of diglossia used by Fishman was not appropriate for the case of the Spanish and English in the United States. The author reported that the two languages were used in a variety of functions (in public and in private) and Spanish could be used in several formal domains. Silva-Corvalán (2001) suggested that the difference of the Spanish dialect of the USA is due to reduced input and as a consequence of an incomplete acquisition.

Among the definitions that have been written about heritage speakers, the one offered by Valdés is very recognized and one of the most used for research and education. Based on that definition, the heritage speaker is a person “who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken who speaks or merely understand the heritage language, and who is in some degree, bilingual in English and the heritage language” (Valdés 2000, p. 2). Other popular definition was given by Fishman (2001) which describes a heritage speaker as a person who has a familial or personal connection to a language that is not English, in the case of the United States. In this research, I preferred to use Fishman’s definition because it is more inclusive.

Montrul (2008) claimed that the heritage speakers have an incomplete acquisition or do not acquire totally the heritage language in their first years or have lost parts of their abilities in the language later in time (attrition). The author reported that the heritage speakers’ level in the language is comparable to the intermediate and advanced second language learners explaining that one of the factors such as the learning of the dominant

language can contribute to language shift and the loss of the weaker language of the adult bilingual speaker (Montrul, 2006). Garcia and Otheguy (1988) explained that the more time the people stay in the United States, the more they tend to lose their heritage language and shift to English.

The linguistic abilities of the heritage speakers vary among them. Several of the factors that can play a role in the level of ability in the individuals are the age, the education received in the language, the degree of contact with the two languages, and the economic status. Some of them are not able to write or read in Spanish because their formal instruction have been in English. On the other hand, there can be individuals that had a formal education in their countries of origin and those abilities are good. The group of Hispanic heritage individuals in the areas studied in this project is very diverse because although the parents of these speakers come from Colombia or Mexico, they are exposed to multiples dialects from other nationalities from Spain, Central and South America in Houston.

The heritage individuals who live in the United States share certain characteristics and they understand, speak or have a historical background in a heritage language. Although this population is very heterogeneous, every individual has particularities according to their experience with Spanish. In this case, the heritage individuals' abilities in the language differs from bilingual individuals in Spanish and English or native speakers in Spanish who have lived all their lives in a monolingual environment. Roca and Colombi (2003) indicated that some of the heritage individuals can comprehend elementary informal communication but they are unable to speak because the lack of

confidence due to their limited proficiency and knowledge of only the most basic registers and repertoires.

2.2 Language Attitudes and Motivation

The definition of language attitudes has been explored by different researchers in their particular manner. There is not a vast exploration of studies exploring specifically the attitudes on heritage speakers and their families; however the field has been growing in the last decades. The concept of attitude has been relevant in sociolinguistics from the moment that Labov's influential work on speech communities' social stratification was published in 1966 (Allport, 1935). The author reported that language change is motivated by the stigma or prestige allowed by speech communities to particular linguistic features. In the case of the United States, there are many heritage languages but in general language shift occurs towards the prestigious language that in this case is English.

Binder (1989) elaborated a research on attitudes about language variation in the city of Brownsville in Texas. The researcher wanted to determine how the people viewed the Spanish spoken in the area where they live. Three groups were involved in the study: educators, businesspeople, and other citizens. Participants were given five labels to choose from: formal educated Spanish, informal everyday Spanish, Southwest Spanish dialect, south Texas Spanish dialect, border slang. The findings were that average citizens classified the dialect as "informal everyday Spanish". On the other hand, educators and businessmen characterized it as "border slang." The results showed that those groups more familiar with prestige domains for the use of Spanish had in certain way a negative perception and those participants who did not have familiarity with prestige domains

were less negative and believed that the dialect was more similar to their own way of speaking.

One difficulty that is present when trying to study the attitudes of speakers is the classic black box (Gibbons and Ramirez, 2004). In other words, it is not possible to access to the participants' minds so the way to do it is by using certain instruments such as surveys, interviews and interactions with the people. With these techniques it can be possible to determine beliefs and previous experiences of the people. By interacting with people, we can identify their attitudes towards the world, specific speakers or their identity.

Gardner's extensive research and his socio educational model on the importance of the attitudes and motivation in second language acquisition is recognized. It is very important to delimit these two concepts that are linked in the achievement of learning a language. Gardner (1985) defines attitude as "an evaluate reaction to some referent or attitude object, inferred on the basis of the individual's belief or opinions about the referent" (p. 9). In other words, in general people are likely to evaluate what surrounds them for example the education, heritage languages or foreign people. That evaluation of the world is influenced by various factors that affect or have affected the individual such as the education, age or nationality. Individual attitudes are created.as a result of this assessment

Taking into account this concept, Gardner (1985) also recognized that attitudes are incorporated in the meaning of what motivation is. The author determined that motivation is the mixture between the positive attitudes towards the language and the

eagerness and effort to learn it. The author pointed out that the relevance of these two concepts has been studied in many areas but he affirmed that their roles are stronger in language learning settings.

Gardner (1985) also made reference to the dichotomy between two type of motivation: integrative and instrumental. Integrative motivation refers to an interest of the individual in learning the language to participate and associate with the people and the culture that speak that language. In general, the learners with this type of motivation have a close friend, a boyfriend, girlfriend or family members who speak that language. Heritage learners are supposed to have this type of motivation because they are part of the culture. On the other hand, instrumental motivation is associated to the desire of the individual to learn the language for obtaining certain objectives in life such as a better job, a requirement at the university or other similar reasons.

Individual, cognitive and social factors have a role in the personal motivation of the speaker. Ducar (2012) claimed that most of the research about the heritage speakers is based on the definitions and constructs of attitudes and motivation proposed by Gardner in second language acquisition. Kondo-Brown (2001) developed a survey for heritage learners of Japanese in different levels. There were 145 participants with different levels of proficiency who completed this survey. Results showed that the learners had an integrative motivation. However, in the first years some of them had an instrumental motivation as a requisite to graduate. Their attitudes towards the heritage language were positive referring to the language as relevant, challenging and interesting. More than 90 percent of the learners confirmed that bilingualism in Japanese and English was important to obtain more job opportunities. The results obtained in this study showed that

attitudes and motivations can change during the learning process and if the classes play a role in that change. In the case of the families, their attitudes towards the heritage might evolve with time and many factors could affect this change.

Wen (2011) indicated that heritage learners were more interested in learning the language for an instrumental motivation than for an integrative motivation in the classroom. A survey was completed by 317 participants in three public institutions. An interest in the Chinese culture and desire to have a career advantage by being bilingual were the motivations that learners had to study the language. With the increase in the Hispanic population in the United States in the last decades (According to the Census Bureau 2010), it is impossible not to recognize the relevance to become a bilingual in English and Spanish. Therefore it is possible that the families' attitudes in this research will be positive towards the heritage language because of an instrumental motivation.

Feenstra (1969) argued that the integrative motivation is supported by an "attitudinal atmosphere" in the family. This type of atmosphere was created when parents were focused in helping and supporting their children in the learning process of a language and having a positive attitude towards the communities that speak it. The researcher explained that children's attitudes towards English and French in Canada were linked to the parents' attitudes at home. According to the author, the learning of another language was more than learning a set of verbal habits but the necessity to adopt several behavior characteristics of the other linguistic community and the family was a place to support this learning in a positive way. However, it is important to do it during the children's first years of life.

Attitudes towards languages can help to support its maintenance or its shift based on the perceptions of the speakers. Lambert and other researchers. (1960) explored the attitudes towards French and English in Canada. Although Montreal is a bilingual city, a process of language shift from French to English was happening in the French speakers in the area. The methodology used was the “matched-guise” technique in which recordings were collected of bilingual or bivarietal speaking in two languages or two varieties of the same language. Once the recordings were collected, they were mixed up, having space between the recordings of the same speaker. The participants in the study listened to the tapes and evaluated the speakers’ voices.

The results from this study showed clusters such as solidarity (e.g. likeable, friendly) and status (e.g. confident, prestigious). Furthermore, this study demonstrated certain stereotypes of Anglophone and Francophone speakers from the English and French Canadians. The data revealed that English was seen as more prestigious and this was an evidence of the shifting from French to English. Bourhis (1984) indicated that Lambert’s findings helped as a motivator to raise the status of the French used in the community.

Attitudes towards the heritage language in the family could be affected for different circumstances or factors. The Anglophone or Hispanic community in the USA can also change the perceptions of the speakers about the heritage language. Silva-Corvalán (2001) indicated that solidarity in the community could help to protect any forces of assimilation. Cities where the Spanish population is well perceived and their communities have strong ties to their heritage, the language is preserved. Dominican people in New York expressed that their heritage language is a symbol of identity and it

can have a unifying or separatist function (Toribio, 2000:265). As a result, the heritage language is the force that makes unique a community and it is the vehicle transporting traditions, experiences and beliefs.

It is also important to determine if perceptions about the people who speak the language and the varieties spoken can also affect the attitudes towards the heritage language learning. According to Gibbons and Ramirez (2004), people with no training in linguistics thinks that particular language varieties “are better than others, and when pinned down they will say that one language or variety is more beautiful or elegant or expressive than another” (p. 192). Bills (2005) reported there were negative attitudes among the heterogeneous Hispanic community in the country. Several participants expressed their dislike for accents from other countries like Puerto Rico or Mexico.

Zentella (1997) reported about the views of more than 300 participants living in New York. The author explained that Hispanics preferred to be called by their origin such as Colombian, Mexican, and Venezuelan instead of a label like Hispanic or Latino. The author explained that the bigger Hispanic communities (Mexican, Cuban and Puerto Rican) see themselves as different historically or culturally compared to other Hispanic groups in the United States. Zentella added that there are prejudices among the different countries that may affect the families’ attitudes towards the language or other Hispanic communities.

Some studies focused on the participants’ attitudes about the language maintenance in the United States. The respondents in general showed a positive attitude about the future of Spanish. Rivera-Mills (2000) asked 50 subjects of diverse nationalities

(Mexico, Colombia, Salvador and others) about Spanish in the United States. They were recruited from Fortuna, a small town in the Northern part of California. They were inquired if they believed it was relevant to conserve Spanish in the country. Their answers showed their desire to keep the language.

Other findings in this study were that there were differences among the generations, the first and second generation felt a strong commitment toward the maintenance of the heritage language but the interest was lower from the third generation. Most of the subject believed that the responsibility of teaching Spanish should be relegated to the home and not to the bilingual schools. Fifty per cent of the participants believed that English should be the official language of the United States. Rivera-Mills also indicated that the multiple Hispanic nationalities living in Fortuna and the social classes contribute to the tensions in the area. On the other hand, these tensions reduce once the new Hispanic generations appear as a consequence of the acculturation.

Silva-Corvalán (1994) evaluated the level of engagement to the preservation of the heritage language. She used an attitude survey presenting yes/no questions asking if they would contribute economically to a Mexican American organization to strengthen the use of Spanish in the city. The majority of the participants showed a supporting attitude with positive answers but the first generation was the most motivated of all of them. It seemed that the desire to preserve the language can decrease when people have lived for a long time in the USA.

Bell-Corales (2006) showed that positive attitudes can diminish; those speakers who have stayed in the country the longest tend to lose interest in the maintenance of

Spanish. The author collected the data from 20 students that were enrolled in a class with native and near native Spanish speakers and the subjects were given a questionnaire seeking to know their language attitudes towards the heritage language and language use in a variety of settings. There were four items researching the four dimensions on attitude (Spanish in relation to group identity, the use of Spanish for interpersonal communication, the use of Spanish for instrumental reasons, and the use of Spanish for personal satisfaction).

2.3 Social, Demographical and Cultural Dislocations

Fishman (1991) claimed that a community of speech stops using a language X favoring a dominant language Y because it experiences processes such as social, physical and cultural dislocation. Fishman understood social dislocation as the process in which the population speaking the heritage language is marginalized economically, socially and politically. As a consequence, using the minority language in the community comes to be a synonym of being disadvantaged.

According to the author, demographical or physical dislocation is characteristic of people that have experienced a recent process of migration. Fishman described this process as the relocation of the speakers of language X resultant of a condition of uneven power and absence of accessible symbolic and economical resources. The final type of dislocation is the cultural one which is described as the omnipresent of the majority language leaving the other minority languages little space for private space and public legitimization. In the case of the families of this study, these types of dislocations can

affect the transmission of Spanish and they also can alter the Colombian and Mexican parents' attitudes.

2.4 Benefits and Consequences of Language Maintenance

Several researchers made reference about the advantages of language maintenance. Báez (2002) and Fishman (1996) indicated that the language provides the individuals a connection to their culture and offers a closer relationship with older members of the communities and families. Reyhner and Tennant (1995) pointed out the necessity of the native language for cultural integrity as a response to the problems in the society in crisis and crime. The authors reported that learning the heritage language let the speakers to know the cultural values that are part of the language. Gibbons and Ramirez (2004) suggested that it helps people to have a better concept of themselves.

Some researchers studied if the heritage language increases the mental abilities of the learners. According to Portes and Hao (1998), it enhances the cognitive development and academic achievement. Portes and Rumbaut (1990) completed a study with 39,000 students of different ethnic backgrounds. The researchers reported that the bilingual participants performed better than English monolingual subjects. High academic achievement is associated to the subjects who were bilingual and had a strong identify with their heritage and ethnic values. Li (2002) argued that there is a connection between first and second language acquisition. The author explained that children with knowledge in their heritage language but less exposure tended to have less security to learn a second language.

On the other hand, the loss of the heritage language in the family can bring negative consequences. Báez (2002) and Thomas & Cao (1999) noted that the shift of the

language can generate conflicts among members of different generations for the lack of linguistic ability or understanding of the heritage language. It can also generate conflict not only inside the family but also outside. Cho (2000) reported that students that have not learned to speak the heritage language were rejected from their ethnic group because of the lack of linguistics abilities. Fishman (1996) made the connection between language and culture affirming that a part of the culture is expressed in the language. The author indicated that forgetting the language is like losing one of members of the family, it has a great value that needs to be kept. Wong Fillmore (2003) reported that maintaining a heritage language is a central factor to a better quality of life. The researcher explained that if the language is not preserved, the parents and children's communication is not fluid and children's identity is altered.

Kouritzin (1997) studied the consequences of the loss of the heritage language interviewing 21 subjects. The researcher analyzed the data in relationships in the family and school, the self-image of the learners and their performance. The results showed that the loss of the heritage language impacted their lives negatively in aspects such as loss of job opportunities, lack of ethnic identity, decay of parental closeness, family misunderstandings and separation from extended family. The researcher pointed out that when the children do not speak the heritage language, they lose the possibility to appreciate and understand many aspects of their parents' lives especially in the cases where parents did not learn English.

2.5 The Family and the Use of the Heritage Language

The family is essential in the preservation of the heritage language but there are other factors that can modify the attitudes of the members of the house towards the

heritage language. Mindel (1980) explained that Hispanic families tend to have a stronger tendency towards the *familism* which is defined as fundamental values that embrace solidarity and loyalty within the household. In the case of migration families tend often to seek for surrogate families in the diaspora caused by the familial void created by living in a foreign country different to their culture (Guardado, 2008).

On the other hand, the attitudes and roles of the parents are essential in the maintenance or shift of the heritage language. Spolsky (2009) indicated that language management is when a manager tries to adjust the language practices of others. According to the author, that language management can happen at macro level (the city) and a micro level (the family). In this case, parents in the family are in charge of the decisions to decide the teaching of the heritage language. This choice of the transmission depends on the family's attitudes that may be affected by different experiences and the environment that surrounds them. The decisions that parents make about the language used at home have an impact on its shift or maintenance. The family influences in many ways its members and it affects positively or negatively the preservation of the heritage language at home.

Valdés (1996) developed a study to show an ethnographic portrait of 10 Mexican families who immigrated to the border town of Las Fuentes. The selected participants were originally from the Mexican border and they were contacted using assistance of the city's "barrio" school and personal networks. There were two types of observations: Three-day observations and single-day observations. During Valdés' visits to the houses, conversations were tape-recorded about topics such as child discipline or household schedule.

According to Valdés, the mother played a very important role in the linguistic planning and the language maintenance. The author indicated that there was a common pattern in all the families. Fathers worked outside the house and mothers were principally staying at home having sporadic part-time jobs. Besides, the mothers were in charge of bringing up their children and underlining the relevance of their role at home relating the distances between a bilingual child and the school.

Kondo (1998) reaffirmed the idea of the mothers as the primary social agents for the preservation of Japanese, principally during the early years of the children. Her study indicated that mothers who organize an atmosphere in the house where children feel the need to speak the heritage language at home, the children will be more motivated to use the heritage language. The author argued that mothers affect the perception that children have about the heritage language, not only communicating with them, but also as the providers for opportunities to practice the language in different ways. Some of these strategies were obtaining materials that were particularly interesting for their children in Japanese, sending the children to Japan to learn about the culture, practicing the language and providing ways for their children to be bilingual.

Hakuta & D'Andrea (1992) elaborated a study about language election in the family that demonstrated the importance of the role of the parents in the conservation or loss of the heritage language in 300 students. The participants were organized by their depth of familial establishment in the USA. All the participants belonged to the same high school and were taking Spanish classes as a foreign or heritage language. Evaluations were made to determine the students' attitudes and experiences related to the use of Spanish.

The research showed that the principal reason for the loss of the heritage language was the decision of the parents and it was not related to the students' bad attitude toward the language. In addition, the proficiency of Spanish was different from those participants whose parents were born in a Hispanic country and those whose parents were born in the USA. According to the data, the attrition of the heritage language is regarded as a difficulty to recover the vocabulary rather than the total loss. Several factors that altered the adult language choice between English and Spanish were the social connections to Mexico, the demographic fact of immigration and the English proficiency of the members of the family in the house. Language shift towards English was evident but it was not related to Spanish proficiency, instead it was predicted by the participant's language attitude.

Hinton (1999) examined the loss of the heritage language among participants of the first and second generation at the University of California in Berkeley. Students' autobiographies were used that were written during the classes. Many of the subjects expressed the parents' roles and attitudes in the preservation of the heritage language. Some of the students explained that one factor forcing them to learn Spanish was the need to communicate with their parents who did not speak English. Other subjects indicated that their parents used the approach "one parent, one language" to preserve the language. This approach was presented for the first time by Maurice Grammont claiming that when parent separate the languages from the start, they could avoid misunderstanding and code-mixing in their bilingual children (Barron-Hauwaert, 2004). The researchers reported that there were two crucial factors in the maintenance of the

language: the parents' approach towards Spanish and the opportunities to use it in various situations.

Family' economic status seems to affect the parents' attitudes to conserve the heritage language at home. Phinney and other researchers (2001) collected data from teenagers from different backgrounds (81 Armenians, 47 Vietnamese people and 88 Mexicans). According to the researchers, the Mexican families with a high economic level tended to put fewer efforts to protect Spanish and as a consequence the shift occurs faster and the skills in the language are not as strong as in the group with a lower economic status.

Gibbons and Ramírez (2004) also found that parents were a relevant factor to maintain the heritage language. The authors used questionnaires and interviews to study bilingualism and the illiteracy rate in both languages. For this study, 106 young Hispanics living in Sidney participated. The researchers discovered that the quantity and quality of interaction of the people with Spanish was a relevant factor in the preservation of the language. Parents' positive attitudes and the contact with their families in the Hispanic countries played a fundamental role in the maintenance. The permanent children's communication with their relatives about topics such as history, politics and science influenced the interest to continue learning the heritage language.

The authors highlighted three relevant findings of their study. The first one was that it was likely to preserve the minority language similar to a native speaker in the children living in Australia. However, high proficiency was not easy to achieve, it required a lot of time investment and work from the members of the second generation, the family and the people around them. A second finding was that the stress given to

daily conversational aspects of language may alter the acquisition of high aspects of the language. The final one “reiterate the range of complexity of the factors that affect bilingual proficiency” (p. 233).

Velázquez (2009) also studied a group of families focusing on beliefs about the vitality of Spanish in the community in El Paso. The author tried to determine the benefit and the costs of the preservation of the heritage language. This study was based on three principal arguments. The first one stated that the speakers’ decisions concerning the maintenance of Spanish were caused by their beliefs about the language, “and that those beliefs are a reflection of underlying tensions present in a multilingual community” (p. 70). A second argument was that intra-community diversity causes different understandings of what bilingualism is. Finally, numerous parents in this group replicated an ideology to marginalize those Spanish speakers belonging to a working-class.

One of interesting result of the study was that Spanish was seen as an impediment for English acquisition by some of the mothers. They argued that Spanish can affect the pronunciation in the dominant language. In addition, according to the mothers, it was relevant to avoid any kind of discrimination due to having an accent in English. The most relevant finding was that mothers interested in the preservation of Spanish believed that their children would be able to learn this language by just listening to it at home.

Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe (2009) explained that families that immigrate to the United States encounter challenges to preserve their heritage language. The authors analyzed the attitudes of the Chinese immigrant parents and their children. The

maintenance of the heritage language was relevant to the parents or other members of the family because this transmission was beneficial to their children's future. The analysis of the data showed that parents were interested in the transmission of the minority language and made efforts to maintain it with positive actions. On the other hand, the children failed to understand the importance of the language and had certain resistance to the parents' efforts. The researchers proposed that the schools in the country should support the immigrant parents and work to organize a positive atmosphere for the HL learning.

As documented in these studies the election of the language that is spoken at home is fundamental. The constant practice of the heritage language in the family helps the preservation of the language and the parents' roles and attitudes are relevant because they are the ones who take the principal decisions that affect all the members at home. Among the factors that support the maintenance of the language is the parents' lack of knowledge of English, the one parent, one language technique, the economic status and the continuous communication with Hispanic speakers in different contexts.

2.6 The Identity to Preserve the Heritage Language

Hart-González and Feingold (1990) defined ethnic groups as identifiable communities with a common history, system of values, customs and beliefs. The election of the use of a language can be tied to the values of the group and their beliefs. In this part of the research, studies related to individuals' identity will be explored and how the identity is affected because of the family and other reasons that surround the speakers.

Pease-Álvarez (2003) wrote a study in one Mexican community where there was a disagreement among parents who maintained the heritage language in California or

shift to the dominant language. One mother summarized the children's situation of Mexican families in the following paragraph:

Es una lástima si ellos olvidan su español, porque uno guarda sus raíces en el español... es importante para ellos que continúen sus raíces, la cultura y que ellos se sientan orgullosos de nosotros y de ellos mismos porque ellos son mexicanos (Pease-Álvarez,13).

The author revealed that many Hispanics criticized parents who abandoned the use of Spanish at home. Pease-Álvarez (2003) explained that the children answered to the tensions between parents and the dominant society of the United States in different ways. Some of them felt that they had to teach their children Spanish to conserve their culture and roots. Other participants expressed their frustration when parents forced them to speak the minority language and as a consequence they wanted to speak English all the time to their own children. A few rebelled to speak Spanish when they were younger but rediscover their identity later or when English speakers looked down their culture or roots.

In one research about Hispanic families living in Vancouver, the participants revealed that the ethnic identity played a very important role. Guardado (2002) selected four families (two Salvadorians, one Colombian and one Guatemalan) with deliberate and snowball samplings. The families expressed the importance of the music, the literature and the pop culture associated with the minority language to help to the preservation of Spanish. Guardado indicated that the families with strong ethnic identity tended to find ways to protect the heritage language. On the other hand, those participants who were not

interested in the culture of their native countries were more assimilated to the culture where they live.

López (1978) explored the loss of heritage language in Los Angeles using data from a survey to observe the shift from Spanish to English. The researcher tried to determine the reasons why this situation was occurring. Lopez determined that if there was not a continuous immigration from Mexico, Spanish would not be maintained as it has happened to other European languages when immigrants assimilate to the dominant language in the host country. Examining factors such as ethnic identity, Lopez concluded something different from Guardado's research. The author explained that even if there was shift to English, the ties to their Hispanic identity were not lost.

Báez (2002) shared his personal experience when he was a young Puerto Rican child coming to school in the United States. The author explained that learning English made him to forget his identity, lose his closeness with the family and the visions and sounds associated to his culture. Báez pointed out that his mother and the school staff encouraged him to learn English forgetting his roots and what he really was at that time. Besides, the researcher indicated that the experiences with the dominant language were making him lose his sense of self identity. Báez argued that the language was a tool that ruled social existence, gave meaning to the culture and provided the conditions for inclusion or exclusion. Taking into account Báez's experience, we can understand the relevance of ethnic identity and how it helps to the maintenance of the heritage language.

Urzúa and Gómez (2008) investigated the maintenance of the language in families of Southbridge in Massachusetts. There were 384 Puerto Rican participants who completed a survey in which 51.5 % of the people were born on the island. The snowball

sampling technique was used to contact the subjects of the study. The majority of the speakers addressed the importance of the preservation of the language. The authors explained that the conservation of the language is happening because all the participants lived in a small area that facilitated social ties, participation in meeting and ethnic events. There were also many sources of input around the area in Spanish such as churches, radio station, bilingual school and others. The heritage language was principally used at home by the members of the family or they would use the two languages equally.

The majority of the participants had a positive attitude towards the heritage language, continuous relations with family members and a strong ethnic sense as a member of the Puerto Rican community. In contrast, for the members with ages ranging from 14 to 24 that were born in the United States was more difficult to be faithful to the use of the language in the house. According to the results, 15% of the participants showed a very low interest in the conservation of Spanish.

The use of the heritage language and the relationship to the ethnic identification in three generations from Mexico were studied in San Antonio. Cody (2001) examined the election of the language in specific situations to recognize the ethnic identity from families using a detailed questionnaire. The author found different aspects of the identity experience various degrees of variation. In this study, the participants varied their own perception of the role of Spanish in the maintenance and ethnic identity. The researcher indicated that in the relationship between language and identity contributed factors such as the racial discrimination, linguistic insecurity and the lack of a uniform ethnic etiquette for all the speakers. The results showed that the variation was an indicative of the

ambivalence that several participants experience about their ethnic identity in relation to the dominant culture and of the complexity of the ethnic identity.

According to the studies elaborated about this topic, it is clear that ethnic identity plays an important role in the attitudes of the families for the conservation of the heritage language. The ethnic identity depends on the perception that the speaker has about the culture of the minority language, the community that surrounds this person and the positive or negative perceptions that can influence the subject. Besides, there are other factors that can affect the identity such as the racial discrimination and the linguistic insecurity. As it was presented in Báez and Guadado's studies ethnic identity is seen as a relevant part of the community because it provides meaning to the Hispanic culture.

2.7 Similar Studies about Family Attitudes towards the Heritage Language

There is research that focuses on the members of the families' attitudes towards the Heritage languages that coexist with English in the United States. Although these studies are similar to the ones presented in this dissertation, there are some factors that make this project different such as the participants, the methodology employed, the place where the study was developed, the research questions and the presentation of the research. On the other hand, it was relevant to present studies elaborated by different experts that enrich the design of this research. In this part, studies about three heritage languages such as Chinese, Japanese and Arabic and the families' attitudes towards their heritage languages. For each study, it was presented a brief description of the methodology, the participants and the findings of the research.

The maintenance of the heritage language is not easy and in general children of the third generation shift to English. Fillmore (2003) reported that different from other

native and indigenous languages, the heritage languages of the immigrant groups of various ethnic communities are given up instead of being taken away. The author asserted that parents were inclined to believe English as more powerful and useful language because it provides better education, job opportunities and a better integration to the community where they live. The researcher added that as a consequence the learning of the heritage language was often ignored. Some of the disadvantages of neglecting the development of the heritage language were not seen until later because parents focused on the learning of good English (Tse, 2001).

The attitudes of the members of the family towards different heritage languages was studied for the following experts. Chung (2007) explored the parental attitudes toward their children's heritage language preservation in Chinese families living in Los Angeles. The author also attempted to complete a research gap inquiring parents how Chinese parents perceived and view their children's heritage language development. The information was collected through 99 questionnaires, 17 interviews and 2 focus group discussions. One of the objectives of the study was to investigate the factor that could affect the parent's attitudes on their children's language learning. The results showed that 80% of the parents maintained a positive attitude towards the importance of learning Chinese in the United States. In addition, this study indicated that Chinese parents who had more education have stronger expectations for the Chinese Language development. Another finding was that parents educated from multicultural communities were more focused in encouraging bilingualism and academic excellence. The author reported that immigrants of the first generation showed more ambivalence towards continuing their

children to learn the heritage language than the parents who have been living in the United States for more than two years.

Duckyoung Jung Becker (2013) analyzed Korean immigrant parents' attitudes towards their children heritage language maintenance who live in West Michigan towns (children's attitudes were not taken into account). Furthermore, the researcher also sought to find the parents' efforts in the preservation of the heritage language. The author explored this situation taking a descriptive qualitative case approach to examine the hypotheses of the study. Six parents were the subjects of the study. First generation parents who immigrated to the United States were contacted for the research in order to be a part of the project. Semi- structured video interviews were recorded, field notes were written and observations of the participants were made to obtain the data collected during this research. The information was examined using inductive and deductive coding methods and it was reviewed several times to find patterns among the parents that participated.

According to the author's results, all the parents maintained a positive attitude towards the maintenance of Korean and they talked to their children using the heritage language while they were in the house. The maintenance of Korean was more difficult for the families once their kids started to go the kindergarten because English was used more frequently at home, especially with their relatives. The subjects reported that opportunities to speak the heritage language were scarce where they lived. The researcher also claimed that there were divided opinions towards the maintenance because several parents explained that it was difficult to preserve Korean and some other did not. Finally, the subjects stated that a few changes in the community setting should be made such as

higher heritage language awareness at school and more encouraging and supportive immigrant language policies to protect these type of languages.

Martin (2009) developed a study to analyze the attitudes towards Arabic as a Heritage language in 94 Arab American Parents across the United States. The author explored associations between language practices and racism. A survey was completed by parents with at least one children (ages from 5 to 18). Almost all the participants were women (62.6%) and parents had a median of 3 children. The survey was divided in several parts such as the language proficiency of the children, the language attitudes or the perceived racism. The participants answered questions such as the use of Arabic in their daily lives, where they motivated their children to use the language, the perceived racism and their family proficiency in the heritage language. The information collected was gathered through an online survey delivered in Arab American organizations or with personal acquaintances that the researcher knew that fit in the study.

Preserving the cultural heritage was reported as the most important reason to conserve Arabic having 72% of the parents agreeing to transmit the heritage language and culture to give a sense of pride and identity to their children. Moreover, the majority of the parents claimed that they were in contact with other Arabic speakers and language through their religious practices. On the other hand, although parents were interested in the maintenance of the language, they also reported that few children were proficient in the heritage language and as a result a shift occurred towards English. One of the reasons for the lack of knowledge of the heritage language was that Arabic was not offered in the schools and the cost of classes outside was very expensive. The author also explained that the racism was not related to language encouragement or attitudes.

Hamamoto (2011) explored the attitudes of Japanese parents toward the preservation of the heritage language and culture in Southern Illinois. The research was developed using a qualitative methodology using Japanese “chuzai” families (residents who stay in the USA for a short time). Questionnaires, school observations and individual and group interviews were used to obtain the data. The most important subjects were five mothers of a “chuzai” group who participated in the study answering questionnaires and interviews. The author also visited the schools to collect information of the programs where the children attended and classes were observed. Focus group interviews were conducted in public places near the participants’ houses and the language spoken was Japanese.

The findings revealed that “chuzai” families were dissimilar to “eiju” (permanent residents) and Japanese communities living in bigger cities for various reasons. The researcher reported that the Japanese people living in Southern Illinois was a small community maintaining a strong connection with the culture and people. Positive attitudes were found towards preserving their heritage roots, as well as learning English and the culture of the host country. Their heritage affected their everyday life emphasizing the relevance of education in their children trying to preserve the Japanese standard. The author explained that “chuzai” families see their future living in Japan and they have the intention to come back eventually, so this could affect their children’s success while readjusting to their schools in the country. For this purpose, Japanese Saturday school had an important role to help the children for their return to the parents’ home country. Besides, parents found their experience in the United States would open the opportunities for their children’s future in the global economy. Hamamoto claimed

that an adequate instruction in the schools was necessary taking into account the students' needs and backgrounds.

In this part of Chapter 2, three studies that has been elaborated about families' attitudes towards their heritage language were presented describing them and taking into account the results. In the three studies, it was found that parents have a strong interest in the maintenance of the heritage language and their ethnic culture. The reasons why parents were not able to preserve the heritage language was that their heritage language was not offered in the public schools and the high costs of paying for classes outside those institutions. Talking in their heritage language to their children at home or relating with people from the same country was one of the strategies to keep their children in contact with the language. These studies provided tools to establish a better methodology using various instruments to confirm the results in this project.

Chapter 2 presented definitions and studies linked to this dissertation. The first part was dedicated to explain the concepts of heritage speakers, attitudes and motivations exploring significant investigation that has been done about them. After that, research was reviewed taking into account the family, the identity and advantages and disadvantages of the transmission of the heritage language. Finally, some of the studies developed towards other heritage languages such as Chinese, Arabic and Japanese were reviewed considering the methodology used and the characteristics chosen to analyze the communities living in the USA. In chapter 3, the methodology chosen for the dissertation will be explained in detail. The procedure to follow this project was highly influenced by the literature review explored in this chapter and it helped to develop a better understanding of the situation of the heritage languages in the United States.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Chapter 3 explains the rationale for the design of the dissertation and the methodology used for this research. Similar studies have been performed about the attitudes of families towards different heritage languages such as Mandarin (Chung, 2007), Arabic (Martin, 2009) and Japanese (Hamamoto, 2007) in the last decade (see chapter 2 for a brief description of the studies). However, this research was particularly different from others because it focuses on Spanish in an area such as Houston and its surrounding areas. This location presented particularities such as its large Hispanic population and the variety of nationalities. In addition, the surveys and the interviews were administered to two-parent families coming from Colombia or Mexico.

After a careful analysis of the goals and objectives of the study, the situation of the participants to be used in the project, and the methods available, the following methodology was designed. First, this chapter presents the pilot study developed in 2012 to examine if a project such as the one presented in this dissertation would be viable. This first sample provided the data and the necessary elements to create a larger study in which the attitudes of the families could be better analyzed. After the pilot study, this chapter focuses on the way the subjects were recruited and the different places where they were contacted. After that follows a description of Houston and its suburbs where the project took place, taking into account the importance of the Hispanic population. Moreover, the process of the data collection is displayed and the instruments selected are described carefully. Finally, the participants of the study are presented and the procedure used during the research is explained in detail.

One of the objectives was to understand how the attitudes of the different members of the family towards Spanish were affected when they were surrounded by a multicultural location as it is Houston and its suburbs. As a result, it was analyzed the perceptions of the participants towards the heritage language in different contexts (house, church, and school), change over time and by gender.

3.1 Study Design

The principal goal of this research was to elicit the attitudes of Colombian and Mexican families in Houston and its surroundings towards Spanish and the community and dialect spoken in the Houston and its suburbs in order to find strategies to protect this minority language. To achieve this goal, the researcher started to participate in activities in the city to meet people and to gain the trust of the Hispanic community around the city. Families were selected based on certain specific characteristics: both parents needed to be from the same country (Colombia or Mexico); and one of their children needed to be at least 7 years old and born in the United States, or he/she was born in a Hispanic country and was brought to the United states before he was 3. Before this dissertation was conceived, a pilot study was designed to obtain information and to determine how to elaborate a larger research project such as the one presented in the following paragraphs.

3.1.1 Pilot Study

A pilot study was developed during the spring semester of 2012 to determine the differences between two Hispanic communities (Colombian and Mexican) comparing their attitudes towards the Spanish language in the United States. All the participants lived in Houston or in the surroundings of the city. Snowball sampling was used to recruit

the families. The subjects were found through people who were interviewed and they provided information who fit in the profile that was required in this study. Four families were interviewed and observed during 6 months; seventeen people were interviewed three or four times each during the process. These subjects were selected based on specific requirements. The families needed to have at least one child that was brought to the United States before the age of 3 or he/she was born in this country. The parents belonged to the first generation; and their children to the second. The majority of the recordings were made in Spanish, but there were exceptions where the children preferred to have their interviews in English.

The interviews lasted 40 to 80 minutes and each member of the family participated in them. The researcher conducted the interviews during the weekends or in the evening when the subjects were available to be recorded. This small research helped to test several instruments that were chosen and to modify or add some to elicit better results. As this was a qualitative study, families were observed or recorded in their houses and quantitative instruments were not used. In the following Table 1 on the next page, information about the families is provided; real last names were not written because they were not relevant for this first pilot study. According to the data in table 1, some of the families had just one parent: the mother. Additionally, almost all the families indicated to use Spanish in the house.

Table 1. Information of the families

Families	Parents' nationality	Children born in the U.S.A.	Language that is spoken at home	Children that live at home	Parents in the house
Martínez	Colombia	3	Spanish and English	3	Father and mother
Gómez	Colombia	1	Spanish almost all the time	2	Mother
Rodríguez	Mexico	3	Spanish almost all the time	2	Mother
García	Mexico	1	Spanish almost all the time	2	Father and mother

Based on the recordings, narrations were written describing the situation of the families and their attitudes towards Spanish. One of the outcomes of the pilot study was that the parents have a positive attitude towards the learning of Spanish at home because they valued the language as a way to protect their identity and culture. Colombian families' attitude towards the conservation of Spanish was more focused on the importance of the language in the job market. On the other hand, the Mexican families tended to have a positive attitude towards the language because it was important for their culture. The mother's role in the house was relevant in all the cases because she made more decisions about the language spoken at home. Although all the children reported positive attitudes towards Spanish, there were external factors that affected their motivation such as the school, church and others places that they visit. Several children did not want to speak Spanish because they thought that their ability in the language was not good enough.

This pilot study provided the tools to develop this research and to choose the methodology used in the project. In the following paragraphs, the way for recruiting the participants of the study will be explained and the methods used for that purpose.

3.2 Recruitment of the Participants

All the participants in this study were Colombian or Mexican families who lived in Houston or the suburbs around this city. These families were recruited using different strategies. One was using the snowball sampling or chain-referral sampling which is a technique used in the Sociolinguistics field. The investigator had a similar cultural and linguistic background as the subjects who participated in the study, hence these characteristics helped to contact the families and to conduct the necessary gathering of the surveys and interviews. The researcher already knew some of the participants in different areas of the city (especially the Southeast), and these people recommended other eligible families for the study, but as the project developed, more people in other areas of the city and in the suburbs were contacted to participate through other avenues.

The researcher also visited several formal institutions around Houston and its suburbs. The first places were a few community centers such as St. Austin Center, Houston Center for Literacy (Denver Harbor) and others. The investigator contacted the person in charge of each institution and he was allowed to talk to ESL classes where people could sign an interest sheet to be called later. In general, three or four people from each class agreed to take part in the project but after calling them on the phone, it was identified that some of them did not fit the profile of the study. Among the formal institutions, the researcher also visited the Colombian and Mexican Consulates to find more participants asking the workers in these establishments. These consulates were very

important to recruit people because they organized different events. Examples of these activities were the welcome meeting for the new Colombian consulate or medical fairs. As people were introduced in those meetings, people started to help by sending e-mails or text messages with new possible participants for this project. As Mexican families were easier to find because of their large population in the area, the Colombian consulate was really useful to recruit and meet families from this community in the city, especially the events were helpful to increase the number of subjects.

Two public schools were also used to recruit people after getting permission from the principals of the institutions. People were met in meetings or special occasions of the schools such as Open Houses or students' fairs. Upon approval, phone numbers of the prospective participants were collected to set up future meetings. The secretaries of the schools were good sources of information to get more families involved in this study. Some of them were very receptive and interested in the study and they provided a few phone numbers of Hispanic families.

Once the information for two or three of families was collected, parents were visited in their houses to complete the survey in various areas of the city and its surroundings. Several parents who initially showed interest in the research withdrew from the project for several reasons, such as unwillingness to be recorded or visited in their homes. Other participants were not selected after checking the answers given in the surveys because they did not fit the requirements of the families needed. There were a few cases of families who completed the survey and were suitable but declined participating because they were busy. Although it seemed that Mexican families were easy to find because of the number of people that live in Houston from that country, a lot

of the families were mono-parental so they did not qualify for the purpose of this study. Additionally, there were several families in which one of the members did not want to contribute to this research, especially fathers who did not allow their wives to participate.

Although all the parents completed the survey and the families were recorded for the interviews, only the families who completed the surveys and participated in the interviews were used to write the following chapters of the dissertation. A detailed explanation of the participants will be presented in later in the study.

3.3 Houston and its Surroundings

Houston is the largest city in Texas and the fourth largest city in the USA, being the most populous of the state with a large metropolitan area containing approximately 6 million people. Based on information from the 2010 US Census, a population of over 2.1 million people live in an area of 599.6 square miles. Houston was established in 1836 on land close the banks of Buffalo Bayou and integrated as a city on June 5, 1837. The city received the name after General Sam Houston who commanded the Texan Army at the Battle of San Jacinto 25 miles east of where the city was founded on June 5, 1837. This area hosts a rich Hispanic culture that is present in its architecture, food and its population which is one of the largest in the USA is also one of the fastest growing minority groups.

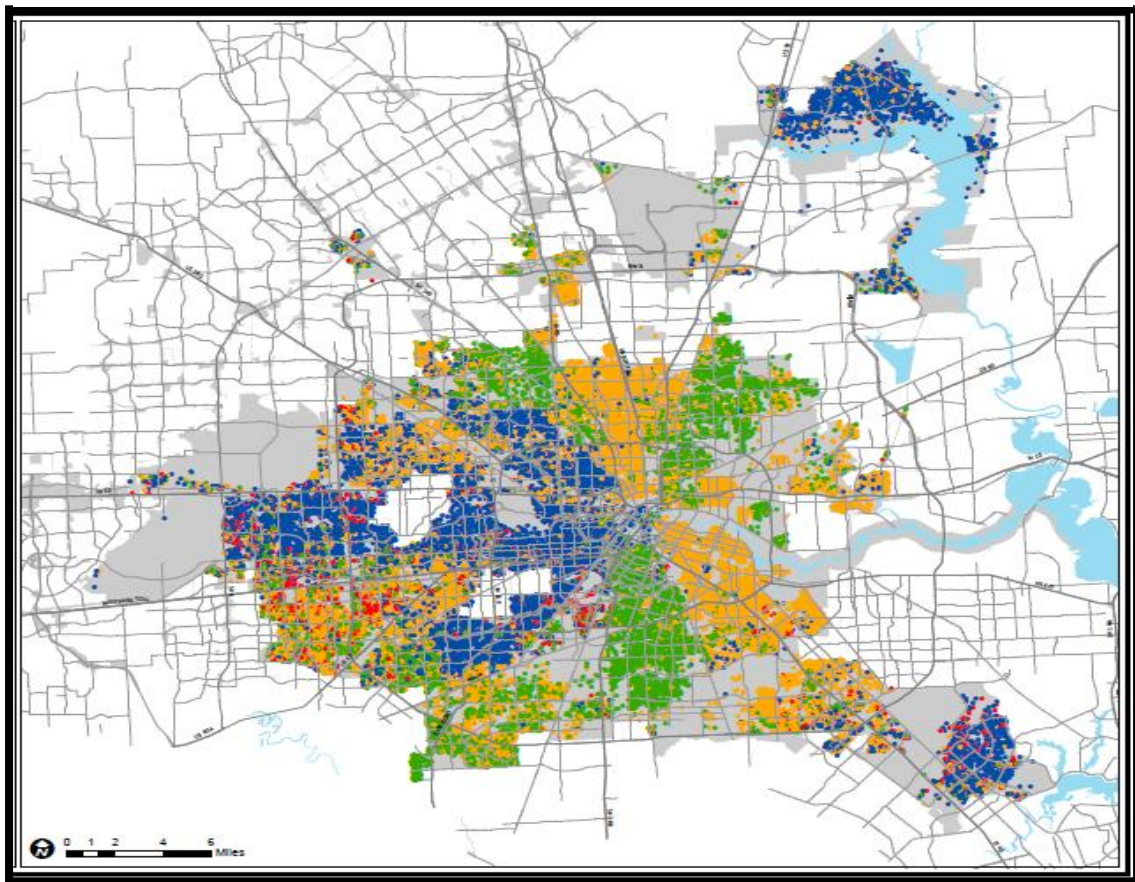
Houston is a mixture of multiple cultures and it has multiple universities and colleges (University of Houston, Rice University and The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center) and it is a port city with important industries (BASF AG, Bayer Coro. and Chevron Phillips Chemical). The city is the home of NASA's Johnson Space

Center and the Texas Medical Center which counts with a large concentration of healthcare institutions.

According to the 2010 Census, there are approximately 90 languages that are spoken in the metro area and it possesses one of the youngest inhabitants in the United States because of the growing immigration into Texas. The Census Bureau indicates that a 51% of the people in Houston are white with 26% of them who are non-Hispanic whites. On the other hand, black Americans are the 24% of the population. Asians were 6% of the total population (Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipino and others). American Indians were the 0.7 % of the population. Inhabitants in the city, coming from different Hispanic countries and races are a 44% of the population of the city.

Figure 1 was taken from The Census Bureau 2010. It presents the city of Houston and its surroundings by race and ethnicity, each point represents 50 people living in the areas of the city and its surroundings. The blue points represent the white population in the city and the orange points are the Hispanic community. The black and African American inhabitants are represented with the green points and the Asian population is shown using the red points. Other races were not taken in to account for the design of this figure.

Figure 1. The city of Houston and its surroundings by race and ethnicity



Although the researcher thought about writing this study with two different ethnicities such as Hispanic and Asian, at the end the Hispanic population was selected because there are many countries of the Hispanic countries that live in the areas of the city and they possess their own particularities, traditions among other unique characteristics. Taking into account the importance of the Hispanic population in Houston, this location was chosen for the purpose of this study.

3.4 Methodology of the Current Research

Snowball sampling was the principal method employed in this dissertation to obtain the subjects necessary for the project. This type of sampling consisted of existing

participants, who helped to recruit new people to be a part of the research (Palys, 2003). As more acquaintances were met through mutual associations, more subjects were known through those new people met and a great amount of information might be collected in the process. The total of families of participating were 40 (20 families with both parents born in Colombia and 20 families with both parents born in Mexico). In addition, each family had to have one child born in the USA.

To collect the information, it was used a triangulation methodology or mixed methodology. Triangulation is defined as a mixture of data and methods so there are various viewpoints upon the same topic. This mixing of data collection helps to validate the results obtained in the research. Denzin (1970) was one who wrote a justification for triangulation and it is believed to be one of the first researcher who used this type of mixed methods. The purpose of using different methods was to determine if the results obtained from the data collected from the instruments led to the same conclusions or on the other hand there are certain differences. The use of different tools to answer the research questions in this study allowed the investigator to consider the issues of the attitudes of the families in this areas from different angles and to increase the body of research about Spanish as a heritage language in the United States.

For this purpose, this researcher used quantitative and qualitative methods. According to Nunan (1997), a quantitative method was interested in corroborated relationships among variables. For the quantitative methods a survey was designed to investigate the social phenomena using numerical data techniques. The purpose of the use of this method was to assess people's feelings, opinions, relationships and attitudes (Shaughnessy et al., 2003). In the collection of the data for the quantitative method, the

parents were the only ones in the family to respond the survey because some of the children were not old enough to complete this task in a diligent manner. The survey will be explained more in detailed in this chapter in the section about the instruments.

This study used a phenomenological approach to have a comprehension of the subjects in terms of their language experiences and attitudes. According to Treviño (2000), this type of approach allowed the participants to express what they feel and tell their stories using their own voices. Willis (2007) explained that phenomenologists differentiated phenomena (the beliefs and perceptions from the view of the subjects) from noumena (what the reality is). In this case, the inquirer interpreted what the subjects said by listening to the different narrations of the people.

Nunan (1997) concluded that the qualitative methods in general generated insight and comprehension instead of creating ‘truths’. The reason to use qualitative methods was exactly to understand better the attitudes of the respondents and the reasons for those beliefs or disposition towards their heritage language. The interview method in particular offered opportunities to acquire important deep understanding of the situation and to elucidate any salient issues of the subjects (Babbie, 2004). This technique contributed to collect in-depth information on the participants and to recognize, deconstruct and describe their lives in their own meaningful ways (Dervin, 1999). During the recorded conversation with the families the researcher asked structured and non-structured questions. Several interviews were individual and some of them included the whole family.

The purpose of using this method was to comprehend in a deeper manner the families’ attitudes towards the heritage language and the reasons behind them. There

were structured interviews in which the interviewer asked a standardized set of open-ended questions to the subjects, and they were free to reply. For the unstructured interviews, there was a spontaneous interaction among the researcher and all the family members. The researcher in this case was free to take the conversation in the best direction to get the results desired in this project. Although it provided interesting data for the study, it was more difficult to examine when the researcher tried to compare information across the respondents.

This type of mixed methodology using quantitative and qualitative data style design (Creswell, 2003) was used to obtain a more holistic view of the situation proposed in this project. In this case, the use of the quantitative and qualitative approaches in this study proportioned a more appropriate understanding of the research issues that the researcher was trying to answer.

3.4.1 Data Collection

The data collection was the process to obtain the data necessary to answer the research questions and to examine the outcomes of this project. The principal objective of this process was to capture quality and valuable information from the participants involved. For that purpose, the selection of adequate collection instruments was relevant to increase the credibility of this study. The data collection consisted of a survey, interviews and observations conducted from August 2013 to June 2014. Before the families completed any survey or interview, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and the family members read and signed the assent and consent form approved by the University of Houston Committee for the protection of Human Subjects. The surveys were provided to the parents in person, sent by e-mail or were delivered by a friend of the

family. After three months depending on the availability of the families, the participants were interviewed individually to explore the experience of each member of the family with the heritage language. The average number of interviews conducted was among four to six for each family. There was a family interview in which the members of the family participated as a group. Some of the participants did not agree to be recorded but they consented to be interviewed. In these cases, the researcher took notes of the relevant information to answer the research questions of the study.

3.5 The Instruments of the Study

There were two instruments used in this research, a survey and two different types of interviews (structured and spontaneous). These instruments were based on other similar research designed to study heritage languages such as Mandarin (Chung, 2007), Arabic (Martin, 2009), and Japanese (Hamamoto, 2007). All the instruments were administered with the consent of the participants. For that purpose, consents forms were written and approved by the Committee for the Protection of Human Subject at the University of Houston (see appendices 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5). For more information on the procedure, it is necessary to go to the following link:

<http://www.research.uh.edu/Home/Division-of-Research/Compliance-and-Committees/CPHS>. To obtain permission to use the instruments with the families, the researcher completed a Human Subject Research Training and an application at the Research Administration Management Portal.

3.5.1 The Survey

The survey (See Appendices 6 and 7) was designed to suit the population that participated in this research. It was given to Colombian and Mexican parents who had children living in Houston and its suburbs and it was the first technique administered. This instrument was not completed by the children because several were not old enough to complete this type of questionnaires. Although the researcher had the opportunity to collect the data from single-parent families, only information from nuclear families was analyzed. The survey was written in Spanish in case some parents were not able to understand English. In this case, as all the parents belonged to the first generation, it was easier for them to complete the survey and the answers were be more reliable because of comprehension.

The survey was divided in 4 parts. The first two parts were designed to collect personal information from the parents and children such as where the families live, the languages they speak, their educational background, and the number of years that they have lived in the United States. The third part focused on the use of Spanish in the house, the church, and the school, who spoke the heritage language and with whom, if the children communicated with relatives in Spanish, or if the heritage language played a role in the religious practices of the family. In the final part, there were questions related to the parents' attitudes towards the Hispanic community and Spanish in the city of Houston and its surroundings. The principal objective of the survey was to determine the parents' attitudes in a quantitative manner towards the learning and use of Spanish.

3.5.2 Interviews

The use of interviews complemented the survey, allowing the subjects tell their stories in as much more detail as possible. There were two types of interviews in this research: one that was individual and one with all the family (see the questions for the two interviews in appendices 8 and 9). A few of the procedures to conduct the interviews were taken from Silva-Corvalán (2001) and Richards (2009). Silva-Corvalán (2001) recommended interviews to be as natural as possible so the conversation flows. For this reason, the researcher tried to induce a spontaneous conversation so that the person interviewed forgets the recording. As some of the families did not have a friendship with the interviewer, the first contact was formal but they quickly developed rapport after the completion of the survey, and the participants felt more comfortable to be interviewed in the following visits at their homes.

Although there were types of interviews such as: open, semi-structured and structured (Richards (2009), the interviews in this study followed more a semi-structure format. In other words, the researcher prepared organized questions but there was flexibility in the order in which the questions were asked to focus in a deeper manner in certain areas. The researcher followed the structured questions to obtain specific information related to the research questions of the study. However, there were enough opportunities to ask spontaneous questions based on the structured ones created to explore more the responses given and to confirm the information that was provided by the subjects.

Two months (depending on the availability of the participants) after the parents completed the survey, the family was contacted again to be interviewed for the first time.

The interviews took place in the families' houses or in public places such as cafes and restaurants. There were two sets of questions (one for the parents and one for the children) focusing on the role that the members have. Each member of the family was recorded individually; with some exceptions: several parents decided to participate but without being recorded, so the research took notes by hand. Each interview took 40 to 60 minutes having questions that were related to the survey to go deep in what the family's attitudes were (see the questions for the interviews in appendices 8 and 9). Each week an average of two to six families were interviewed. The majority of the interviews were conducted in Spanish but some of the children who were not able to communicate in the heritage language preferred to have the interview in English. The most difficult in the process of the research was to get contact with the fathers. In general, the male parents were the ones who worked so they often got home late and it was easier to meet with them in the evenings.

For the second interview, the family was contacted two or three months after the first one. Once again, questions were prepared but were addressed to the whole family, and any member could answer. This interview was designed to confirm the information collected previously and to obtain more detailed responses. The conversation with the participants was more relaxed in this interview and the subjects were open to ask questions and to talk more about other topics. Several families could not be interviewed again because the researcher could not reach them.

3.6 The Participants and the Procedure

The Hispanic population in Houston and its surrounding is quite heterogeneous; there is a large population from various Spanish speaking countries especially from

Mexico. The participants in this research are Colombian and Mexican families who had at least one child that was born in a Hispanic country and came to the country before the age of 3 or was born in the United States. It was really important to inform the subjects that the information provided was used strictly for the purpose of this sociolinguistic study and that their names would be anonymous and changed. To gain the trust of the participants, it was relevant that the researcher created a positive atmosphere so the interviewees felt comfortable to talk in a natural way.

These two nationalities were selected for different reasons. The Colombian families were chosen because there are not many studies taking into account people coming from that country. Besides, the researcher of this project is also from that country so it was also important for him to know more about this community in the city. On the other hand, the Mexican families were selected because they are the largest Hispanic community living in Houston with a population of 673,093 according to the Census Bureau (2010). In addition, there are not many studies where Mexican families have been studied in the area. This type of research not only would be beneficial to the Colombian and Mexican communities but also for all the minority groups living in the United States and different parts of the world that want to maintain the heritage language. Table 2 shows the total of the families and the number of the children that are a part of the household.

Table 2. Number of children per family

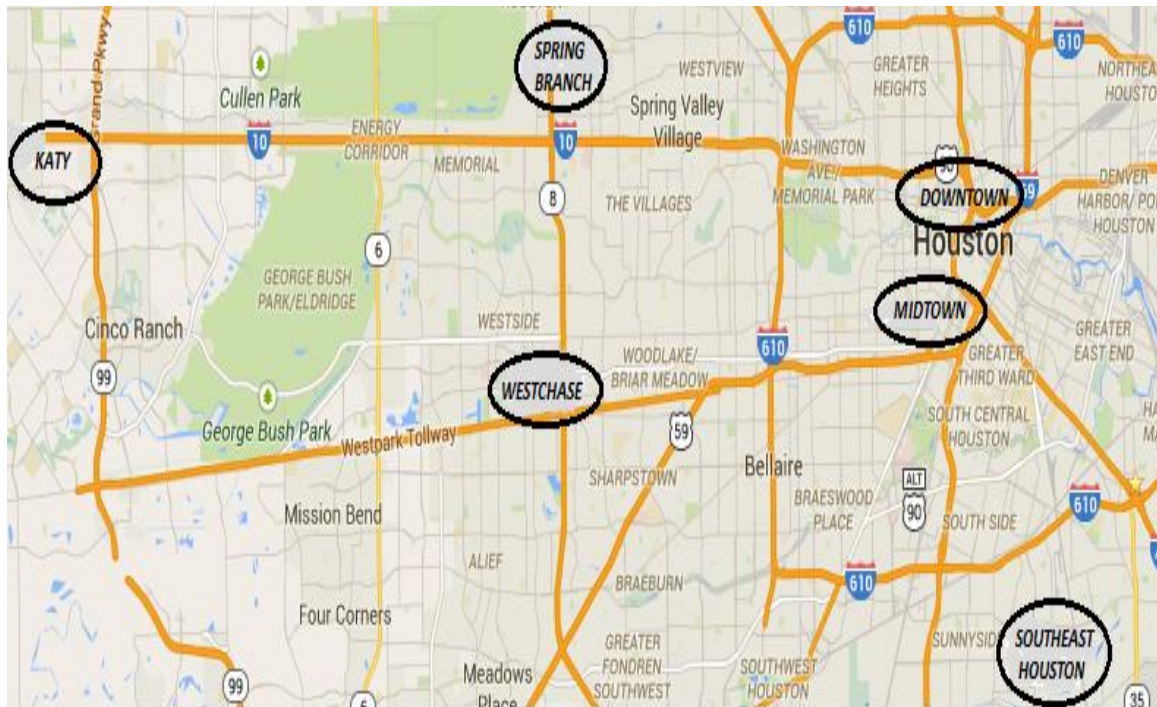
Number of children	Number of families
1 child	3
2 children	18
3 children	11
4 children	8

Based on Table 2, almost all the families of the study had 2 children and there were few families with 1 child at home. There were also several families who have 3 or four children. Hispanic families are living in all areas of Houston and its surroundings. For this project, the families contacted lived in different areas, Table 3 and Figure 2 present the location of the participants in Houston and in the suburbs.

Table 3. Location of the families in Houston and the suburbs

Areas of Houston and its surroundings	Colombian families	Mexican families
Downtown	1	3
Southeast	0	5
Spring Branch	4	3
Westchase	2	4
Midtown	3	3
Katy	11	2
Total	20	20

Figure 2. Areas of Houston and its suburbs where the families lived



As seen in Table 3, most of the Colombian families were located in Katy, a city within the Houston-Woodlands–Sugar Land metropolitan area. On the other hand, the Mexican families were distributed similarly in all the areas. Family settings were chosen to meet with the subjects but some families preferred to meet in coffee places or restaurants. Once the respondents were established and contacted, the first step followed by the researcher was to explain the purpose of the study and obtain the general information of the participants. The subjects have been part of the research upon informed consent of the members or the parents of the households. Figure 2 shows the areas where the families were contacted in the city of Houston and its suburbs. After getting signed the informed consents, the recruiter proceeded to administer the survey to the parents. When a subject did not want to complete the survey, the researcher

read it for them and completed it on their behalf. The researcher contacted 92 parents to fill out the survey but only 80 surveys were selected for the study. In general, parents spent 30 to 40 minutes to complete all the survey. Even though single mothers were easily contacted to complete the survey or mothers were the ones who completed the survey first, the researcher selected families where both parents were willing to help and fill all the survey. As shown in Table 2, more mothers completed the survey because they were easier to contact. Although 92 surveys were collected, a few the surveys were not added to the research for different reasons, such as some of the families were constituted by one parent or one of the parents received the survey but it was never completed by one of the two parents. At the end, 80 surveys were analyzed (40 mothers and 40 fathers).

Table 4 presents the information about the number of surveys obtained.

Table 4. Participants in the survey

	Female	Male	Total of surveys collected	Total of survey used in the study
Number of participants	52	40	92	80

After 2 months, the participants were contacted once again to record the interviews. These interviews were made in the participants' houses, restaurants or coffee shops. The majority of the interviews were conducted in Spanish but there were cases where the children preferred the conversation to be recorded in English. It was very important to let the subjects chose the language they felt more comfortable with so they

could better express their beliefs and attitudes. The first interview was individual and the total number of recordings is represented in Table 5.

Table 5. Participants in the individual interviews

	Female	Male	Total of interviews conducted	Total of interviews used in the study
Parents	45	40	85	80
Children	60	52	112	104
Total	105	92	197	184

As presented in Table 5, the inquirer conducted 85 individual interviews with the parents but more data was collected in case the families discontinued participating in the study. A total of 117 interviews were made with the children; nevertheless, 109 interviews were used because some of the children were not old enough to be recorded. A total of 189 interviews were utilized in this dissertation and they lasted approximately 40 to 60 minutes each one according to the answers given by the participants. The researcher was always taking notes while the recording was taking place. In a few cases, subsequent interviews were scheduled in person, by phone or by Skype to obtain more information to clarify some of the answers provided individually.

Another interview was conducted with all the members of the family after three months. Although questions were prepared for this interview, the purpose of this recorded conversation was to let the participants be able to express their ideas freely. This type of recording required more coordination so that all the members of the families were together at a certain time and place. The majority of these interviews took place during the weekend with the exception of some of them that were developed at night after the

parents arrived home after work or from other activities. Table 6 presents the information related to these interviews.

Table 6. Family interviews

	Total number of interviews recorded	Total of interviews used in the study
Number of families	46	42

The recordings lasted around 60 to 70 minutes each. Extra interviews were made to collect more information about the subjects in this dissertation in case there was clarification needed about the answers provided. Almost all the conversations where recorded completely in Spanish but there were cases where participants only replied in English, especially the teenagers. The researcher was not only taking notes when the interviews were recorded but the recordings were also listened twice or three times to write any relevant comments related to the study. The researcher was searching for certain ideas or points that were constant throughout some of the families and he registered the situation. Once all the data was collected, this information was organized in categories, taking into account the research questions prepared at the beginning of the project.

In the tables (see Appendix 10), the information about the families according to nationality and the number of children was organized. These tables were relevant because they helped to identify the families and to recognize the information of the

participants while the project is read. All the names were changed to protect the privacy of the families who participated in the study.

3.7 The Procedure to Analyze the Data

Taking into account that this project used a mixed methodology, having quantitative and qualitative methods, there were several steps to follow to process the data. The first step was to organize all the data in folders to find them easily and to review it after all the information was collected. Then, all the data from the survey was ordered and the interviews were heard as many times as it was necessary to transcribe the parts that were most relevant for this project. The quantitative data obtained was represented using tables and figures elaborated to show the results from the information asked in the survey. All the data was organized in this way to be able to compare the similarities and differences among the families that participated in the study.

To examine the results, it was required to structure all the data acquired and to determine general patterns. Once these patterns were identified, it was relevant to observe the interrelationships among variables such as gender, age, education etc. to determine if they were related. After that, the data was separated to answer each one of the research questions proposed. In some parts of the research, only the qualitative information obtained was taken into account and in most of this study, a mixed procedure was implemented using the data from the surveys and the interviews.

For all the parts of Chapters 4, 5 and 6, the data from the interviews was heard and the important information was selected to fit in each portion of the study. In addition, the researcher used direct fragments from the recorded interviews in the

following chapters to better explain the findings of the study. In Chapter 4, the language planning and heritage learning at home will be explored using mainly the information obtained from the interviews. To identify the attitudes of the families at home, in the church and in the school, the questions 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 18 from part 3 of the survey were reviewed. To compare and contrast the parents' attitudes in Chapter 5, questions 1, 2, 3, 4 from part 3 were studied. For the second part of this chapter, only information from the interviews was taken into account. Finally, Chapter 6 compares the Colombian and Mexican families and the attitudes of the families towards the Hispanic community living in Houston and the use of Spanish in the area. To write this chapter, the responses for questions 20, 21 and 22 were used and the information from the interviews.

Chapter 3 presented how this project was designed. In the first part, an explanation of the pilot study was described and the procedure determined to do it. After that, the mixed methodology was clarified defining the quantitative and qualitative instruments employed. Finally, detailed information of the place where the research took place and the subjects who participated was provided. In Chapters 4, 5, and 6, an examination of the results will be provided after a careful revision of the data obtained.

Chapter 4

Family Members' Attitudes in Three Discourse Communities

Chapter 4 is dedicated to explore the results obtained from the data collected. Martinez (2006) indicated that speakers' decisions about the transmission or non-transmission of the Heritage language were influenced by their opinions and attitudes about language, and those attitudes were a result of tensions in a community where many languages are spoken. Therefore, this analysis recognizes the positive and negative attitudes of the family members and how they affect the maintenance of Spanish in the city of Houston and its surroundings.

As reported in the methodology section, the principal sources of information were a survey that was completed by the parents and individual and family interviews recorded which elicit family members' attitudes towards the heritage language and its speakers. Although there were many similarities among the subjects of the study, the community of this research was very heterogeneous because of many particularities of each participant such as age, gender, or nationality. Some of the parents reported that they were not able to speak English but all of participants have certain level of the dominant language, especially in terms of comprehension. After the surveys and the interviews were examined, information was selected to write every part of the different sections of Chapters 4, 5, and 6. Chapter 4 starts with the parents' language planning in the house. The second part of the chapter reports on the parents' and children's attitudes towards the heritage language at home, the church, and in school. In Chapter 5, a comparison between fathers and mothers' attitudes is presented which takes into

account gender similarities and considerations of the language used in the interview (Spanish or English). This chapter is also centered on the changes of the children's attitudes according to their age and gender. Chapter 6 focus compares and contrasts the Colombian and Mexican families' attitudes towards the heritage language. The final part considers the families' attitudes towards the Spanish spoken in the United States and their speakers. All chapters finish with a summary of the principal findings.

4.1 Attitudes towards the Heritage Language in Three Discourse Communities

The first part of the study focuses on the family members' attitudes towards the language in three discourse communities (i.e., the house, the church, and the school), that can affect their interest for the maintenance of the heritage language or the shift to English. John Swales (1990) defined a discourse community as a group that has intentions and objectives and use communication to reach these objectives. In other words, it is a community that has in common a group of discourses which are comprehended as basic assumptions and values.

4.1.1 Attitudes at Home

As mentioned in the Chapter 3 all the names provided in this dissertation were changed to maintain the anonymity of the subjects who took part in this project (tables with the families' information are in Appendices 10 and 11). The majority of the parents decided that they wanted the house to be the principal place to maintain the heritage language (just three of the families interviewed shifted to English). In the following fragment, Marco (45) gave details of how they maintained the language at home which

was similar to most of the families who had a positive perception about the transmission of Spanish:

Queríamos que nuestras hijas hablaran las dos lenguas... Entonces afuera de la casa está su mundo en inglés, el McDonalds, el fútbol americano y todo eso porque obviamente el inglés es indispensable en este país pero en mi casa está Colombia [laugh]... Es por eso que cuando entran en la casa, todo es en español porque ellas tienen que conocer sobre nuestras tradiciones, nuestra comida, como somos, como pensamos y solo se logra hablando español.¹

According to Marco, there were two separate worlds to learn English and Spanish. The outside world was the one for English where the child could explore and learn about the dominant language and its culture. On the other hand, the house was the place to recognize their cultural identity through the use of the heritage language and to acquire the values and the parents' ethics. Obviously, there was a positive attitude towards the heritage language that might lead to a good environment towards the acquisition of Spanish. In contrast, there were parents who warned about the usage of the heritage language only at home, which could lead to a negative perception towards the heritage language. Miranda (34) explained the situation in her house with her two sons (Tomas and Pepe):

Pos lo que pasa es que mis hijos asocian el español con la casa, con el lenguaje de los adultos es decir con la cantaleta. Es como la lengua aburrida que no

¹ All fragments of the conversations presented in this study were taken directly from the recorded interviews done to the members of the families.

hablan con sus amigos con los que se divierten... Es la lengua de limpiar la casa y arreglar entonces a veces hay que buscar alternativas para esto cambie...

Miranda presented a problem of the usage of Spanish in the house. From her perspective, there was a risk when children associated the language to undesirable assignments or activities such as cleaning the house, dusting or washing the dishes because the heritage language became tedious. These two examples of the parents' beliefs was an opening for the next parts of this study. The following paragraphs will focus on how the 80 interviewed parents organized the use of Spanish in the house.

4.1.1.1 Language planning and heritage language learning at home

Spolsky (2009) explained that *language management* was when a “manager” tried to alter the language practice of others or himself or herself. In other words, this management was when older people intentionally tried to manipulate the sociolinguistic environment by choosing a particular language to offer instruction or speak with others at home. The author added that one member (a parent or the children) recognized the existence of the “language problems” in a setting, analyzed the situation and selected strategies to establish certain changes. Once that plan is elaborated, it was productive when this adjustment generated the desired effect. Furthermore, Velázquez (2009) pointed out that intra-community variety resulted in widely diverging comprehension about bilingualism even among speakers that belonged to the similar social network and had the same or analogous economic status. As the families of this study lived in a multicultural and diverse community, the planning of the parents was going to be very

heterogeneous even if they lived in the same area or had similar economic incomes because there were internal or external factors that modified their attitudes.

As noticed in the results, the majority of the parents had a strong commitment and interest in teaching their children Spanish at home; however, those decisions were modified by other factors such as the place where they lived, level of education, etc. After checking all the data obtained, a classification of the families was made according to the way the parents established the use of Spanish at home. Among all the families, there were 9 (or 22.5% of the subjects) who established a clear plan with rules to guarantee the conservation of the heritage language. Because both partners were from the same country, they shared similar linguistic, cultural and social backgrounds and they had a good proficiency in English. All these factors facilitated agreements between them.

According to the parents in this group, they were highly concerned in the proficiency of their children in the two languages so they planned strategies to reach this purpose. Besides, they reported that other people's experiences and their own as a motivator to establish certain policies in their household. The type of method to promote the language at home varied among the different families interviewed. One type of arrangement prepared by the parents was to use the heritage language on certain days of the week on which parents prepared activities to promote the use of Spanish at home. The following paragraph is an extract from Matia's interview, one of the children of a family, who explained clearly the way his parents (especially his father) organized strategies to "force" him and his sister to practice the language:

De niño, mi papá se dio cuenta que no estábamos aprendiendo español, entonces él tenía una manera muy especial de como nosotros podíamos entender y hablar español y después practicar. Cuando apenas comenzamos con ese “programa”, yo lo llamaba una “programa” sarcásticamente, desde el viernes hasta el lunes que entrábamos a la escuela de nuevo, solamente era en español en casa. Los sábados y domingos teníamos que hablar y escribir en español, nos daban unas tareas. Como por ejemplo, teníamos que pedir la comida en español, no podíamos decir: Mom, I am hungry! pero Mami, ¡Tengo hambre! porque si uno les hablaba en inglés, ellos hacían como si no le entendían a uno. Al principio fue muy difícil pero poco a poco fui aprendiendo palabras y después yo me amoldé.

In the case of this family, the father was very concerned with the need to conserve their heritage by speaking Spanish because he noticed that his kids were losing the language. As a result, he and his wife established specific policies in the house to reach their goals and to modify the linguistics habits of their household by imposing their decisions. Although there was resistance, the persistence of the parents obtained the desired results. On the other hand, there were parents that set up their rules without specifying days but organizing different activities during the week so there were enough ways to practice the heritage language. Dolores, a 38 years old Colombian mother, narrated her experience related to this type of planning in her house:

Organizamos algunas reglas en casa para que nuestros hijos hablaran español en casa. Entre ellos podían hablar en inglés pero cuando se sentaban en la mesa y nos preguntaban algo, siempre tenían y tienen que hacerlo en español y si lo hacen en inglés no les respondemos hasta que no nos pregunten en español... Se pusieron

más rebeldes cuando entraron a middle school y a high school. En el caso de mi hija, ya no quería hablar mucho español pero siempre fuimos muy estrictos en eso. En el horario de la semana veíamos juntos “La familia Peluche” de Eugenio Derbez porque en esa época no teníamos Direct TV. Traíamos libros en español, La Ilíada, La odisea, El Quijote de la Mancha en español, cosas que ellos pudieran usar. Ellos esperaban impacientes la noche del viernes para jugar entonces las peleas eran todas en español, juegos de mesa, jugábamos monopolio o jugábamos cartas o jugábamos Life u otro juego que se llamaba “Cachito” o nos sentábamos y veíamos películas y siempre hemos tenido grupos de amigos hispanos. Pero siempre planeábamos y lo seguimos haciendo con mi esposo para que no se pierda el español.

Although the 9 families kept similar rules at home such as setting precise procedures for their children to follow, Dolores used to search for specific activities such as games, time for reading or watching programs to motivate their kids in the language. This time spent with all the members of the household was special for all the members of the household because they could share exceptional moments with their love ones but also it was an opportunity to use the heritage language. In the following paragraph Dolores clarified one of the activities that was important to her youngest child:

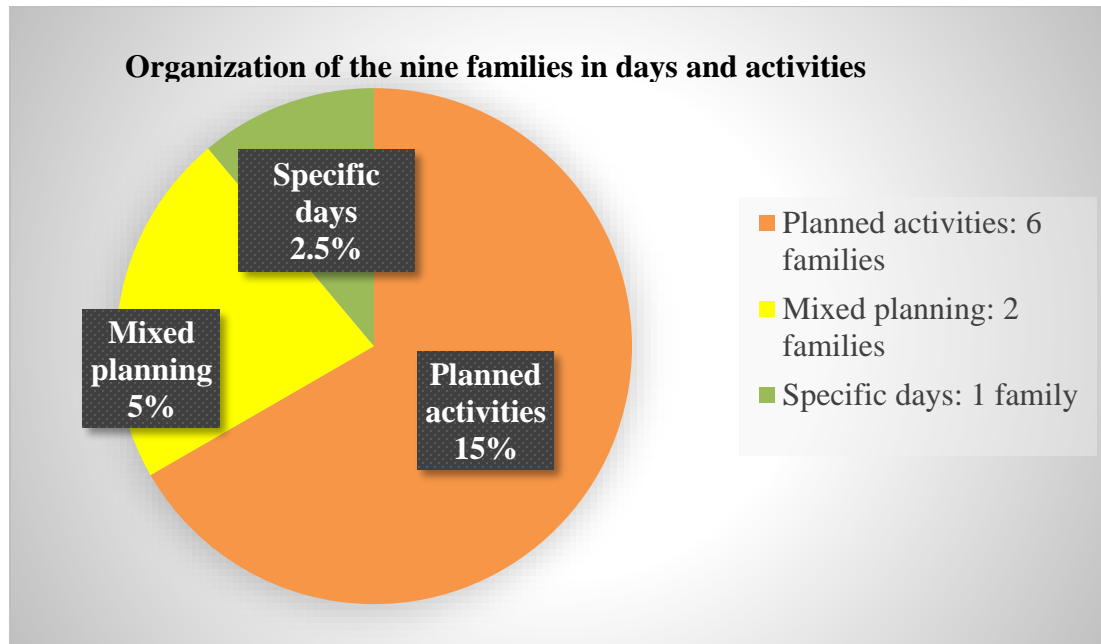
Ella espera impacientemente esa hora para que nos sentemos con ella a ver esa novela ... más que la televisión es el hecho de que estemos juntos hablando en español con ella, viendo algo en los que coincidamos, porque es el momento en que se me acurruca, a veces duramos todo el día sin vernos entonces ella como

que espera eso porque quizás no entienda lo que está pasando y tener un punto de conversación pero me pregunta: mami, ¿en la novela va a pasar tal cosa?, ¿qué pasó con esto? y ¿qué pasó con lo otro? Ella está siempre preguntando por el vocabulario que no entiende del español y por los temas de cultura que no entiende.

This quality time that these parents provided their children is what Gibbons and Ramirez (2004) believed was a relevant factor in the preservation of the language. For Dolores and his husband, these activities scheduled weekly were opportunities to encourage the children to speak their heritage language and understand their identity. The activity, that parents created, showed the positive effects in Sara, the youngest daughter, because she was the one who had become the promoter to keep the strong foundation of their customs and traditions. Besides, she was motivated to ask for the vocabulary that she did not know in Spanish and to enrich her cultural background. For that reason, it was necessary for Dolores and her husband to find spaces in which they could coincide to spend this time together as they noticed these programmed activities were successful.

Figure 3 presents the organization of the nine families and it represents the planning created by them. The differences of percentages is displayed using colors such as orange, green and yellow.

Figure 3. Organization of the nine families in days or activities



As it was presented in Figure 3, the orange part (6 families, 15%) indicated that most of the families prepared regular activities to do with their kids during the week. The green part (1 family, 2.5%) showed that only one of the households had specific days to speak the heritage language with their children. Finally, the yellow part (2 families, 5%) displayed the combination of the first two planning methods which mix planned assignments and specific days. However, parents explained that they modified these type of rules for special occasions or special circumstances such as celebrations with people who do not speak Spanish.

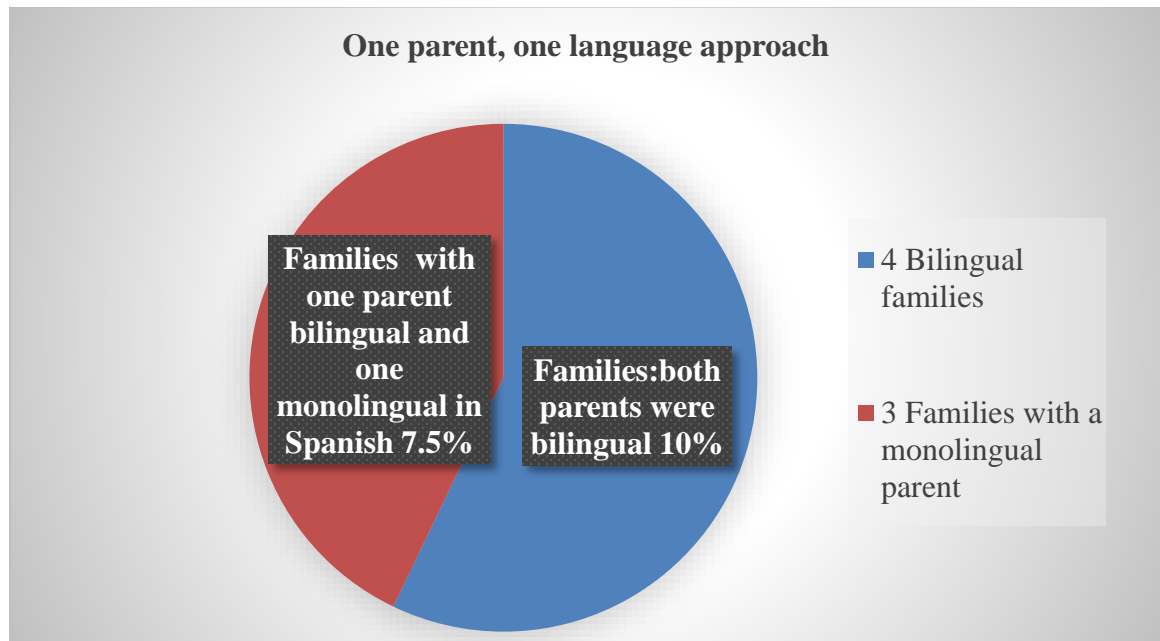
Among the participants of the study, there were 28 families that, although they wanted to maintain their heritage language, they did not have a specific planning designed. There were 7 families who used the one language, one parent approach. This approach was introduced for the first time by Maurice Grammont arguing that when

parents separated the languages from the start, they could avoid misunderstanding and code-mixing in their bilingual children (Barron-Hauwaert, 2004). After analyzing the data obtained, the following were the characteristics of the seven families of this study:

- Three of the families knew from reading articles or relatives about using the one parent, one language approach. The rest of the families established this strategy based on searching on the Internet.
- The two parents came from the same country and they were native speakers of the heritage language.
- All the mothers spoke the heritage language at home. Some of the parents, who spoke the dominant language, were brought to the United States when they were young.
- The parents communicated to each other in Spanish when children were present.
- Three mothers were not able to speak the dominant language so children needed to communicate with them in Spanish.
- From the 7 families, both parents were professional in five of them

Figure 4 presented the organization of the “one parent, one language approach” in the 7 families:

Figure 4. One parent, one language approach



Five parents indicated that they were not very rigid when English speakers came to visit. Although the parents were aware of their linguistic roles in the house, the ones totally consistent were the families where one of the parents could not speak English. It was noticed that the children's ability to use Spanish was higher when they lived in areas surrounded by Hispanic people such as the Southeast of Houston. The children were observed using the language outside with their friends.

According to the parents, they decided that the one who had the highest level in English would speak with the children using that language. Besides, all the parents who decided to speak the dominant language expressed that they felt comfortable using it. Three parents studied their last years of high school in the United States. Fabricio, a 51 year old Mexican father, who arrived when he was 13 years old to the United States

explained that he and his wife made that decision because they wanted to enrich their cultural background. The participant expressed that his wife would be the person in charge of showing his children the Hispanic culture and he, who had lived in the United States for 38 years, would be the person in charge of using English with them. Fabricio commented about their decision to use this approach in the following paragraph:

Yo llegué aquí muy joven y estuve con unos familiares que me inscribieron en middle school. Por eso, mi nivel de inglés es mejor que el de mi esposa. Cuando tuvimos nuestro primer hijo, decidimos que ella hablaría en español y yo en inglés con ellos. Algunas veces, yo soy un poco más flexible y les hablo español porque ellos están más rodeados de un ambiente en inglés. Mis hijos vienen algunas veces y me preguntan cosas que no entienden en español y yo les contesto en español porque cuando salen la casa para ir su school y todos los lugares son en inglés. Pero mi esposa es un poco más rígida con la lengua y hace todo lo posible por conversar con ellos y leerles en español. Esperamos que nuestros hijos no tengan acento en inglés o en español.

As in the case of this family, 5 of the families stated certain concern about their children having a strong accent in Spanish or in English. They claimed the importance of their children's fluency in the two languages because it would help them to communicate with others easily. Besides, they also indicated that an accent could cause mockery and misunderstandings. Adriana, a Mexican mother, commented about her experience with Hispanics who had an accent in the heritage language:

...Escuchábamos a la gente que se burlaba de hispanos nacidos aquí con mucho acento y a veces la gente no entendía lo que decían, no queremos que nos pase eso. La verdad, no estamos tan preocupados por el inglés porque ellos van a la escuela en inglés y mi esposo también les habla... Por eso, a mí me tienen que hablar en español y tienen que contestarme porque no los dejo hacer lo que les gusta cuando me hablan en inglés.

Although in all these 7 families, there was a decision to have one parent speaking Spanish and one English, 4 families selected this choice before their children were born and 3 after. Parents explained that they were consistent using the language they chose to use at home but a lack of congruence was noticed in the interviews in this aspect. In some of the conversations, when the parent who used the heritage language started to talk in Spanish and sometimes he switched to English when the child answered in the dominant language.

There were 21 families that were interested in the maintenance of the heritage language and although they did not have a plan, they decided to use the language at home and expected their children to learn from practicing in the house. The characteristics of the parents are shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Parents' knowledge of English of the 21 families according to education level

	Both parents speak English	One parent is bilingual (Spanish-English) and the other is monolingual in Spanish	Monolingual parents in Spanish	Total
Parents with an academic degree	3	2	1	6
Parents without an academic degree	4	6	5	15
Total of the families	7	8	6	21

As presented in Table 7, the majority of the parents in the families did not have an academic degree (15 families =30 parents). There were only 12 parents (6 families) that had one. On the other hand, there were not a lot of differences among the bilingual parents (7 families), one bilingual and one monolingual parents (8 families) and the monolingual parents (6 families). Although there was a very heterogeneous group of families, they did not have any specific plan or activities to transmit the heritage language. However, they expressed that the way to conserve the language was with their daily routine activities such as eating, doing homework together, singing, telling jokes, participating in social activities and household chores.

When listening to the interviews, there were different levels of combining the languages among the children. Romaine (1995) claimed that mixing words from each language to create words or sentences is a common situation for those growing up

bilingual. Although it was noticed that parents having negative attitudes towards code-switching tended to be stricter with their children when they were mixing the languages in one conversation and as a consequence they were more focused on asking their kids to use just one language at home. Úrsula, a 47 year old Mexican mother, indicated her feelings about the mixing of the two languages:

No dejo que mis hijos hablen las dos lenguas al mismo tiempo porque no me gusta esa mezcla, me parece que no terminan hablando bien nada...No aprenden ninguna lengua, ni el español, ni el inglés bien; eso lo que hace es dañar los idiomas... Cada vez que mis hijos lo hacían, no les respondíamos hasta que encontraban la manera de decirlo en español pero eso del Spanglish no lo permito en mi casa.

Úrsula perceived that speaking the two languages at the same time is an indication of the inability to use English and Spanish correctly. As Úrsula, other parents claimed that this type of mixing was negative for the development of the languages. These participants had a strong prescriptive view of the language, expecting that their kids spoke a “pure” Spanish. On the other hand, 9 parents explained that they felt that it was normal to mix languages in a context like the one in Houston because the two languages were used in several fields of life in the city. Helga (37), a Mexican mother who has lived in Houston for 16 years, presented her opinion about language mixing in her house:

La verdad no me he preocupado por la mezcla de las dos lenguas si nosotros como adultos lo estamos usando, ahora se usa muchas palabras del inglés en

español como *aplicar, troca, parquear*. Pos creo que cuando mis hijos lo hacen es porque cuando no se recuerdan de palabras o cuando no conocen el vocabulario en alguna de las dos lenguas y lo dicen en la otra.

There were a variety of responses in favor or against similar to Úrsula and Helga's perceptions about mixing the languages. The final 3 families were not really focused on the transmission of Spanish for very particular reasons. There were 4 parents who claimed that they were able to speak English very well and two of them indicated that their level of proficiency was good to do their daily activities outside the house. As this group is not numerous, more detailed information for each case is presented to explain the parents' decisions. In the first family, the parents came from Colombia 21 years ago, escaping from the violence of the country. They had professional careers and both of them spoke English. In the next conversation, Juan, the father of the family, explained the reasons to stop the heritage language transmission:

Entrevistador: ¿mantienen el español en la casa?

Juan: La verdad no hacemos esfuerzo en eso pero mi mujer y yo hablamos español algunas veces pero con los hijos no.

Entrevistador: Ok, ¿por qué tomaron esa decisión?

Juan: En ese momento pensamos que lo mejor era que se acostumbraran a la cultura de donde nacieron porque para eso nos vinimos para Estados Unidos, sino nos hubiéramos quedado en Colombia pero para nosotros era imposible volver en aquella época por los problemas que había en Medellín. Esa experiencia nos dejó traumatizados y por lo tanto en mi casa solo se habla en inglés.

Because of their negative experience in their native country, Juan and his wife wanted to erase their past in Colombia. They decided that the best way was that their children learn English to feel integrated in the new society where they lived.

The second family was from Mexico and they narrated a different reason to discontinue the maintenance of the heritage language. Damaris and Francisco, a Mexican couple, came to the country 25 years ago. They have lived in different areas of the city. The parents explained that the reason why they did not teach their children Spanish was to avoid the prejudice that they and their families lived through when they arrived to the U.S. Damaris (50) commented her reasons for stopping the transmission of Spanish in her family:

Entrevistador: ¿Ustedes mantienen el español en la casa?

Damaris: Mmm, es que cuando llegamos a la ciudad, batallamos bastante porque no hablábamos inglés. Además, escuchábamos que los hijos de nuestros amigos tenían problemas en la escuela porque no hablaban inglés bien y los separaban por esa razón... No queríamos que nuestros hijos tuvieran problemas por el inglés o que tuvieran acento fuerte porque eso puede afectarle para que tenga éxito aquí.

Entrevistador: ¿Cree que si una persona tiene acento puede ser menos exitosa?

Damaris: Los tiempos han cambiado bastante pero cuando llegamos a la ciudad si era más fuerte la discriminación por tener acento, hasta se burlaban de uno por eso... La situación ahora es diferente, la gente es más tolerante ahora.

The parents of this family experienced what Fishman (1991) called *social dislocation*. Damaris indicated that they did not want their children to experience difficult times because of the heritage language and being marginalized socially just as their

friends and the parents experienced in the public schools. The mother also pointed out that speaking the heritage language could affect the full acquisition of the dominant language. On the other hand, Damaris also recognized the evolution of the perception that people were more accepting towards others who had an accent in English nowadays. The final family arrived to the city 21 years ago, and because they first lived in an area with few Hispanic people, they decided to just speak English to them. Lina, a 41 year old Mexican mother, reported her decisions at home:

Lina: Cuando llegamos a Houston, comenzamos a vivir en Katy y la verdad yo sí quería que mis hijos hablaran español pero comenzamos a conocer a bastantes gringos y casi nunca nos mezclábamos con hispanos porque no queríamos... para cuando nuestros hijos nacieron, decidimos hablar solamente en inglés para ellos.

Entrevistador: ¿Por qué decidieron hablar solo en inglés?

Lina: Porque decidimos que era mejor que hablaran en inglés para su educación y también para nosotros. Gracias a mis niños, nosotros reforzamos el inglés porque para hablarlo nos ha tomado muchísimo tiempo y todavía seguimos aprendiéndolo.

In this part of the research, the reasons and attitudes of the parents for maintaining the heritage language (presenting the strategies that they followed to do it) and the shift toward English in the forty families interviewed was considered. Almost all of the participants chose to have the house as the place to speak the heritage language. Among the families, different strategies or activities for the transmission of Spanish were used. Nine families decided to have strict rules: using the language certain days, preparing specific activities during the week or a combination of both. Seven families selected the

strategy “one parent, one language” in which each one of the parent had to speak English or Spanish in the house. One of the issues found was the lack of consistency at home of the parent using the minority language. There were 21 families who agreed to conserve the minority language but they did not establish any rules but its use at home. Finally, it was explained why three of the families stopped the language transmission of the heritage language.

4.1.1.2 Families’ attitudes towards Spanish learning at home

In the previous section, I discussed the attitudes of the parents for the transmission or loss of the heritage language at home and their policies. The following paragraphs will focus on the particular motivations of the parents for the conservation of Spanish. For this purpose, the first step was to check the surveys completed by the parents to analyze their attitudes towards the heritage language. Based on the results obtained, the majority of the parents had a positive attitude towards the use of the language at home. According to Chung’s (2007), Martin’s (2009) and Hamamoto’s (2007) studies, parents’ attitudes encouraged the maintenance of the heritage language so a similar positive result was expected in this research especially since in the case of this study, Houston and its surroundings are populated by large number of Hispanics from different nationalities. Table 8 presents the results obtained from the survey completed by the parents.

Table 8. Parents' attitudes towards Spanish learning

Spanish learning is very important for me	Number of parents	Percentage
I agree	73	91.25%
I don't totally agree	2	2.5%
I disagree	4	5%
No response	1	1.25%

Table 8 shows that most of the parents had a positive attitude toward the learning of Spanish at home having a 91.25 % of the positive responses. There was 5% of the parents who did not consider relevant the learning of the heritage language. There was 2.5% of the participants who were not totally interested in their children's learning of Spanish. Finally, 1.25% did not answer this part of the survey. Although most of the parents were positive in the maintenance about the language, there were different types of motivations that modified their attitudes. As reported in Chapter 2, there was a connection between attitude and motivation because the latter was the mixture between positive attitudes and the parents' eagerness to make their children learn the language. Table 9 revealed the results of the parents' motivations (several of the participants selected more than one option repeated, for that reason, the percentages exceeded 100%).

Table 9. Parents' motivations in their children's heritage language maintenance

Motivations	Number of parents	Percentages
To have better job opportunities in the job market	69	86.25%
To communicate with family and relatives	51	63.75%
To preserve the ethnic roots	35	43.75%
To travel to Hispanic countries	19	23.75 %
To improve their brain development	16	20%
To help others in the community	13	16.25%

The results in Table 9 report that the motivations of the parents varied among them. Almost all the families indicated that they recognized the advantages of helping their children to be bilingual in terms of opportunities in the job market, success in life, communication with relatives etc. Most of them agreed to be very happy with their children's abilities in Spanish but they also reported the lack of time necessary to help their children more in the language acquisition process. Taking into account that the results in the last table were collected from the surveys, each one of these motivations was explored taking into account the answers of the family members from the interviews. The following sections of this study offer a better description of each one of these motivations.

4.1.1.2.1 To have better opportunities in the job market

Houston and its suburbs has 44% of Hispanic people based on the Census Bureau (2010). This large population was noticed by the parents who reported the importance of Spanish in the job market. Lorenzo, a 48 year old Colombian parent who has lived in the city for 15 years, explained how the need of the heritage language for job purposes had increased in the last decade and he also described the changes in the city concerning the Hispanic population and representation:

En el trabajo en estos últimos diez años de preferencia (se) tiene que hablar inglés y español, o si no lo habla, al menos por lo menos entenderlo un poco y muchos bancos por ejemplo el mercado hispano es de millones de dólares... entonces ellos (people living in Houston) saben que teniendo el español es un factor de mercado aquí en los Estados Unidos, ósea es una necesidad que la gente en la mayoría de los lugares hablen español. Antes yo llegué aquí en el 2002 y en las dependencias públicas no habían voceros en español y ahora la mayoría en el condado en la policía, en el municipio tienes voceros en español. Creo que mucha de la última gente hispana que ha llegado a este país ha llegado con más dinero. La mayoría que está generando el dinero es el español en ciudades como Houston, el idioma genera una ganancia impresionante a los Estados Unidos.

Lorenzo perceived the changes towards Spanish in the city of Houston in the last years. He noticed the relevance and the need of the language in several sectors of the society in public and private jobs for different reasons, such as the change of the Hispanic population. Lorenzo's observation was also recognised by the parents who maintained

Spanish at home, because they saw Spanish as an important reason to be hired in the city and surroundings

As reported on the findings from the surveys in Table 9, participants in the survey recognized the value of the language to get better opportunities in their professional life. According to the results 86.25% of the parents found that Spanish was important at the moment of getting hired. Based on the interviews, there were 3 general trends why parents or children found the heritage language relevant for professional purposes. First, 47 parents of 80 said that they wanted their children to speak the language because of their professional future in the city. Although the use of the heritage language for job purposes was not beneficial now, they felt that it would be relevant when they got older. Helga, a Mexican mother, described in the following paragraph this situation:

Aunque mis hijos no quieran hablar español algunas veces, van a tener que hablarlo porque algunos de mis amigos o familiares han logrado mejores trabajos como mi sobrino que trabaja con una aerolínea, todo esto por hablar dos idiomas. Ellos todavía no entienden pero se beneficiarán más tarde con el español.

In this case, Helga's attitudes seemed to be motivated by references that she got from the people related to them who have gained certain privileges at work. Although she perceived that her children did not have interest to learn the heritage language, she would make an effort to enforce the use of Spanish because she foresaw that it would be beneficial for their future. The parents were not the only ones who noticed this situation; the children also noted its need in the city. Matias, a 15 years old son,

indicated that although he preferred using English to communicate, Spanish is also relevant for his future at work:

No me gusta mucho hablar español porque me siento más cómodo hablando inglés pero es importante ahora en la ciudad, mi hermano acaba de agarrar un empleo so lo escogieron porque tenía su troca lista y era bilingüe. Además cada día llega más gente de México a la ciudad por los problemas de la violencia por allá.

A second trend was the parents who found it to be a useful tool in their own professional career and as a consequence they wanted their children to learn it. In this case just 15 parents pointed out this trend. The following is a passage from one of the interviews recorded with Saúl (42), a parent whose knowledge of Spanish had brought him success in his career:

Saúl: pero obviamente uno sigue siendo colombiano y sigue siendo latino y realmente mi trabajo y mi vida profesional se ha dado gracias al español

Entrevistador: ah sí, ¿por qué?

Saúl: porque en el primer trabajo que yo tuve después de la universidad, trabajé para una compañía en la parte de instrumentación de procesos industriales y ellos estaban buscando a una persona bilingüe, ahí yo empecé a trabajar entonces todos mis trabajos que he tenido y ahora soy empresario y todo ha sido gracias al español. Es por esto que mi hijo tiene que aprender el español porque va a ser muy útil en su futuro.

Saúl found Spanish as an important tool because of his own experiences in the work force in the United States. This parent stated that being bilingual led him to obtain his first experience in the job market and he wanted his child to have the same advantages that he had. The third trend was based on the parents' desire to teach their children to use Spanish because they used it in their family's businesses or professions. From the total of the parents, 9 parents reported this type of motivation in their recorded interviews. In the following case, Dolores, a 38 years old business owner, explained the situation in her job:

Fue importante para mí que mis hijas, que las dos, hablaran bien español porque la población de Houston está creciendo, con mucha gente latina. Lo veo en mi trabajo con ellas, muchas veces los clientes no quieren hablar en inglés y es más fácil lograr las ventas, cuando se les habla en español si las personas son de México o cualquier país de Latinoamérica.

Dolores pointed out the importance of the Hispanic population and how the heritage language use increased sales in her business. She also perceived that her children could help the customers that were not able to speak English. This section explored the parents and children's motivations to learn the heritage language for job purposes. Three different trends were found based on the parent's responses.

4.1.1.2.2 Communication with the family and relatives

Fishman (1966) pointed out that immigrants in the US wanted to conserve their native language and pass it on to their children because they saw it as a strength and a resource. The author clarified that in the case of the parents who only spoke the minority

language, their native language was the link to communicate with them because the parents either did not speak the dominant language or although they spoke it, they found Spanish more necessary when their children needed to communicate with their relatives. Cho (2000) argues that the conservation of the heritage language improved family relationships and ties with relatives because, without a common language, lack of communication and feelings of hostility could grow because of misunderstandings. Danilo (53), one of the Mexican fathers, described how the experience of other families warned him of the consequences of losing the heritage language at home:

Desde antes, desde cuándo Juana estaba creciendo, este, empezamos a ver así familias, a conocer familias donde veíamos que se estaba perdiendo esa comunicación y en parte era por eso, los padres se quejaban que no podían tener una buena comunicación con los hijos y a veces eran en parte por eso, por el idioma. A veces los hijos están hablando ciertas cosas que no deben estar diciendo y los padres no entendían lo que estaban diciendo los hijos. Entonces eso nos alertó a nosotros, tenemos que tener cuidado y que no nos pase eso.

As Báez (2002) and Thomas & Cao (1999) reported on the negative consequences of the loss of the heritage language, Danilo perceived that the lack of knowledge of the heritage language had generated conflicts of communication in other families. For that reason, he wanted his two daughters to learn Spanish.

The parents in the present study wanted their children to know Spanish to communicate with the family and relatives for the following purposes. For the parents, it was necessary that their children spoke Spanish because they did not speak the dominant language and Spanish was necessary to communicate with them. There were 25 parents

in the study who claimed that they did not speak English. However, it was observed during the interviews that most of them had certain level of comprehension and they also communicated using simple sentences or words. These results were self-reported and it is probable that parents underestimated or overestimated their language ability and proficiency. From the seven families who were using the one parent, one language approach, four explained that they used Spanish when they needed to talk to each other in front of the kids but sometimes when the children were not around, the parents tried to speak to each other in English to help the parent with the weakest proficiency in the dominant language. Adriana, a 39 year old mother, explained: “¡claro que sí! yo quiero mejorar el inglés, no hablarlo todo cortado, pero con mis hijos siempre hablamos en español cuando estamos los dos y cuando estamos solos intento hablarle a mi esposo en inglés.”

Different from the motivation to speak to their parents, there was also the reason to learn Spanish to communicate with the relatives that were in the United States or in other countries. Carmen (35), a mother from Bogotá, indicated her reasons to keep the language to be able to continue relating with her family in her native country:

Las relaciones familiares, el estar en capacidad de comunicarse completamente con toda su familia porque al fin y al cabo nuestra familia toda vive en Colombia, entonces el hecho de poderse comunicar con los abuelos porque es triste que un nieto no se pueda comunicar con los abuelos porque los papás nunca le inculcaron el español para mí eso no tiene sentido.

As Carmen explained, members of the extended family from the participants lived far from them so it was important to teach the heritage language to their children to

continue staying connected with their relatives. She also indicated that communication with the grandparents was really relevant. There were 14 families who reported that they did not have any relatives living in the city of Houston and its surroundings. According to Mindel (1980), Hispanics showed stronger levels of *familism* which was defined as a set of beliefs that embrace strong ties of loyalty with the nuclear and extended family to rely on members for support. The families of the study demonstrated a higher level of *familism* in the city, participating in different activities with their extended relatives in activities such parties, visiting church or other places of the city. For the families was important to have members of their family living in other countries to join them in the U.S.

On the other hand, the participants who claimed not to have relatives in the U.S. reported that they were continuously in contact with their families abroad using technology. This situation fostered support for the minority language and socializing with people from their native country. Eleven parents mentioned receiving the support of their siblings who had experience in maintaining Spanish at home, and their advice was essential in the moment of taking decisions. They argued that after seeing the results of the children of their relatives, they felt more inclined to transmit the heritage language.

Although parents reported that they wanted their children to communicate with their extended family, the most relevant relatives were the grandparents who played an important source of input for the grandchildren of the families. Patricia (37), a Colombian mother commented in reference to the grandparents: “Es supremamente importante porque no se pueden comunicarse con los abuelos. Uno siempre tiene una

historia de su abuelita...Al menos una vez por semana hablamos con ella.” Figure 5 presents the presence of the grandparents in the 40 families:

Figure 5. Presence of the grandparents in the family

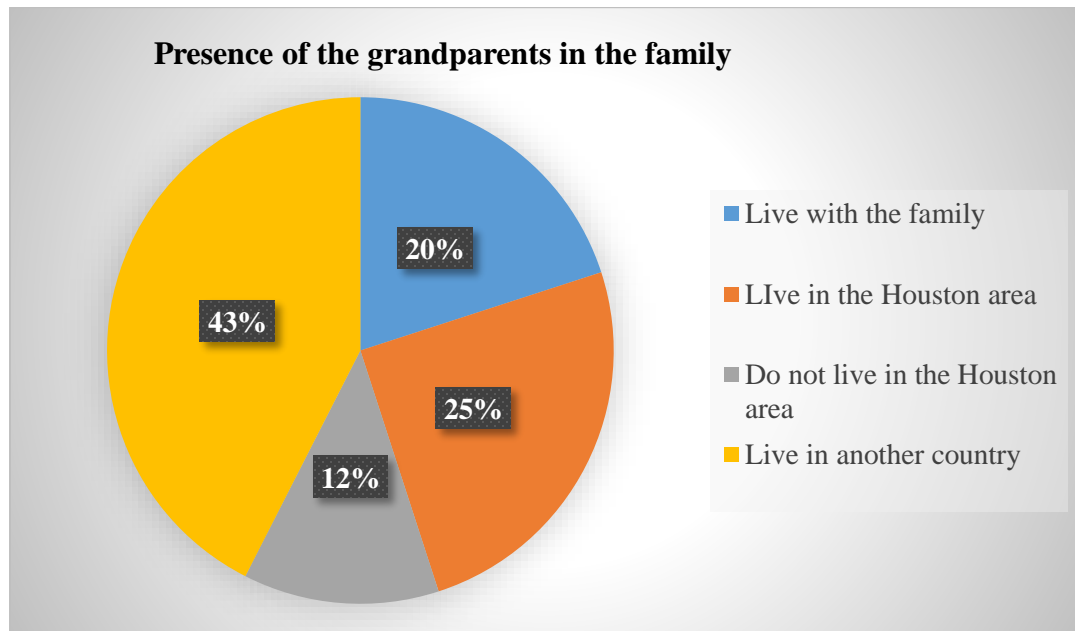


Figure 5 showed that the 43 % of the grandparents lived in another country and the subjects expressed a strong motivation to visit their native country to meet them. In addition, 12% of the grandparents lived in another city or state of the United States and 25% of them were located in the Houston area and its surroundings. Finally, 20% of them lived with the families. Barron-Hauwaert (2004) highlighted the role of the grandparents as helpers to acquire the minority language. Carmenza, a Colombian mother, explained the relevance of the grandmother for her daughters:

La abuelita ha sido siempre parte fundamental en la motivación de ellas para hablar español porque por ejemplo hoy no estábamos, porque mi hija puede ser que llegue de la escuela y cuando no está mi mamá puede pasar toda una tarde

sola y ellas extrañan que haya alguien que esté en la casa y que les hable y esté pendiente. Mi mamá es muy dulce con ellas y solo puede hablar en español, entonces a ellas les hace falta el abracito, el besito, la sobadita y alguien con quien hablar...

The parents claimed that grandparents in general generated positive attitudes in their children. They reported that grandparents tended to spend more time with the children doing activities such as playing games, reading books, singing songs and helping them with their assignments. Silvana, a 19 year old daughter reported how her attitude towards Spanish was more positive because of her grandparents: "...aprender español me gusta porque quiero comunicar con mis abuelos... es que ellos no pueden hablar inglés...desde niña mi abuelita me cuidaba, por eso me toco hablar español porque me quedaba sola con ella." Silvia explained how the presence of her grandparents motivated her to learn the heritage to communicate with them.

On the other hand, the role of the relatives could also bring negative feelings to the children. There were 4 cases in which the role of the relatives could create more insecurity and refusal to speak Spanish. There was the case of relatives who would laugh at the children's mispronunciation of words or mistakes that led to a negative feeling associated with speaking the language. Fabián, a 19 year old son, explained how his relatives discouraged him to speak Spanish:

I prefer to speak English because when I was younger, my cousins used to laugh at my accent and I felt embarrassed... Sometimes when I was with them, I didn't like to speak Spanish because I didn't want to be corrected and they used to do it all the time.

As Fabián, other 3 participants mentioned that their desire to communicate in Spanish diminished when their relatives mocked at them. They also added that it was annoying to be compared to monolingual speakers because they did not have the same abilities and exposure to the language that a person who was raised in a Hispanic country.

4.1.1.2.3 Preserving the ethnic roots

Language and culture are linked together. When a person learns a language, he is not only learning its linguistic structure but also understanding how the people who speak that language think, behave, and feel. The cultural knowledge is necessary to comprehend and to be accepted in the country where the language is spoken. Certain general norms like how to act in public or how to greet or say good-bye are compulsory to fit in any group speaking a different language. The parents are the ones in charge to provide spaces for the children to recognize their heritage background and they have to work together to set examples for them to be the mirrors of the customs of their native countries.

In the case of the families who wanted to transmit their heritage language in a foreign country, one of the ways to encourage their children was through the learning of the culture. Guardado (2002) argued that families with strong ethnic identity tended to maintain their heritage language in foreign country. The author claimed that it was necessary for parents to nurture positive feelings towards the language and the culture. It was then necessary for the parents to supplement and provide spaces for their children to participate in activities such as cultural events, read Hispanic magazines or books, etc.

On the other hand, Báez (2002) and Thomas & Cao (1999) noted that the loss of the language could create conflicts between members of different generations for the lack of

linguistic ability or understanding of the heritage language. Ana (39), a professional Colombian mother, described her perceptions on the consequences of losing the heritage language in Houston:

Yo veo mucho la funcionalidad, hay parte de arribismo social que es normal en cualquier inmigrante latino, cuando usted quiere llegar a una nueva cultura, usted quiere incrustarse lo más rápido posible y acostumbrarse y estar en la regla como todo. Los inmigrantes tenemos el obstáculo del idioma, es un problema para nosotros entonces esta primera generación que llega y ve que sus hijos lo (el inglés) sacan adelante es una ayuda para ellos. Es un problema de incrustarse en la nueva sociedad pero al mismo tiempo es que no saben que la lengua es identidad cultural. Cuando ellos pierden esa identidad cultural y el primer indicio de identidad cultural es la lengua. Entonces usted ve hispanos que se parecen más a los afroamericanos que a los hispanos, ver como cuantos niños hispanos no se identifican con la cultura hispana pero tampoco con la americana por eso cuando usted ve todo un grupo de muchachos que yo no soy esto pero yo no soy lo otro, no tienen la identidad para crecer como personas. No sabe de dónde viene y no sabe para dónde va, si me entiende, el problema de los papás es que piensan que la lengua es solo funcionalidad perfecto el niño habla y entonces ya se incrusta y entonces los papás también se incrustan con él, pero se les olvida que la identidad cultural que viene con el lenguaje sí se pierde, ellos se forman como híbridos. Si usted no entiende su lengua que es su cultura, como usted va a pretender ser alguien en una nueva cultura.

Ana indicated the problem when parents did not teach the heritage language and they pretended to be a part of the dominant culture as soon as possible to fit in. She claimed

that although parents perceived that learning the dominant language and becoming part of the new culture as something very positive, they did not recognize the consequences of not teaching Spanish. She believed that parents tried to move away from their minority group to be a part of the majority group as soon as possible and the problem of trying to blend is that the children might not accept themselves as they are.

According to the comments of the participants, some of the parents believed that it was necessary for them to maintain their heritage background and gave their children opportunities to learn about it. The comments from the mothers and fathers were:

- **Victoria (45, mother):** Pues ya que vivimos en Estados Unidos, es necesario que aprendan la cultura de mi país también y que se mantengan orgullosos de ser parte de las dos (México).
- **Liz (41, mother):** Para mí es importante que nuestros tres hijos se identifiquen con las costumbres y tradiciones de México para que no batallen cuando visiten por allá (México).
- **Federico (48, father):** Pues aquí tenemos muchas oportunidades para que ellos conozcan la cultura latina pero con mi esposa y yo nos enfocamos en que los tres aprendan a amar nuestras raíces porque quiero que se sientan también colombianos. (Colombia).

Victoria, Liz, and Federico as well as other parents believed in the relevance of not only maintaining Spanish at home but also their culture. They expressed their interest in transmitting the traditions and customs of their native country so their children felt identified with their family ethnicity.

Based on the recorded conversations, two principal reasons were identified to conserve their heritage language to protect their ethnic roots at home. The first reason was that through the language their children distinguished better who their family was, themselves and their cultural background and as a result this is going to bring them higher self-esteem. Alejandra, a 43 year mother from Mexico, explained how relevant the transmission of her cultural background was: “si mis hijos no conocen la lengua y la cultura de dónde venimos mi esposo y yo, ellos nunca conocerán quienes somos y quienes son ellos.” Other parents who did not speak the dominant language expressed their concerns about the lack of knowledge of Spanish in their children. Horacio explained the situation in his house and why the acquisition of the language was necessary for his family: “Me la paso todo el día trabajando y cuando llego (a la casa) quiero hablar con mis hijos en mi lengua porque no hablo inglés, no imagino un día que ellos no puedan comunicarse conmigo, nos convertiríamos en totales desconocidos.”

The second reason was that parents wanted to teach their children Spanish to be integrated and accepted into the heritage community. They claimed that children needed to distinguish the behavior, traditions, and norms of the culture to elude confusion and misinterpretations. Camila, a 39 year old Colombian mother, indicated that she and her husband looked for spaces for their children to understand their ethnic background: “Con mi esposo queríamos que nuestros hijos conocieran más sobre la cultura hispana por eso buscamos diferentes festivales o actividades latinas para que ellos se integren y conozcan.” On the other hand, parents also pointed out that the lack of knowledge of Spanish could bring rejection in the Hispanic community. Saúl (42), a father described his feelings towards this situation: “...quiero que mis hijos sean bien recibidos en mi

familia y en mi país, pero esto no va a pasar si ellos no conocen la lengua del país, ni sus costumbres.”

In contrast, there were parents who did not care a lot about the importance of their cultural background. According to them, they felt that they were living in another country and they had to integrate themselves to be a part of the mainstream culture. Juan, a 47 year old father, referred to his feelings towards the transmission of the culture:

Es obvio que me gusta mi cultura y tiene cosas muy buenas pero ya hace tiempo estamos aquí y la verdad queríamos que José y Joaquín se sientan cómodos en los Estados Unidos, por eso para mí es mas importantes que aprendan a como desenvolverse en este país.

Yolanda, a Mexican mother, felt that they would be more successful if they knew how the dominant culture works: “creo que ellos les va a ir mejor si solo agarran el inglés y conozcan esta cultura, al final de cuenta ellos nacieron aquí.”

4.1.1.2.4 To travel to Hispanic countries

Once immigrants come to the United States, some of them try to get integrated to the new culture and the new language experience. Many parents frequently travel to their native country because it is one of the ways to maintain that liaison with their origins (Barron-Hauwaert, 2004). They make efforts to continue connected with their culture, roots and native language for different personal reasons. Several families of the study expressed their desire to conserve the language because they wanted their children to travel or to continue visiting different Hispanic countries to enrich their lives. After analyzing the recordings, parents stated 4 principal reasons for their children to visit

Spanish speaking countries: 1) to visit the family in their native country; 2) to know more about their ethnicity; 3) to understand why the parents migrated to the USA; 4) to enrich and improve their Spanish.

Among the families interviewed, there were 6 families who had not left the country because the parents were undocumented. The rest of the subjects who could travel to visit their relatives argued that it was very positive for their children to do it. Since travelling to the Hispanic countries gives an immersion in the heritage language, it was important to know the time spent and the frequency of travelling to the different Spanish-speaking country. Table 10 presents the results that were collected listening to surveys and the interviews recorded:

Table 10. Time per years spent in a Hispanic country

Time	No of families
1 to 2 weeks	26
1 to 2 months	3
3 to 4 months	1
1 year	2

Table 11. Frequency of travelling to a Hispanic country

Frequency	No of families
Never	8
Rarely	12
Every six months	3
Every year	9
Every two years	4
Every three years	3

Table 10 showed that most of the families did not visit the country for a long period of time (26 families for 1 or 2 weeks). In general, these participants preferred to travel to their extended family during December because it was a good time to see all their relatives together. For the subjects that spent more time in Hispanic countries (1 to 4 months or 1 year), the mother traveled with the children or the children would travel alone. Twenty two parents expressed that they tried to travel as often as they could because they wanted their children to learn what their native country is. According to them, the time in Colombia or Mexico brought many opportunities to embrace the ties with their relatives and to explore the culture. Ana, a 39 year old mother from Colombia, described how his son's trip to Cali helped him to communicate with his relatives and to discover what the country had to offer:

Podía hablar con sus primos y sus abuelos, se sintió más la libertad, jugar afuera, salir. Se sintió feliz. Vio que en otros países también hay desarrollo. Llegar a un aeropuerto muy bueno, malls elegantes, la naturaleza, las playas, las montañas.

Twelve parents expressed that the children who traveled for the first time felt a bit shy and not very talkative at the beginning but once they felt comfortable after one or two days. Some of the children stated that they wanted to identify with their ethnicity when they visited Colombia or Mexico. Ignacio, a 21 year old young adult, traveled to Mexico for the first time when he was 11 and he described his feelings towards his extended family there and his ethnic identity:

...la primera vez era difícil para mí comunicar con mis tíos, con mis tías y también con mis primos, me motivó porque yo quería en cierta manera ser perfeccionista, quería hablar la idioma bueno...adaptar con el ambiente, quería sentir como mexicano...

One of the most important reasons for the parents to send their children to visit their native country was to experience the cultural events and traditional activities that were celebrated in the country. Some of the parents mentioned that Houston provided opportunities to be a part of Hispanic celebrations but they claimed that although the activities were great, the best for their children was to live these events in Colombia or in Mexico. The following are 4 of the participants' comments towards the experience in the Hispanic countries:

- Néstor (14, son) Ha sido tanto tiempo que no he visto mi familia y fue bueno que por fin pude ir a ver a mi familia otra vez, especialmente cuando era la quinceañera de mi prima entonces fue tiempo perfecto! Órale que bonito fue!.. conocer una tradición y hasta baile con mi prima como chambelán y pos comunicar con ellos y que me cuenten cosas de México me gusta (México).

- Ana (39, mother): Cuando lo llevamos al país, le hacemos un recorrido por todas partes. La última vez fuimos al festival de las flores en Medellín, le encanto mucho y así lo hemos llevado a varias partes como al Eje Cafetero... se motivó mucho al estar allá y sobre todo para hablar con la gente, aunque a veces no sabía cómo decir las cosas (Colombia).
- Eric (41, father): A mis hijos les gusta mucho ir a México y por supuesto disfrutar de las tradiciones... a ellos les encantan las posadas en diciembre porque siempre tenían la oportunidad de disfrutar con los primos y con toda la familia que no ven cuando están en los Estados Unidos (México).
- Carmenza (37, mother): En las oportunidades que mis dos hijas han viajado, les ha encantado... aunque en Houston hay algunos colombianos, creo que lo mejor es que vayan para que sepan cómo la gente se comporta por allá y que conozcan los patrones culturales del país...la última vez que fueron, visitaron las ferias de mi ciudad y otros eventos de la comunidad (Colombia).

In contrast, children might be very sensitive at feeling different and have the desire to fit in the culture (Barron-Hauwaert, 2004). There could be other factors that may alter their attitudes towards speaking the heritage language while visiting their parents' native country. One of the factors that could affect their attitudes negatively is their own relatives. Monica, a 45 year old mother, claimed that the trips to her hometown with her daughter Allison in Colombia were not very positive to encourage her to use Spanish. In the following passage, Mónica (45) narrated how one of her daughter's contact with her relatives was distressful for her:

Se reunían en Colombia y le hacían el corrillo, cuando estaba la familia, los primos se reunían en círculo y la hacían hablar en español. A ellos les gustaba escucharla porque tiene mucho acento, entonces ella le daba cosa y decía: ¡yo no quiero!... a ella no le gustaba encontrarse en esa situación con la familia, se sentía muy forzada y le daba pena porque creía que los primos se burlaban de ella.

As Mónica described her daughter's situation in her native country was unhealthy for her motivation to use Spanish because it brought her more insecurity and reluctance to talk in the heritage language. Monica also indicated that this situation did not help her and she started to increase her use of the dominant language with the family. On the other hand, other parents found that the location was also relevant factor in the attitudes of their children. Daniel, a 43 year old father, found that the place to send their children in their native country was really important to motivate them:

No nunca los mandamos solos, alguien iba y los dejaba y alguien iba y los recogía. Los dejábamos por allá por un tiempo, tres semanas, un mes, durante las vacaciones. Al principio no estaban muy entusiasmados, en Bogotá, fue muy encerrado, entonces se iban donde mi hermana. No hablaban casi con mi hermana, ni con mis sobrinos y se encerraban en el cuarto a hablar ellos dos en inglés. Entonces decían mi mamá y mi hermana “es que ellos a nosotros no nos hablan y siempre están hablando su inglés y nosotros no entendemos... porque además ellos tenían cable y agarraban los canales de inglés pero cuando iban a Buenaventura allí si hablaban español porque la gente curiosa se acercaba a hablarles.

As Daniel explained the location where he sent his children was not very positive for them because there were factors that encouraged the children to just speak the dominant language in the Hispanic country. First, they used to communicate to each other to avoid speaking with their relatives, perhaps because of the lack of ability in the minority language. Besides, they had the possibility to continue watching American channels which were in the dominant language. Daniel also specified that it was not the same in Buenaventura because they had more possibilities to go out and people used to be more interested in meeting them and talk to them.

4.1.1.2.5 To improve their brain development

Learning two languages is not always well perceived. There is a belief that it can cause cognitive and educational disadvantages especially when children are in their first years at school (Montrul, 2013). There were also negative attitudes supported by research that compared monolinguals and bilinguals. This view resulted from the use of methodologies and tests that were originally designed for monolingual people applied in bilingual participants. The results of this comparison yielded lower scores from the bilingual subjects and the impression that learning two languages at the same time was not good for the individual. In addition, Velazquez (2009) claimed that a few parents believe that Spanish was an obstacle to the correct acquisition of English, leading this situation to have a strong accent in the dominant language (Velázquez, 2009).

In this study, there were 31 parents had positive attitudes towards learning Spanish because being bilingual was thought to be beneficial in their home countries. Marco, a Colombian father referred to this situation in his native country:

La mayoría de mis familiares tienen a sus hijos en escuelas bilingües porque en mi país el ser bilingüe ya es una necesidad en todos los aspectos, sobretodo aprender inglés...esto ya se está viendo también en Houston donde hasta los gringos ya quieren que sus hijos aprendan español.

Marco supported bilingualism because speaking two languages was appreciated and well perceived in his native country. He also thought that this situation was changing in Houston and more people were trying to learn Spanish. According to the parents' motivations table 9, there were only 16 parents' survey responses that agreed that learning the heritage language was good for their children's brain abilities but there were 18 that in the interviews mentioned the same motivation. Helga, one 36 year old Mexican Mother, responded about her motivation to teach the heritage language: "tiene muchas ventajas no sólo económicas sino físicas... especialmente para el cerebro porque lo ayuda a que se mantenga en actividad ya que le permite entender cosas en los dos idiomas." Danilo, a 53 years fathers commented: "... aprender dos idiomas es bueno para la cabeza y recordar porque no solo tienes que memorizar las palabras de una lengua sino de la otra también." When listening to the interviews, the reasons provided for the participants were that the learning of another language would help the brain to associate ideas better, keep it active, and memorize more vocabulary.

4.2.1.2.5 The language as a tool to help others

Rushton defined altruism as a "social behavior carried out to achieve positive outcomes for another rather than for self" (1980, p. 8). The author also explained that altruism might be described as frequency with which one person executed acts of good will in situations that arise in daily life, such as assisting an elderly woman with her

groceries or helping a friend with an assignment. Sometimes experiences in life could generate this kind of behavior in people. For several participants of the study, their personal experiences caused a desire to help their own Hispanic community and it is one of the motivations to teach their children the heritage language. Nora (46), a Mexican mother explained her situation when she arrived to Houston 18 years ago:

Pos para mí, si es necesario que mis hijos aprendan español, no sólo porque es bueno para ellos. Es que cuando llegamos no había mucha gente que hablaba español y nosotros tampoco inglés...No era , Houston era menos grande la verdad...Es bueno que nuestros hijos ayuden a la gente que no habla inglés porque sabemos que no es fácil aprender otra lengua especialmente cuando uno no es tan joven y no se le facilita hacerlo... Es positivo ayudar a los otros para que no pasen lo mismo que nosotros tuvimos que vivir...

Nora indicated that part of her motivation to conserve Spanish at home was not only because it would be beneficial for her children but also because she considered that the language could be used as a tool to help others in her community. As Nora, a few parents stated their altruist desire speaking by using the language to assist others by translating what they wanted to say. As the parents' motivations Table 9 presented before, 13 parents specified their interest in this cause. However when the interviews were recorded, this number increased to 15 taking into account all the subjects' responses. Other parents had an intrinsic desire to help others with the use of the heritage language. Maritza, a 45 year old mother explained her feelings about it: "A mí me motiva que aprenda español porque con eso ha ayudado a varias personas no sólo aquí pero también cuando hemos ido a México con las misiones de la iglesia." Although these participants

stated that this was not their principal motivation for teaching their children the heritage language, they considered helping others in their Hispanic community as a very relevant part of their lives.

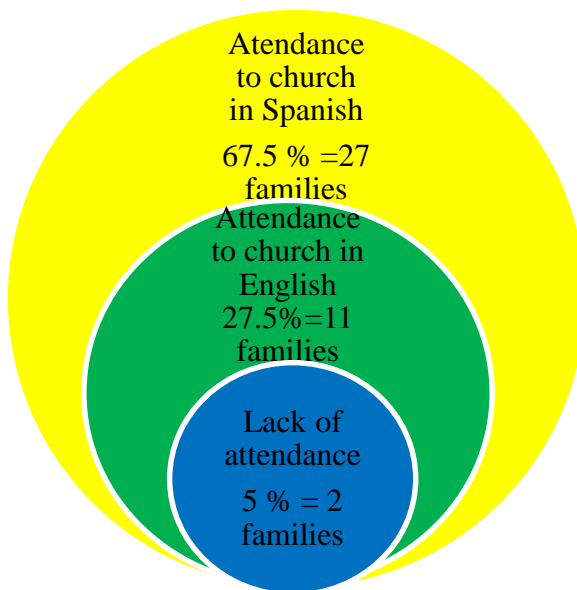
In this part of the study, the families' attitudes towards Spanish learning at home were explored. The findings showed that 91.25% of the parents had a positive attitude towards the preservation of the heritage language. In addition, the motivations behind those attitudes were presented in detail. To have better job opportunities was the motivation with the greatest percentage of all. The following section addresses the participants' attitudes towards the role of the church in the language transmission.

4.1.2 The Church as a Modifier of Attitudes

Religious institutions have always played an important role in the lives of their parishioners. According to Spolsky (2009), their relevance in the language management have been overlooked in the last century of western academic fields. In these places, immigrants can speak the same language and relate to people who have similar cultural backgrounds. Besides, churches are community institutions which offer different guidance and provide the participants the opportunity to gather in cultural and linguistic activities. Based on the family's responses, the churches in the city offered the following opportunities for them: (1) a place to encounter support in their lives; (2) organized activities where the parishioners can meet with other members of the community to find ease and (3) maintenance of important values which respect the difference among various cultures that participate in the institution.

Most of the families that were part of this study belonged to a religious institution in the city of Houston and its greater area. Figure 6 was created from the results of the survey and shows the families' attendance to church.

Figure 6. Families' attendance to church



As it is perceived in Figure 6, 27 (67.5%) families stated that they went to a church in Spanish. They claimed that these institutions were places where new immigrants could unwind with people of other Hispanic countries using their native language. Also, they argued that children could have some kind of interaction with other Spanish speakers. Consuelo, a 36 year old mother, explained the importance of these religious spaces in her life in Houston:

...para mí, la iglesia ha sido importante desde que llegue a Houston porque siempre nos ha apoyado...lo bueno es que los niños tienen una oportunidad para conversar en español, entre ellos casi no lo hacen pero al menos con los mayores

si les toca... es una oportunidad también para que conozcan a personas de países como Guatemala, El Salvador y otros...

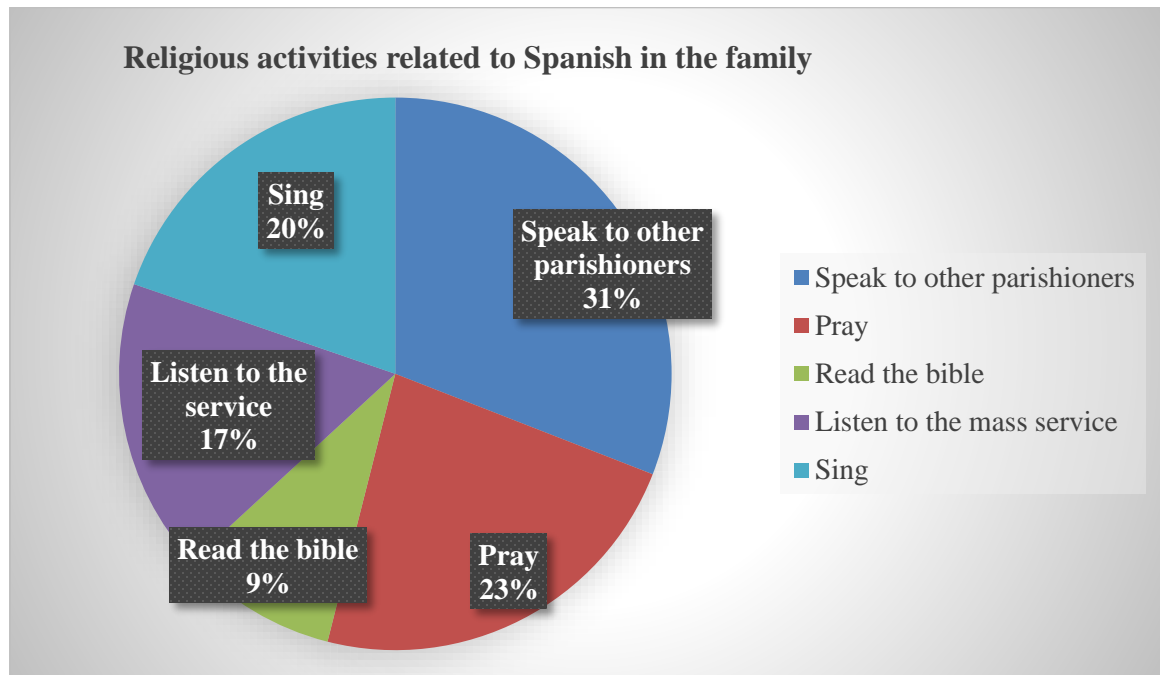
Consuelo perceived the church as a relevant place for her family to learn not only about Spanish but also about other Hispanic cultures. She also noticed that this institution gave an opportunity to interact with a heterogeneous group using her native language. Guardado (2002) indicated that a strong heritage identity and a sense of self in families living in a dominant language environment was a relevant factor to language transmission. According to 8 of the families interviewed, the house was not the only place to encourage their children to learn about their roots and reinforce their character; some of them saw the church as an opportunity to generate a strong ethnic identity. Norberto, a 38 year old father, has been participating in a religious institution for 6 years in the United States and referred to his experience:

...me siento muy bien en la iglesia porque yo y mis hijos tenemos la oportunidad no solo de entablar una relación espiritual con Dios, pero también ellos se relacionan con gente de nuestro país y de otros...es que esto les ayuda a sentirse más relacionado con mi cultura y con personas de otros países.

Norberto indicated that the church was a place where his children had the opportunity to meet people from different Hispanic communities. For several parents like Norberto, the church was in that way a place to affirm their culture and share with people of other Hispanic countries to validate their identity and create community networks. This place contributed to the children's practice of the heritage language with others and enlarged the knowledge of their own roots. Pratt (1991) claimed that people required spaces for healing and reciprocal recognition, safe houses to build mutual knowledge and

understandings. The religious activities that parents mentioned as relevant for the learning of the heritage language are represented in the Figure 7:

Figure 7. Religious activities related to Spanish in the family



According to Figure 7, 31% of the parents perceived that speaking to other parishioners was the activity which most encouraged their children to use the language. They argued that the relationships created with other members of the church were similar to the ones with their families in their native countries. Ana, a 39 year old mother explained how the interaction with the members of the church has grown stronger:

...es que el estar en la iglesia es participar con gente que se ha convertido como en mi familia... cantamos, leemos y participamos en las actividades de la parroquia... es en ese momento que Joel tiene la oportunidad de hablar con gente y compartir con ellos...

Ana explained that the church gave her opportunities to find what Guadado (2008) called *surrogate family relationships* sometimes perceiving other Hispanic immigrants as their extended family. Based on the families' responses, these kind of interactions helped to create solidarity and generated positive images of the ethnic culture in their children.

On the other hand, families who did not go to a church with a service mass in churches indicated three principal reasons for not going. First, they explained that Spanish-speaking churches were far from their current home. Victoria, a 45 year old mother explained: "Solo vamos a misas en inglés porque está cerca, extraño la misa en español porque uno sigue la lectura." Two parents commented that they started going to the English mass because those religious institutions had more to offer, especially because they had more funds. Finally, three of the families claimed that as they moved to a different area of the city, they decided to participate in the closest religious institution, regardless of preferred language.

As illustrated in this section, for several families the church was a place to find emotional support and to encourage the children to learn the heritage language through interaction with other parishioners. Next the study examines the role of the school in the family members' attitudes towards Spanish.

4.1.3 The school as a Factor to Change Attitudes

During the first years of life, the children's attitudes towards the heritage language are modified especially by their parents, close relatives and friends. As presented in the first part of this analysis, the parents' decisions to transmit Spanish or to

move to the dominant language are really important in the child's language acquisition. Parents established various ways to maintain Spanish or simply use English at home. Once the children start to go to their educational institution, their attitudes can also be altered by different factors such as their peers or teachers. As the children spend a lot of the time in educational settings, it usually influences the use of the heritage language at home for the majority of them.

The schools are without doubt a powerful force in language management, but there can be issues especially if the instructor and the student do not speak the same language, do not share the same cultural background or the home language is not well perceived (Spolsky, 2009). María, a 42 year old mother, described this situation related to her 9 year old son in the school context:

María: ... es que la profesora me llama para decirme que Ramiro no es capaz de ir al punto cuando escribe... que siempre le da muchas vueltas al tema y no es capaz de centrarse... que eso era un problema en su aprendizaje y que había que buscar cómo ayudarlo en este sentido.

Entrevistador: Oh ¿y entonces usted que le dijo a la profesora?

María: En ese momento le dije que el problema no era de mi hijo sino que es algo cultural. A los mexicanos o a los latinos nos gusta alargar las cosas y no ser tan puntuales como los americanos... luego ella se reía y me dijo que era verdad porque eso no era problema solamente de mi hijo sino también de otros estudiantes de Honduras, el Salvador y otros países latinos.

In the case of María, she was able to explain the cultural difference because she had experience working with children of immigrant parents and she noticed the differences in customs and behavior. Her understanding of the dominant language allowed her to support her son in a better way to be successful in his classes. However, this example was not true for all the parents because of different circumstances such as the ability or inability to speak English, the area where they lived and the people that influenced their children in school. The following paragraphs discuss how the beginning of schooling can alter the planning and learning of the heritage language at home.

4.1.3.1 Choosing schools

A bilingual school seems to be ideal to maintain the heritage language; however, a balanced education in the two languages is sparse across America and in Europe (Barroon-Hauwaert, 2004). Although many families of the study defended their desire to maintain the heritage language at home, 21 of the families believed that it was better for their children to attend a monolingual school. Table 12 shows the results of the parents' preference for the type of school they wanted their children to go to for primary school:

Table 12. Parents' preference of school type: bilingual, monolingual, or both

	Monolingual school in English	Bilingual school (English-Spanish)	Both Monolingual (English) and Bilingual school (English-Spanish)
Number of families	21	16	3

As seen in Table 12, there were 16 families that sent their children to bilingual schools. The children in this study attended or received one of the following types of

bilingual education: the Transitional Bilingual Program or the Dual Program. In a Transitional Bilingual Program, in the beginning, students take some of the classes in their native language, then switch the language of instruction to English after some years. On the other hand, a Dual Program is created for students to develop full bilingualism and bi-literacy taking classes in two languages during elementary, middle, and high school. Among the 19 families in Table 12 who sent their children to a bilingual schools, there were just 5 children attending a Dual program, the rest participated or attended to a Transitional Bilingual program.

Although Table 12 showed that there was not a big difference between the families who sent the children to a monolingual school and to a bilingual school, 21 of them preferred their children to go to a school in which only English was spoken from the first years. These parents indicated three principal reasons for this decision. First, 5 families believed that children in bilingual school did not learn the two languages correctly, especially not Spanish. Carmenza, a 37 year old mother, commented about this situation:

...prefiero enseñarle en español sólo en la casa y no mandarlo a una escuela bilingüe, es que en la escuela no les enseñan un buen español... una amiga mía me comentó que fue a la escuela que está cerca donde vivo y la profesora ni siquiera habla bien español. Por eso, porque prefiero que al menos hablen bien inglés, decidí no mandarlos, como no trabajo pues yo le dedico tiempo a que ellos aprendan el español aquí en la casa.

As Carmenza, families believed that it was better to teach their children the heritage language at home instead of sending them to a bilingual school. They argued that

they would like their children to learn the dialect of their native country and that the Spanish taught in the school was not the proper one.

Besides, there were 6 families who wanted their children to feel more comfortable in the country where they were living. They argued that they had a strong desire to maintain Spanish but they also remembered their own experience accommodating to the new culture and they preferred their children to be more accustomed to the place where they were now. Saúl, a father who arrived to Houston 18 years ago, described his feelings about it:

...si es que para nosotros fue difícil acostumbrarnos a una nueva cultura, creímos que mejor era que estudiara en una escuela con solo inglés, ¡claro! porque aunque mi esposa le enseñó español, creímos debe conocer más la cultura gringa.

Finally, 10 parents perceived that it was better for their children to spend more time with English to be successful in their classes at school. A few mentioned the need to take the standard exams from the public schools and that it was better for their children to focus in just the dominant language. After the establishment of the *No Child Left Behind Act*, all public schools must test their students to ensure that they are reaching the adequate level of minimum education and appropriate year progress. As a consequence, schools established certain rules which made the child respond in the monolingual standards. Luis, a Colombian father, commented:

La verdad es que quiero que a mis hijos les vaya de la mejor manera posible y para eso lo mejor es que vayan a una escuela monolingüe porque ahora como les toca presentar unos exámenes en la escuela casi todos los años...lo mejor es que en la escuela usen solo inglés.

The children also expressed their feelings about being in a monolingual school in English. They indicated the difficulty to go to school to speak in one language and arrive home to speak in another one. Matias with his sister went to monolingual schools in the city. He expressed that it was not easy for him to use the language the first years but then he got used to it:

Cuando entré a la escuela, no quería hablar porque no hablaba inglés pero luego fue lo contrario, solo quería hablar inglés... como mis papás no me hablaban en inglés si no lo hacía en español, me tocó que hacerlo para poder comunicarme con ellos.

On the other hand, the parents who sent their kids to the bilingual school gave their reasons for this situation. There were 5 parents who found that it was better for their children to be in this type of school because the children were not spending a lot of time at home and it was the best way to keep them using the heritage language. Some parents believed that they did not have the ability to teach Spanish, so it was more appropriate to have experts in this area to do it. In addition, 7 parents stated that there was support to maintain the heritage language for the first years in this type of school but after some years, children started to use English more frequently. Thus, the parents believed that it was necessary to reinforce the idea of using Spanish at home as a way to preserve it. Nora, a 46 year old mother, explained how the use of the dominant language increased in her house:

Cuando estaban bien pequeños pues hablaban español en la casa todo el tiempo pero es que poco a poco en la escuela era menos el uso del español, entonces un día, cuando estábamos en la mesa me di cuenta que ya no se hablaban entre ellos

en español y fue cuando les dije que en la casa no podían hablar en la mesa en inglés, sólo español y nada más.

Nora described how the external factors, such as the school, influenced the attitudes of the children towards the use of the heritage language. In her case, her motivation to keep Spanish at home was stronger and she reinforced its use at home. As presented earlier in this section of Chapter 4, 21 families decided to send their children to a monolingual school for certain reasons such as the desire to feel integrated to the dominant culture. On the other hand, there were 16 who selected a bilingual school to be the place to send their children to study. Finally, there were 3 families who sent their children to both types of schools. In Chapter 5, a comparison between the fathers' and mothers' attitudes will be made taking into account the data collected.

Chapter 5

Comparison and Contrast among the Family Members' Attitudes

In Chapter 4, the parents' policy and planning was explained, taking into account the data collected from the 40 families. The family members' attitudes were also explored in places such as the home, the church and the school. In the first part of Chapter 5, the fathers' and mothers' attitudes will be compared and contrasted. In the second part, the children's attitudes according to their age will be explored.

5.1 Mothers and Fathers' Attitudes

This part of the study compares and contrasts the attitudes between fathers and mothers towards the use of the heritage language. Researchers have claimed the relevance of the mothers' role in the transmission of the language in the house. Valdés (1996) pointed out at the importance of the mothers in language maintenance and the way the children were brought up bilingual. Kondo (1988) also indicated that mothers were the primary social agents for the preservation of the heritage language, especially in the early years of the children. The author argued that mothers who created a climate in the house in which children felt the need to speak the heritage language at home would increase their children's motivation to use the language. Kondo also said that mothers modified the perception that their children had about the heritage language, not only speaking with them, but also as the providers for opportunities to practice the language in different ways. As noticed by other researchers, the role of the mother in the preservation of the heritage language was also found to be very important in this study. Mauricio, one

of the Colombian fathers, explained his wife's importance at home to contribute in the transmission of Spanish:

A mí me interesa mucho que mis hijos hablen español pero la verdad es que no paso mucho tiempo en la casa por el trabajo... Cuando llego muy cansado, no estoy mucho tiempo con ellos. Gisela se ha encargado de ellos desde que están pequeños y aunque las decisiones las tomamos juntos, ella siempre es la que está colaborándoles con todo lo de la escuela y demás... Es muy poco el tiempo que estoy con ellos comparado con lo que ella les dedica...

Although Mauricio showed a lot of interest about their children's learning of Spanish, he stated that his wife is the one who invested most of the time with their children. As a consequence, she was one of the principal motivators in the use of the heritage language in his house. One of the purposes of this research was to better understand the differences between parental roles, especially the fathers' position in children's heritage language acquisition of the children compared to the mothers'. As the roles of the parents have been changing in the last decades, having more mothers integrated in the workforce and a change in the role of men in the families (Pancsofar & Vernon-Feagans, 2006), it was expected to see variations in the structure of the family. This part starts with the analysis of the time spent by the parents at home, their roles at home, and how it alters their children's attitudes towards Spanish.

5.1.1 The Use of Spanish with Parents and Time Spent with the Children

This portion of the chapter starts with the results obtained from the surveys (questions 1, 2, 3 and 4 from part 3 about the use of Spanish at home). After the analysis

of the results, the outcome from the interviews will be presented to have a better understanding of the gender roles of the fathers and the mothers of this project. Table 13 shows the results of the surveys related to the children's use of the heritage language with their parents:

Table 13. Children's use of Spanish with parents

Parent communicate with children	Father		Mother	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
In Spanish	25	31.25%	46	57.5%
In English	10	12.5%	3	3.75%
More in Spanish than in English	31	38.75%	27	33.75%
More in English than in Spanish	6	7.5%	2	2.5%
Using both equally	8	10%	2	2.5%

The results of the survey illustrated in the table reveal that according to the parent's answers, the mothers spoke Spanish more than the fathers at home. When the parents were asked in the interviews about this situation, the participants mentioned the following reasons for this to happen. The first reason is linked with Barron-Hawaert (2004), who affirmed that the language heard the first years creates a strong connection between children and mothers due to the fact that women were the primary caregivers. Thirty five parents reported that because mothers spent more time in the activities of the house, the children felt more connected to talk to them about their personal experiences and their emotions, especially in Spanish. Fifteen parents stated that the mothers in general played a more educational role, and they tended to be stricter in the use of the heritage language. As explained in Chapter 4 in the Language Planning and Heritage

Language Learning at home section, there were 7 families that were using the “one parent, one language” approach and all the 7 cases the mothers were the ones speaking Spanish at home.

Another reason why the mothers were more involved in the acquisition was the time spent at home with the children. Taking into account the data obtained from the surveys, they also were the ones spending more time at home; even if they worked, they were in charge of the principal chores of the house. In general they were in charge of their children during their first years of life. Parental responsibilities were alike in almost all the families (especially for the mothers), but the variation occurred in the time spent by the fathers in the household. Table 14 shows whether the parents interviewed were working or if they were unemployed at the moment of the research:

Table 14. Parents’ employment at the moment of the study

	Mothers	Fathers
Employed	17	40
Unemployed	23	0

As presented in Table 14, all the fathers were working at the moment of the research. On the other hand, 23 wives were unemployed. Valdés (1996) expressed in her ethnographic study *Con Respeto: Bridging the Distances between Culturally Diverse Families and School* that in general the fathers were the ones working and their wives had to stay at home. A similar situation was found in the families interviewed for this project. The typical situation was to find the father working as the money provider and the mother staying at home. There were 9 cases in which the couple shared the household

responsibilities and some of the chores, especially because both of them were professionals and worked all day.

In general, the mothers' role was dedicated to the house offering guidance, cooking the food, and helping their children with their school assignments. As observed in table 14, there were more mothers who were not working at the moment of the study, and those who were working, were only employed part-time. Most of the women also expressed a stronger involvement when their children were born, stopping working to dedicate time to take care of them, especially because day care was more expensive than working. All the mothers expressed the significance of their contribution in the house and their role as the parent who was more in charge of the daily activities at home.

The interviews confirmed that the mothers were also the principal generators of input in the majority of the cases in the heritage language. From the 40 mothers, 37 not only spoke to their children in their native language but also found different materials and artefacts associated with their native culture and language. The activities that they mentioned to help their children with language development were: talking to them, helping them with homework, doing the chores together, reading, watching movies, singing, and praying. The following fragments from the interviews are examples of this situation:

- Helga (36): Siempre que viene alguien de Colombia a visitar le pido que me traiga libros en español porque me gusta que lean cosas de la tierrita... cuando llego en la tarde después del trabajo les ayudo con sus tareas sobre todo con el más pequeño... primero en inglés y luego traducimos en español (Colombia).

- Fabricio (42): Pues ella siempre está pendiente porque es la que se queda en casa... por lo menos cuando estaban más pequeños les buscaba películas en español y también la música como Juan Gabriel, Ana Gabriel y la música banda y a ellos les gustaba mucho y todavía (México).
- Victoria (45) me las llevaba para todo lado porque tengo solo amigos de varios países y con ellos les tocaba hablar en español... además también traía los periódicos y revistas que regalan en las tiendas latinas. A veces vemos películas pero las vemos en español...(México)

Most of the mothers mentioned that they needed to have a lot of perseverance and consistency in helping their children because once they started school, they began to stop speaking Spanish as their environment outside was all in English. They also were encouraging their children not only by talking with them one on one, but by encouraging them to converse with their relatives using the internet and other sources. For this purpose, some of the mothers indicated that bringing relatives to visit was a great source of motivation. Alejandra, one of the mothers mentioned how she created a reading club to support her children to improve their ability in Spanish:

Los llevo a los restaurantes y leemos en español en las noches porque quiero que les guste la lectura. Además organicé un grupo de lectura para que mis hijos mejoren y se relacionen con más gente de otros países. Cuando estaba embarazada, fui a la biblioteca para encontrar libros en español y se me ocurrió la idea de formar un club de lectura en español y entonces nos reunimos de vez en cuando... No hay muchas interesadas pero hay... De vez en cuando invito a un escritor para que les hable...

As Alejandra pointed out she made efforts for her children to have an exposure to her ethnic language and culture. She commented that she lacked support to increase opportunities of input so she decided to create this type of club to offer her two sons an opportunity to meet with other people, especially interested in literature and reading. However, this type of activity was not the choice of all the mothers. Others chose to travel to their native countries as often as they can, visit their relatives or friends or develop activities to do at home.

In contrast, the 40 fathers had a job when the data collection was done as it presented in Table 14. Although most of them expressed their interest in the transmission of Spanish, it was clear that their role was less active because of their lack of time spent at home. The best time for them to spend with their children was nights and for 8 of them weekends. Even though the fathers' time was scarce in the house, their decisions were very important in most of cases, but their choices were not the same for all of the 40 participants at the moment of the transmission of the heritage language.

There were 18 families in which the fathers expressed the desire for the transmission of Spanish in the interviews. For some of them, the time at night was dedicated to support their children doing the homework, watching a movie or playing sports. Rodolfo, a 34 year old Mexican father indicated his role in the house:

Generalmente llego a la casa como a las 5 y 45 o 6 de la noche y estoy algo cansado pero aún así intento pasar tiempo con mis hijos...Mi mujer casi todas las veces les ayuda con las tareas pero algunas veces yo lo hago o ambos. Me gusta

llevar a mi hijo a jugar fútbol y allí conoce más niños hispanos de todas partes.

Otros días lo llevo a jugar softbol porque también le gusta...

Rodolfo explained how after coming from work, he tried to help in the house, but he affirmed that the majority of the care of the children was done by his wife. He also stated his interest in taking his children to do outdoor activities such as playing sports. On the other hand, there were three fathers who did not spend a lot of time at home because they had to travel outside the city for their work. For this reason, they had a more flexible attitude towards learning the heritage language because they were not present to help with the education of their children. One of these fathers, Saúl, stated that Spanish has been very relevant in his career, especially the ability of being bilingual in the United States. In contrast, his busy life at work had not let him offer time to his son in learning the heritage language. In the following conversation, he explained how his wife was in charge of process of the acquisition of the language:

Entrevistador: ¿Qué actividades hacen ustedes juntos?

Saúl: Bueno, buena pregunta la verdad es que ella hace más que yo por mi trabajo, yo estoy constantemente viajando... Sí, a ella le toca mucho más, mis negocios son todos en México, entonces yo constantemente estoy viajando a territorio mexicano por dos o tres semanas al mes. Entonces a ella le toca más que nada esa parte de la educación pero aunque él no lo habla muy bien pero está tratando de aprender...si él me habla en inglés, yo le respondo en inglés porque la verdad es que no quiero pasar mis únicos días con mi hijo haciéndolo sentir mal y por eso mejor que hablemos en la lengua que quiera conmigo.

Although Saúl explained that learning Spanish has been good for his career as a businessman, he did not have time to teach his child the heritage language. He also tried to be more accommodating at home when he was there because he knew he was not there a lot, so he did not want to be seen as the strict parent. In the case of the parents who decided to follow the “one language, one parent approach” as it was described in the first part of this study, the fathers were the ones using the dominant language. There were 7 families choosing this kind of strategy. According to the conversations recorded, they started using Spanish at home, but before their children began going to school, the fathers started to speak English with them as they were the ones with a higher level of proficiency in that language. From these cases, there were 2 families whose parents agreed together about it, and there were 5 in which the fathers stated in the conversations registered that they were the ones who decided in the house. In the following conversation, Jaime, a 44 year old father, explained how he chose to use English in his household:

Jaime: Yo hablo inglés con ellos y mi esposa español

Entrevistador: ¿Hicieron un acuerdo?

Jaime: No, fue algo que yo decidí porque no quiero que tengan problemas con el idioma y se tomó la decisión cuando ellos comenzaron a entrar a la escuela porque el primer lenguaje de ellos fue español pero cuando llegaba el tiempo de ir a la escuela, quisimos irlos preparando para que no batallaran a entender a los maestros. Simplemente que cuando yo llegué aquí no hablaba el idioma y me di cuenta que era necesario para progresar.

In this case, Jaime made the decision to be the one using English, not only because he had a high level of proficiency in the dominant language, but also because he considered that it was necessary to help their children avoid certain difficulties when they started going to school. He also explained that it was important to take the "one language, one parent" approach so that he was in charge of helping their kids with one culture, and his wife with the other.

There were 9 fathers who expressed a stronger involvement in the house by helping taking care of the children and helping with various activities. Three of them expressed that they were the ones who established certain rules at home to use Spanish in their household. The majority stated that they encourage their children to use the heritage language by reading to them or doing other activities.

The results of comparing and contrasting the mothers and fathers developed in the first part of Chapter 5 led to the following conclusions. In most of the cases, the mothers' attitudes towards the maintenance of the language were stronger than the fathers'. There were reasons to reach this finding. The role of the mothers in the families was more noticeable because they were not only spending more time with the children, but they were the instructional parents. Although there were some fathers who shared the household activities, the mother was still the principal caretaker and the one more involved in the education of the children.

5. 2 Children's Attitudes According to Their Age

This part of the study reflects the analysis of the conversations recorded of the children and parents. The questions asked to the interviewees were created to determine

their attitudes about the heritage language in a specific moment in time. Language plays an important role in the life of the people as it helps them to interact and socialize in the communities where they live; it affects the experience of life that humans experiment during all stages of life (Barron-Hauwaert, 2004). A new baby in the house can affect the linguistic use of the languages at home. This is the situation of parents who used to speak the dominant language with their partners (to improve their ability in English), at the workplace or different places, and readjusted the use of the two languages when a new member of the family was born.

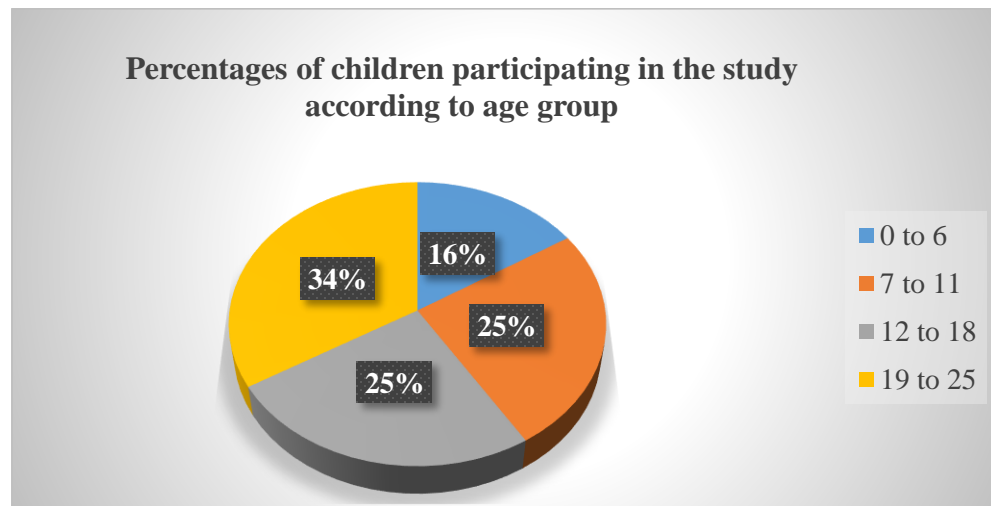
There are certain particularities of the children that alter their roles in the families such as personal characteristics and the order in which they were born (Valdés, 1996). In general for the children of the study, older siblings were given more attention and they were the ones who had a better proficiency in Spanish because the parents spent more time in this process when they were born. On the other hand, parents tended to be more flexible with their younger children and therefore they might be less strict in the use of Spanish. In addition, children had the tendency to use the dominant language among themselves.

In Table 15, the ages of the children are divided in 4 groups according age and education. In the first group, we have children from 0 to 6 years old who stay most of the time at home. The second group is composed of children at the ages 7 to 11 who begin to go to school until they finish primary school. In the third group, we have the teenagers at the ages from 11 to 18 who attend middle school and high school. The final group is made up of young adults, ages from 19 to 25 who experience life at the university or in the work force.

Table 15. Distribution of participating children according to age group

Ages	Number of children in the families	Children that do not participate	Total of children participating
0-6	17	0	17
7-11	29	2	27
11-18	28	1	27
19-25	30	4	26
Total	104	7	97

Figure 8. Percentages of children participating in the study according to age group



As presented in Table 15 and in Figure 8, the different groups did not have the same number of participants. The children of the families who did not preserve the language were not added to this part of the study, so it was taken into account the recordings of the 97 children for this part of the study. This part of the analysis was developed using a qualitative methodology principally taking into account the interviews that were recorded to the parents and children during the time of the research. For this purpose, all the conversations recorded of the members of the family were selected to describe better how the attitudes of the children change in time.

There were 47 parents who reported that their children's attitudes towards using the heritage language changed as they grew up, and consistency in using it at home was essential for the transmission of the language at all ages. Yolanda, a 40 years old mother from Mexico, indicated how her firm attitude and consistency towards speaking Spanish at home had brought her successful results:

En mi casa hemos batallado mucho para mantener mucho el español porque ellos solo quieren hablar inglés ahora, especialmente mi hija la mayor...cuando ellos crecen, se vuelven más rebeldes pero mi esposo y yo no los dejamos hablar en inglés en la casa porque es el único lugar donde lo hacen... Lo bueno es que hemos logrado que mis tres hijos lo hablen bien con paciencia y persistencia...

Like Yolanda, other parents of the study found that the use of the heritage language had to be constant so the children got used to it during the time they stayed at home. In the following paragraphs, an analysis of the children's attitudes towards Spanish is reported by age groups. Though some of the activities or situations mentioned in this part can happen at any time in life, the researcher chose the ones that he considered relevant for the participants of this study.

5.2.1 First Group: Ages 0 to 6

The initial years of the children are vital for them to acquire languages because during this time the babies move quickly from babbling to be able to use complex sentences; parents during this time modify their speech for the babies (Barron-Hauwaert, 2004). Crystal (1987) claimed that parents imitate the children to produce baby talk to create intimacy between them. All the children of the study in this period of life had a positive

attitude about Spanish according to their parents. They also spent most of the time at home with their mothers, relatives, or close friends. As reported by Guardado (2002), 5 parents claimed that their older brothers or sisters were influencing them to speak more the dominant language. Julieta, a 39 year old mother, explained this situation in her house with her daughter Lupita (6):

...les hablo todo el tiempo en español pero por lo menos con Marcelo habla inglés y con él se la pasa mucho tiempo sobre todo los fines de semana... yo no los dejo, cada vez que los veo hablando en inglés, los hago que se hablen en español.

Julieta expressed that Lupita was influenced by her brother to use English because they spent a lot of time together. However, Julieta pointed out that she did not allow them to use the dominant language. Parents also mentioned the following ways to motivate their children to learn Spanish at home during this period of time. First, almost all the parents indicated that they acquired objects from their native or other Hispanic countries such as books, games, paintings or other articles to motivate their children to speak the language. Romaine (1995) explained that the quality of the input was more important than the quantity. Parents commented that using these type of cultural artifacts was crucial to communicate with their children during the first years to create a positive bond with the heritage language. Camila, a 39 year old Colombian mother, described why it was relevant to use cultural elements or toys:

Cada vez que alguien viene de mi país, le pido que me traiga algo para Carmelo porque está pequeño... un libro, un juguete o algo que no se consiga aquí... es que aunque mis hijos no vivan en mi país, al menos que tengan algo de allá para

que se sientan conectados con mi tierra... ahora ellos están encantados con las camisetas de la selección Colombia que les trajeron sus abuelos.

Camila made efforts to obtain objects from her native country for her younger children. In addition, she believed that these types of artifacts maintained their children's links to their home country. There were two families in which parents claimed their success in creating a positive atmosphere at home about their native country. These participants argued that they exposed their children to Spanish as much as they could while they were very young. As Guardado (2002) indicated in her study in Canada, parents reported on the use of children's literature and songs for helping their children in their motivation. Patricia (37) one of the Colombian mothers of the study, explained: "Tenemos en la casa diferentes cuentos en español que les leo a Kim y a Horacio... También los Canticuentos que escuchaba cuando era niña, ahora hasta hay videos...a ellos les encanta cantarlas."

According to the parents, the children in these ages maintained a positive attitude towards the heritage language because they spent most of the time at home. Parents indicated that the way to maintain a positive attitude in their children was by surrounding them with ethnic artefacts from Hispanic countries. The effect of the older brothers or sisters could also contribute to the children's desire to learn the heritage language or to use English.

5.2.2 Second Group: Ages 7 to 11

During this period of time all the children were going to primary school and spent a lot of time outside the house. The school is definitively a place that could cause conflict

with the pattern of the language used with the family at home (Spolsky, 2009). The exposure to the dominant language in school increased in their daily life. Based on the interviews, the beginning of formal education changed the children's attitudes about the heritage language in different ways. Several parents explained that when the children started primary school, they were still motivated to use Spanish, but the more time they spent outside the house, the more they got used to using English. Rosario, a 40 year old Colombian mother, explained about this situation in her family:

...Carol cuando empezó la primaria nos hablaba todo el tiempo en español porque no conocía a nadie... pero eso poco a poco cambió porque fue mejorando su inglés y ahora lo habla mejor que el español. Fue algo similar a lo que le pasó a su hermana mayor Mercedes... la única manera fue obligarlas a sólo hablar el español en casa pero no ha sido fácil. A veces cuando le hablo en español, ella me responde en inglés.

Rosario indicated that the more time Carol had spent in school, the more she used the dominant language. She also stated that she enforced the use of Spanish but it has not been easy because her daughter was more driven to use English at the moment. There were the cases of children who disliked to use Spanish, for example Eugenio (10) who indicated his feelings about it: "I don't like speaking Spanish because I don't have enough vocabulary and I get confused... My Spanish is mocho, I prefer English."

On the other hand, there were families in which their children had a positive attitude towards the use of Spanish for the following reasons. First, they lived in areas where there was a large population of Hispanic people so their children were in contact

with them. Silva Corvalán (2001) indicated that in communities where there were strong ties and solidarity, the heritage language tended to be preserved. In the case of the children in this research, the participants of the group indicated that the principal reason to use the heritage language was to communicate with the family and people in the neighborhood where they lived. Parents also believed that the constant travelling to their native or other Hispanic countries was the way to maintain the interest. Esmeralda, an 11 year old child, explained how travelling to her parents' native country helped her feel motivated towards speaking the language:

Cada año, vamos con mis padres y mis hermanos a México a visitar a mis abuelos y a mis primos... so puedo practicar mi español con la gente allá... Lo que más me gusta es las celebraciones, en especial la navidad porque es muy distinta a aquí. Hay mucha gente en las calles y se hacen las posadas... Además la comida está muy rica...Esto me hace sentir orgullosa de ser mexicana...

Esmeralda's feelings towards traveling to her parents' native country were very positive. She got encouraged to use the language speaking to her family and people there through the participation in celebrations and the food. For Esmeralda this experience enhanced her feelings to relate more to her Hispanic roots and the language. For 14 of the children, one way for them to be in contact with the culture was when parents took them everywhere. Gabriela (10) explained:

...mi mamá me lleva a todas partes porque soy la menor... sus amigos son todos latinos...y en casi todas partes estamos rodeados de salvadoreños, mexicanos,

cubanos, es muy raro que haya un gringo en el grupo... no me queda otra que hablar español con ellos...

Gabriela stated that she was the youngest of the family and her mother took her everywhere. She also indicated that her mother was always in contact with Hispanic people. For that reason her only choice was to use the heritage language to communicate with them.

The majority of the children's attitudes at this point in their lives was altered by the entrance to school. As children spent more time outside of the house and more in school, they were more motivated to use the dominant language with their peers and friends. However, there were certain factors such as living in Hispanic areas, travelling to their parents' native country and continuous contact with Spanish speakers that promoted the interest in the use Spanish.

5.2.3 Third Group: Ages 12 to 18

Around this time, children grow up and become adolescents. According to the participants, there were certain factors that encouraged them to continue acquiring the language. For some of them, speaking Spanish in high school was an important factor to continue acquiring the heritage language. Piedad (15) reported on her experience taking Spanish classes:

Ya hablarlo pero ahora que tomo las clases de español, son muy fáciles pero he mejorado mucho la escritura... Antes sólo lo hablaba pero no leía nada...además me gustan las actividades sobre los diferentes países...No sabía mucho del país de mis padres y esto me hace interesar más en las mejorarlo.

Piedad recognized that taking Spanish classes was important to improve her Spanish proficiency in reading and writing. In addition, the learning about Hispanic countries stimulated her to learn more about her own ethnic roots. Barron-Hauwaert (2004) claimed that children in foreign languages who have learned the heritage language at home could find studying it a tedious task following repetitive routines and basic vocabulary. There were 2 participants of the research who believed that taking Spanish in high school was not appealing. Pepe (15) explained his disinterest in the Spanish classes: "...la clase de español no me gusta la verdad, me toca tomarla pero me da pereza...es que yo sé más que la maestra y me toca que repetir y conjugar cosas que ya sé."

The most important motivation for the participants in this group was technology. All of them reported on the use of different electronic devices to communicate with friends or their relatives in Houston and in other countries to converse in Spanish. The principal devices used were: computers and cellphones. Sonia (17) reported on the use of electronic devices in her daily life:

Con mis primos en México nos texteamos bastante... como algunos no saben inglés pues lo hacemos en español, aunque a algunos les ayudo con el inglés... pues usamos Whattup, Snapshat o Skype para hablarnos... nuestra familia es bien unida y con ellos nos mantenemos siempre en contacto...

Sonia, like the other participants in this group, uses different modern gadgets to continue communicating with her relatives in the Hispanic countries. There were others who reported that they enjoyed seeing programs that have been translated in the two languages to learn more vocabulary. Doris (16) indicated: "pos me gusta ver las series de

televisión en español e inglés sobre todo para aprender más palabras...por ejemplo veo Game of Trones, Lost y The Walking Dead.” For others participants, music played an important role especially to get them interested. Néstor (14) reported: “cuando estaba pequeño me negaba hablar español pero me comenzaron a gustar canciones de artistas... Marc Anthony, Carlos Vives y otros... y esto me ayudó a apreciar más el lenguaje.”

As pointed out by Beaudrie and Fairclough (2012), the growing role of the ethnic community presented in the social media and daily life of the United States also contributes to a positive attitude. Lorena (16) described how the Hispanic culture was increasing in different areas of life in the country and city and why this was relevant for her motivation to speak Spanish:

Ahora se ve mucha influencia latina en todo... por lo menos en el cine, en casi todas las películas se hace referencia a lo latino... hasta Eugenio Dervez salió en una película, estuvo buena...también hay otros como Sofia Vergara, William Levi...hasta el otro día vimos a un director de la filarmónica en el Miller...me encanta que esto pasa porque me siento identificada con la cultura de mis padres...

Lorena saw that the Hispanic culture was in her everyday life, and this presence motivated to be more interested in the heritage language. As in the example of Lorena, other children felt more connected to their ethnic background thanks to the growing participation of Hispanics in different fields.

According to the participants' responses from this group, the more important ways to motivate them to acquire the heritage language were taking classes in school,

using new technological devices and watching programs translated in the two languages. In addition, they also found motivation in the influential role of the ethnic community in the United States.

5.2.4 Forth Group: Ages 19 to 25

In this final group the participants were studying in one university, going to work or staying with their parents or friends. For most of the participants in these ages speaking the language was important for job purposes in Houston and its surroundings, especially for some of them who use it frequently at work. Charles (22) explained how he uses his language ability in his job:

Todavía hablo español con mi familia pero lo uso bastante con los clientes en el trabajo en el O'Reilly Autoparts... es mejor para entenderles usar español mejor para que vamos a hablar si no nos comunicamos bien... lo mejor es que me pagan 0,50 centavos más por ser bilingüe.

Charles pointed out that he uses the heritage language with clients at work but also received more money because of this skill. Silva-Corvalán (1994) reported on the desire to preserve the language could decrease when people have lived for a long time in the USA. In this study, the length of time of living in the USA was not the only reason for lowered interest in speaking Spanish; there were 15 of the children who were not living with their parents, and 8 of them point out that did not have contact a lot of contact with Hispanic speakers, so the use of the heritage language was scarce. Adam, a 25 year old student who lived on campus at the University of Houston, explained his situation:

No hablo mucho español ahora porque no tengo soporte que lo hablen en el colegio y me hace falta acá... yo no hablo nada de español menos que mi familia... nunca hay gente con la que hablo español, afuera de la universidad es con los familiares después de eso nadie...

Adam described his life, he did not have opportunities to use the language. He used to speak the language at home but he reported that the university did not provide opportunities to communicate in Spanish. On the other hand, there were 11 participants who were still living with their parents. They stated that they were still in contact with the language because they lived with their parents. For 16 of the participants in this group, the time spent with relatives and the family was the best to practice the language.

Magdalena (21) explained:

...yo ya no vivo en mi casa por eso no tengo tantas oportunidades de hablar español... si me reúno con ellos muchas veces hay que hablar en español...nuestra familia es muy unida...nos vemos por diferentes razones como el día de la madre o Halloween... lo mejor es encontrarse con mis primos y otros amigos.

Magdalena claimed that she had possibilities to practice the heritage language when she got together with her relatives. Finally, there were 18 subjects who were still in contact with the language by reading, listening to music or watching Hispanic programs.

In this group, most of the participants did not use the minority language as much as they did before. According to some of them, once they started living outside the house, they began to use the dominant language because all their environment was in English.

Several argued that they spoke the language at work was useful especially because of the economic compensation.

Chapter 6

Families' Attitudes Compared by Nationality and towards the US Hispanic Dialect and Community

This last chapter is divided in two sections. The first one starts with the comparison and contrast of the Mexican and Colombian families. It focuses on the heritage language attitudes in the Colombian and Mexican families according to their language preference for Spanish or English. The second part is dedicated to describing the importance of the extended family to families participating in the study and their influence on the children's attitudes. The third part analyzes the linguistic use of certain media (television, internet, and radio) by nationality.

The second section examines the participants' attitudes towards Spanish and its speakers in Houston and its suburbs. It begins with the family members' perceptions about the Spanish spoken in the area where they live. After that, subjects were asked for their beliefs about the best dialect from all the Hispanic countries. Finally, the participants reported on their feelings towards the Hispanic community that lives in Houston and its suburbs.

6.1 Families' Attitudes towards Spanish Compared by Nationality

The two Hispanic groups chosen for this dissertation were Mexicans and Colombians. The Mexican families were selected because they are the largest Latino community in Houston, and the Colombian ones were chosen for the personal interest of the researcher. The topic of this part of the study is focused on comparing and contrasting the attitudes of the two ethnic groups towards the heritage language. Examining the

participants' answers to the survey and interviews allows for an understanding of the similarities and differences among the attitudes in the two Hispanic groups. To accomplish this purpose, questions 11 and 12 of the survey were examined and the questions 10, 11, and 24 of the interviews were analyzed carefully.

6.1.1 Parents' Preference towards their Children's Language Acquisition

As reported in Chapter 4, 91.25 % of the parents reported positive attitudes towards their children learning Spanish. It was expected that fathers and mothers from both nationalities expressed strong interest in conserving Spanish in the area where they live. They were also asked regarding their preferences about the languages their children should speak in Houston by nationality. Table 16 offers the results from question 11 (part 3) from the survey:

Table 16. Parents' preference towards language acquisition by nationality

I prefer that my children speak	Colombian parents		Mexican parents	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Only English	2	5%	4	10%
More English than Spanish	3	7.5%	4	10%
More Spanish than English	0	0%	0	0%
The two languages	35	87.5%	32	80%

Most of the Colombian and Mexican parents considered the transmission of Spanish important, and maintain loyalty towards their ethnic roots and native country, in

keeping in with the positive attitudes from the Hispanic participants as Rivera-Mills (2000) reported on her study “*Intraethnic Attitudes among Hispanics in a Northern California Community.*” As observed in Table 16, almost all the parents from the two nationalities wanted to maintain the two languages. They stated that they would like their children to be able to speak, write and read very well in the two languages. Tomasa (43) commented: “las dos lenguas son importantes porque ambas se usan en Houston y las van a necesitar en algún punto.” On the other hand, there were 6 parents who claimed that they preferred their children to acquire just the dominant language (more information is in Chapter 4 regarding the parents’ decisions).

All of the parents recognized the relevance of English as the principal language used in the United States and some of them stated the need to learn it without having an accent to have a good job in the country. Several also identified that they came to the country to achieve the American dream and to improve economically. For that reason, they believed that their children’s success would be determined by correctly acquiring the dominant language.

6.1.2 The Extended Family

Mindel (1980) indicated that Hispanics present to have a higher level of *familism*. The role of the extended family (grandparents, uncles, cousins and others) cannot be undervalued because their positive support can inspire children to continue using a language until they grow older (Barron-Hauwaert, 2004). The study showed that 63 of the Mexican and Colombian parents agreed that their relatives played a very important role in their houses to maintain their identity, their traditions, and their native language.

Alejandra, a 43 year old Mexican mother, indicated how her relatives living in the city have helped her children to be engaged to learn the heritage language:

Me gusta mucho seguir la tradición... me acuerdo que los domingos en la casa de mi abuela y todos se reunían... Entonces todos los fines de semana yo trato de seguir esa tradición. Reunirnos no solamente nosotros, a mí me gusta encontrar el espacio para compartir con lo que es el núcleo familiar ósea nosotros cuatro mis dos niños y mi esposo pero también pasa con la familia de él, mi mamá, mi hermano, mis papás y la mamá de él. Nos gusta mucho la convivencia familiar y estos los motiva a seguir aprendiendo español porque con la lengua se inculca mucho el respeto y los valores morales que en realidad no les enseñan en las escuelas.

Alejandra recognized the significance of keeping the traditions and getting together with the relatives to boost family ties and encourage the learning of the heritage language. She also believed that these opportunities to share with the extended family offered learning experiences of respect and values that could not be taught in school. Although there was no ambiguity about the importance of the extended family for the two Hispanic groups, half of the Colombian families did not count on the support of relatives in Houston and its suburbs. Table 17 presents the findings obtained from questions 10 and 11 in the interviews asked to the parents. It also reveals whether the families of the research lived with relatives or had relatives different from the nuclear members of the family in the areas where they live:

Table 17. Extended family in the area by nationality

Families	Live with relatives in the house	Have relatives in the area	Don't have any relatives in the area
Colombian	4	6	10
Mexican	11	7	2

Table 17 revealed that 18 out of the 20 Mexican families that were part of the research had a relative living in their houses or in Houston and its suburbs. They all found their family presence very supportive in the transmission of the heritage language. Perla, a 33 year old mother, explained the role of her extended family in her home:

...el apoyo de mi familia ha sido fundamental... a veces que necesito salir siempre viene mi hermana o mi madre y se queda con la niña...me gusta porque ella siempre está rodeada de la familia mía y no tiene chance de olvidar el español... mis padres se enojarían conmigo si no le enseño a ella a hablar español porque no hablan inglés...

Perla indicated that her close relatives have been helpful in the transmission of Spanish to continue communicating with her parents. The Mexican children also mentioned the relevance of the extended family in their motivation. Sonia (17) stated:

...me acuerdo cuando vino mi prima de Monterrey, no me gustaba hablar español pero quería jugar con ella y tenía que usarlo porque ella no sabía inglés...me iba a la casa de mi tía y la pasábamos muy bien...yo le ayudaba en inglés y ella en español.

Sonia described how the presence of her cousin in her life forced her to speak Spanish in a positive way. There were also those participants who indicated that the family's special celebrations were relevant for their language acquisition. Erasmo (20) explained: "cuando era más pequeño no quería hablarlo pero después me di cuenta que si quería participar de las reuniones con la familia tenía que hacerlo... casi todas las semanas hay algo, un cumpleaños, una fiesta o algo." For the 8 families who lived with one of the grandparents or both, speaking Spanish to communicate with them was almost compulsory in the house.

Báez (2002) indicated that the shift of the language could create conflicts between members of the members of the family for the lack of linguistic ability or understanding of the heritage language. Three of the families reported that their children needed to learn Spanish to avoid conflicts with other members of the family. Parents stated that their extended family shows negatives attitudes towards the relatives who did not speak the heritage language correctly. Vanessa (40) explained:

¡Híjole! a mis hijos les toca hablar con ellos [extended family] en español o sino es un problema porque comienzan a llamarlos gringuitos o los nopaleros... es que hasta a mí me molesta si se les ve el nopal en la frente y no saber español ¡Qué vergüenza!...

On the other hand, for those families who did not have any extended family in the area, the situation was different. There were 6 families who preferred to stay at home relating with few people outside. Pablo (43) indicated:

...mi esposa y yo quisiéramos traernos a mi suegra pero no se puede por ahora...por el momento preferimos enseñarles español con mi esposa... estamos en contacto con la familia por internet o viajando para Colombia pero aquí nos relacionamos con muy pocas personas y en muchos casos hablamos inglés...

Pablo explained that his family was in contact with their extended family through the internet and by travelling to Colombia. In addition, his wife and he preferred to teach their children the heritage language at home. Other parents had close friends from their native country or from other Hispanic countries with whom to share or do certain activities related to their ethnic culture.

As presented in this part, there were more Mexican families with extended family bringing opportunities to the children to share with close relatives and participate in family gatherings. In contrast, the families who did not have relatives in the area found support in close Hispanic friends, travelling to Hispanic countries or with the use of new technology.

6.1.3 Linguistics Use of the Families

The use of the languages at home is motivated by several factors such as: language proficiency, location where people live, friends, and interests. In addition, minority communities can take advantage of access to input in their own language and dialects, as well as the ones from other countries (Gibbons and Ramirez, 2004). There are different ways to provide input through TV programs, music, internet or books. Families were asked about the use of certain media to help in the children's acquisition of

the heritage language. Table 18 displays the results about the question 12 in the survey and 24 in the interviews:

Table 18. Use of the media in Spanish by nationality

	Colombian Families				Mexican Families			
	Parents	Children	Total	%	Parents	Children	Total	%
Internet								
Always	26	28	54	62%	18	21	39	40%
Occasionally	8	15	23	26%	10	19	29	30%
Never	6	4	10	12%	12	17	29	30%
Television								
Always	4	3	7	8%	22	12	34	35%
Occasionally	24	21	45	52%	15	39	54	56%
Never	12	23	35	40%	3	6	9	9%
Radio								
Always	3	2	5	6%	15	11	26	27%
Occasionally	25	12	37	42%	16	21	37	38%
Never	11	33	44	52%	9	25	34	35%

As recorded in Table 18, the participants in the two ethnic groups did not have the same numbers (47 Colombian children and 57 Mexican children). The results demonstrated that there were differences in the use of media among the two nationalities. The Colombian families preferred to use the internet in Spanish among the three types of media. However, the use of the internet in the two communities was high. When the participants were asked for the activities that they did in Spanish on the internet, they indicated that they used it principally for reading the news in the Hispanic countries and to watch videos or movies online. There were 42 parents who enjoyed reading the news

in Spanish online, but children in general did it in the dominant language. Parents chose to read their local newspaper from their country of origin on the internet instead of the ones in English; they reported news that might affect their families, and keep up with current events in their respective countries. The least popular medium was the radio (see Table 18). Patricia (37) pointed out: “ahora no escucho la radio porque todo lo consigo más en internet o lo veo en la televisión... prefiero escuchar la radio en inglés.” The majority of the participants preferred to listen to the radio in the dominant language or they just favored doing other activities.

On the other hand, Colombian families tended to watch less the television in Spanish than the Mexican families. For some of the Colombian families, the television in English was more appealing. The parents also added that it helped them to improve their understanding of the dominant language. They mentioned that they used to watch American shows and movies in their native country so they were used to the sounds of the language. Carmen (35) described watching American television:

...cuando decidimos ver algo en la televisión preferimos estar más al lado americano que al lado latino porque los programas latinos no me gustan, siento que la información no es la correcta, no son nada educativos... casi nunca la vemos porque nos quita mucho el tiempo.

Although Carmen’s ideas about television were not exclusive to the Colombian families as seen in Table 18, most of the Mexican families enjoyed watching TV in Spanish. In this case, parents’ reasons to do it were to watch the news and soap operas from Hispanic countries. It was possible that Mexican families watch more TV in

Spanish because most of the TV networks appear to use their ethnic dialect. Susana (15) indicated:

...cada noche en la casa mis padres o todos vemos una telenovela en Univisión o en Telemundo y mi papá se ve las noticias después de la novela...depende de que tan bueno está el drama me quedo a verla o no.

According to the results shown in Table 18, it was clear that children used less media in the heritage language than their parents. Since they spent most of their time outside home speaking English, their preferences favored the use of these media in the dominant language. Matías (17) added: “por fuera en general no veo o escucho mucho en español porque mis amigos no lo hablan, en la casa con mi padres si lo hago pero no todo el tiempo.”

The participants also mentioned that they frequently modified their likes because of the influence of other members of the family. From time to time parents introduced the children to programs on the radio or on the TV or vice versa. If parents had more than one child, in general brothers and sisters tended to also influence the others decisions about the different media. Tomasa (43) indicated: “bueno a veces estoy viendo una novela y Erika [her daughter] llega y yo la engancho a la historia o ellos también me dicen de algo para leer o ver pero sobretodo yo intento motivarlos al español.” Tomasa explained how the members of her family motivated the rest to use the different types of media in Spanish.

The purpose of this section was a comparison of the Colombian and Mexican families in Houston and its suburbs. For the first section, parents reported positive

attitudes in transmitting the heritage language and they also were conscious of acquisition of the dominant language to be successful in the USA. In the second one, families recognized the importance of the extended family to motivate their children in the learning of the heritage language. However, it was shown that more Mexican families had relatives living with them or in Houston most likely due to the vicinity with México. Although having relatives was not compulsory to maintain the heritage language, the results displayed that they helped the interest of the children towards Spanish. In the final section, the linguistic use of media was presented. The Colombian participants used more internet than the Mexican ones. The least popular medium was the radio in Spanish, because they favored other activities or they listened to it in English. The most popular medium for the Mexican families was television. On the other hand, Colombian families preferred to watch television in English because it helped them to improve their level in the dominant language and because they found it more interesting.

6.2 Attitudes towards US Spanish Dialect and the Local Community

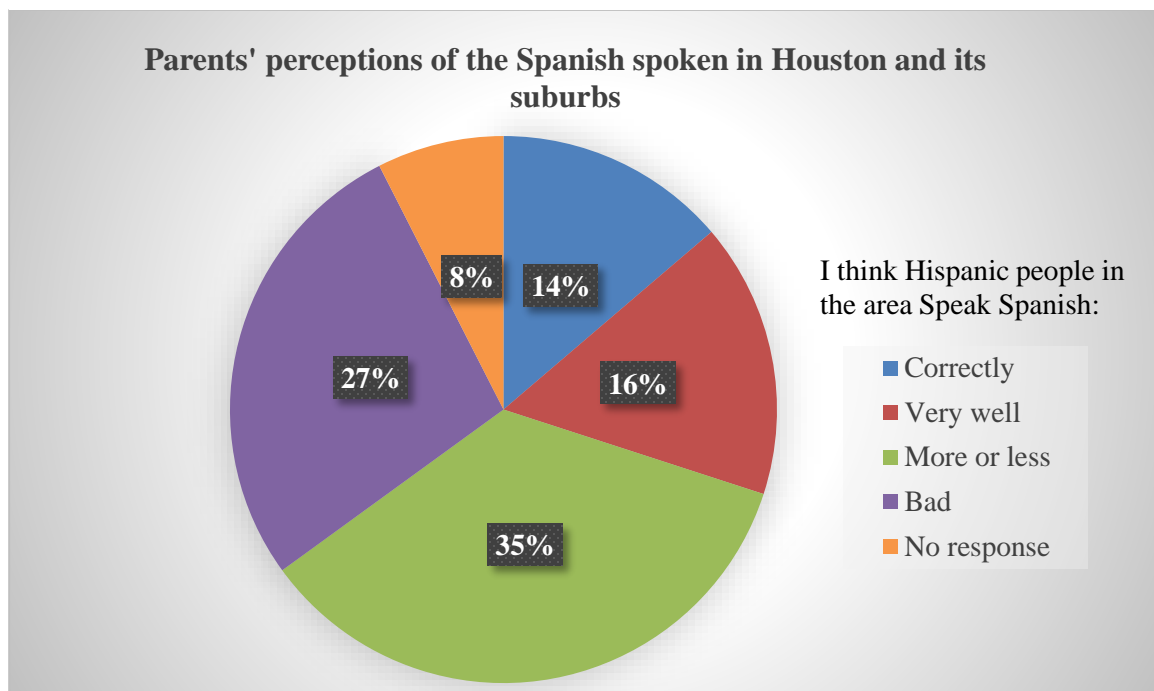
The Hispanic community in the USA includes the descendants of early settlers from Spain and immigrants and their children from the different Spanish-speaking countries such as Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba and Colombia (Tienda & Mitchell, 2006). Houston is one of the places with more diversity of inhabitants from Hispanic countries everywhere you go. As this varied community is in contact with people from many different nationalities, they have certain attitudes towards several ethnic groups according to their own perceptions and experiences in life. This last part of this study addresses particularly the families' attitudes towards Spanish and its speakers in Houston and its suburbs. For this purpose, the answers of questions 12, 20, 21 and 22 from part 3 of the

survey and extracts from the interviews are used to determine the perceptions of the subjects. After reviewing the responses to the questions from the surveys, the data will be compared and analyzed with the information obtained from the conversations recorded collected for this project.

6.2.1 Attitudes towards the Spanish used in Houston and its Suburbs

According to Gibbons and Ramirez (2004), people without linguistic training often think that particular languages varieties are superior to “others, and when pinned down they will say that one variety is more beautiful or elegant or expressive than another” (p.192). For this reason, item 20 from the survey asked parents about their thoughts of the way Hispanic people spoke Spanish in the area where they lived at the moment. Figure 9 summarized the results collected in the surveys given to the parents:

Figure 9. Parent's perceptions of the Spanish spoken in Houston and its suburbs



Based on Figure 9, there were mixed answers in reference to this item. Thirty five percent of the parents believed that people in the area did not speak the language properly. The yellow part (27% of the parents) responded that the Hispanic population spoke bad Spanish. The majority of the subjects (gray part=35%) believed that people spoke mediocre Spanish compared with the one used in their native countries. In addition, 14% of the parents indicated that people in the area spoke Spanish correctly and 16% of them perceived that people spoke it very well. Finally, the green part (8% of the parents) did not really want to give any specific comments about it because they did not want to judge in this matter.

Taking into account the responses of the interviews, there were two main reasons why they considered the Spanish spoken in Houston of a low quality. The first one was

what five participants called “mixing the languages”. Silvia, a 39 year mother, explained her feelings about the Spanish spoken by the people in Houston:

Es un español bastante pobre, te deja mucho que desear porque realmente en mi país se habla un español bastante rico, el vocabulario, pronunciación y la forma de hablarlo. Aquí ya lo han prostituido mucho, muchas de las palabras ya son Spanglish. Si tú oyes a la gente a veces no sabes si están hablando en inglés o en español porque usan muchas palabras de los dos idiomas...

Silvia believed the Spanish in her country was not the same that the one spoken in Houston. She considered that the language that was spoken by people in the city where she lived now lacked a lot of characteristics such as lack of vocabulary, pronunciation or other features. Moreover, she explained that she did not like this type of situation especially because the language was deteriorated when people used the two languages at the same time and mixed English with Spanish.

The second reason was what Bill (2005) reported as the negative attitudes that appeared in heterogeneous Hispanic communities like the one in Houston. Bill indicated that the participants in the study expressed their dislike for accent from other Hispanic countries. In the case of this study, 11 participants found that people from a few Hispanic countries did not speak Spanish in a proper manner. Luis (43), a Colombian father, explains: “Es que prefiero sólo estar con gente de mi tierra porque cuando estoy con gente de Puerto Rico o de otros países no los entiendo”. Úrsula (47) mentioned: “La verdad es que no me gustan algunos acentos de otros países y algunas palabras porque me confundo.”

However, there were parents who were positive about the way the people speak Spanish in Houston and its surroundings as shown in Figure 9 (14 % participants believed people spoke Spanish correctly and 16% of the people considered they speak it very well). These participants offered principally the following reasons. There were 6 participants who indicated that they were judgmental about the way people speak Spanish in Houston but after several years living in the city they changed their minds. Rosario (40) reported:

Al llegar a la ciudad me molestaba mucho la manera como la gente de otros países hablaban pero era porque no les entendía muchas de las palabras que usaban pero al poco tiempo me acostumbre... pero al final esas diferencias me han enriquecido y ahora pienso que la gente habla bien aquí porque comprendo lo que dicen...

Rosario explained how her feelings about the Spanish spoken in the area changed because she got used to it. In addition, she believes that her reaction changed once she started to understand the differences in the dialects and appreciate them as a benefit. There were 7 parents who indicated that they enjoy the diversity of the Spanish used in the area. Patricia (37) commented: ...“en Houston se habla bien el español...me encanta hablar con gente de otros países porque aprendo sobre otras culturas.” Other participants reported that the Spanish spoken in the city as correct as the one in another Hispanic country, some people speaking it well and others speaking it badly. Finally, 8% of the subjects (6 parents) decided not to respond the question.

The 104 children participating were also asked to answer this question. Figure10 presents the results according to the responses:

Figure 10. Children's perceptions of the Spanish spoken in Houston and its suburbs

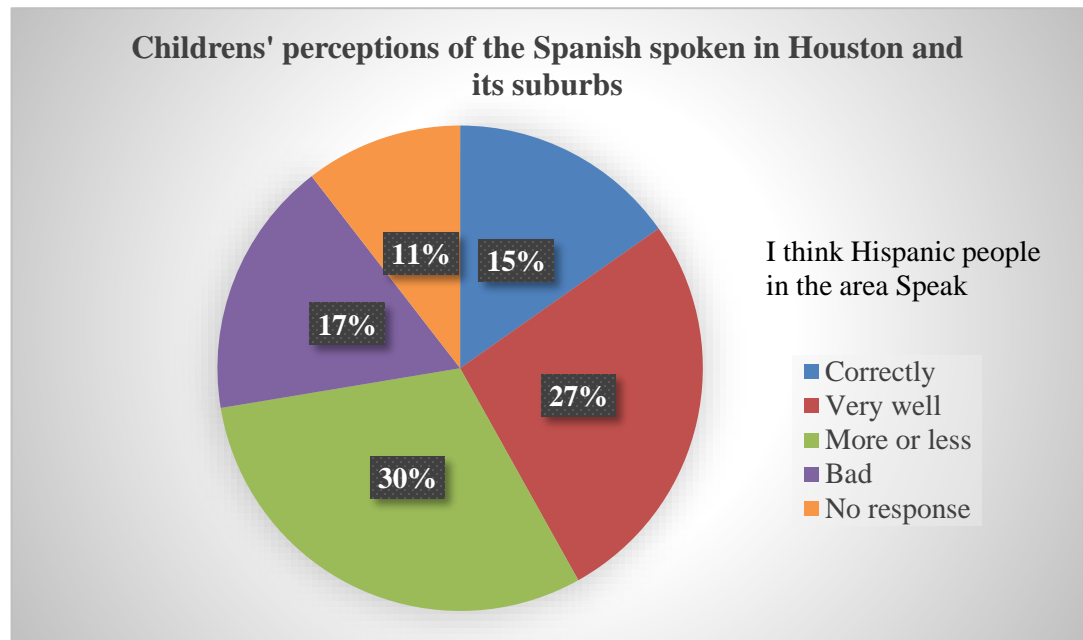


Figure 10 indicated that the children's perceptions about the Spanish spoken in the area were a bit different to the ones of their parents. According to the results, 30% (green part) of the children stated that people in the area spoke mediocre Spanish and 27% of the subjects (red part) believed that people spoke mediocre Spanish. Rosalba (14) indicated: "Mucha gente habla mal...porque los oigo...prefiero que me hablen en inglés porque lo hacen mejor." As their parents, some of the children also did not like the Spanish spoken in the area because people mixed it with Spanish. Susana (15) reported: "aquí mucha gente tiene un español muy pobre y muchas veces ni hablan bien el inglés...usan muchas palabras del inglés como *troca*, *biles* y otras." There were also a 15% of the participants stating that people spoke Spanish correctly in the area, and 27% who indicated that the Spanish spoken was very good. Several argued that the Spanish spoken in the area was the one they knew. César (19) explained: "el español aquí es el

que conozco... creo que es correcto porque lo entiendo y lo uso con los clientes en la ciudad.” On the other hand, there were some participants who believed that the Spanish in Houston was correct because of the history of the language in Texas. Mery (19) stated: “aquí se habla bien pero todo depende de donde se viva en la ciudad...pero en general este estado era parte de México y por lo tanto mucha gente lo usa bien.” Finally, the green part (11% of the children) did not give any specific comments about their perceptions of the Spanish spoken in Houston and its suburbs.

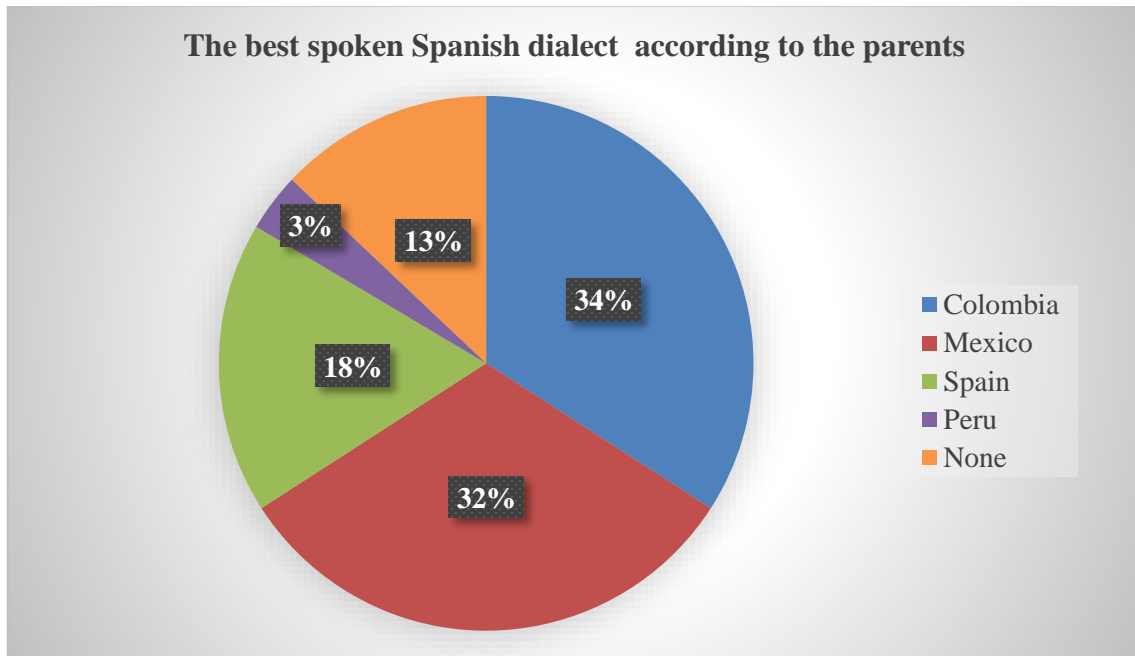
Rivera Mills (2000) indicated that tensions among areas where there were mixed Hispanic communities tended to reduce once the new generations appeared as a consequence of the acculturation. According to the findings from this part of the study, the children had a better perception about the Spanish spoken in the area. Some of the children’s attitudes were affected by their parents’. However, several showed a positive perception towards the dialect spoken in Houston and its suburbs because it was the one with which they were most familiar.

6.2.2 The Best Spoken Spanish among the Hispanic Countries

Espinoza (1923) claimed that it was generally believed that the best Spanish was used in Castile. The author finished his article indicating that based on Cervantes or Navarro Tomás, the best Spanish came from those who were educated regardless of where they were born. As there are still certain beliefs among the Spanish speaking countries about which country speaks the best Spanish dialect, families were asked about it and the reasons for their decisions. For this purpose, question 21 from the surveys was

used, and more information was collected from the interviews. Figure 11 indicates the results from the data obtained from the parents:

Figure 11. The best spoken Spanish dialect according to the parents



The results shown in Figure 11 indicated that most of the parents selected the Spanish spoken in their native country as the best (34% of the parents chose Colombia and 32% of the parents chose Mexico). The other countries perceived as having the best spoken Spanish were Spain (18% of the parents) and Peru (4 % of the parents). In addition, 8 % of the parents believed that none of the countries had the best Spanish. There were several parents who indicated that two countries were the ones who spoke the best Spanish.

After listening to the interviews, fragments were transcribed where parents explained the reasons for their choices when answering this question. According to 12 Colombian parents, the Spanish used in their native country was the best, and they

offered multiple motives for this selection. First, there were participants who indicated that they selected their native country after have compared their dialect with the one from other countries. Camilo, a 43 year old Colombian father, explained:

En Colombia, he tenido la oportunidad de visitar muchos países: México, Centro América. No tanto Suramérica, no tanto Venezuela y Argentina pero nuestro español es sin lugar a dudas el más rico y el más bello de los que yo he escuchado en la lengua hispana. La gente usa un vocabulario bastante rico, la gente se expresa, es un español bueno comparado a otras culturas. Perú también tiene un buen español pero por lo general, el español de México es muy prostituido y de otros países de Centroamérica.

Camilo argued that after having the experience of interacting with people from different countries, he chose the Spanish from Colombia because it had a rich vocabulary and people were able to express clearly. He also said that the Spanish spoken in Peru was good. In contrast, he believed countries such as Mexico and the ones in Central America were not using the language properly, referring to it as “corrupted.” In general among Colombian parents, there was a more prescriptive position towards the use of the heritage language and how it should be spoken. Second, 21 parents pointed out that the Spanish from their native country had been recognized from formal institutions or in articles. Lorenzo (41) stated that the Colombian dialect was the best because of its purity: “Yo creo que en Colombia porque lo leí en un libro que decía que es el más puro y pues es también el más claro.” Additionally, Miranda (34) believed that the Colombian dialect had the best vocabulary and pronunciation: “He leído artículos donde se dice que en

Colombia porque siempre usamos los términos más correctos y nuestra pronunciación es muy buena.”

In contrast, the 34% of the Mexican parents argued that Mexico was the country with the best spoken Spanish. First, 21 parents selected this dialect because they identified with it. Elkin, one Mexican father, expressed the following: “Pues para mí es México porque yo nací allí, además es porque es a lo que estoy acostumbrado y con los que me siento más a gusto.” Elkin claimed that his selection was caused by the feeling of identity related to his own dialect, and because it was the one he knew the most. There were 9 parents who indicated that the Mexican dialect was better than the others because it was used in most of the translations of the programs or movies watched in the Hispanic countries. Melissa, a Mexican mother, stated: “pues en México porque si no porque todas las series son traducidas con el español de México, si ves por los menos Los Simpsons está con el español de mi país y este se ve en toda Latinoamérica.”

The results of the survey demonstrated that 18% of the Colombian and Mexican parents chose the dialect from Spain as the best spoken one. First, 8 of them referred to the history of the language to make their choice. Liz (41) stated: “España es donde se habla el mejor español porque allí fue donde nació y además allí es donde se creó el primer diccionario de la lengua Española.” There were 3 participants who stated that they chose this dialect because they liked the pronunciation of the Peninsular Spanish and it was clear to understand. There were 4 subjects who claimed that the Spanish in that country was the purest and the structures of the language were more correct. Finally, 4 % of the parents indicated their native country had the best dialect, but they also stated that

the Spanish in Peru was very good. These parents pointed out that they had read it in an article or had heard it on the television.

From the total of the parents, 13 % said that none of the Hispanic countries had the best spoken Spanish. There were 5 participants who stated that all the countries had their differences and they all were valid and acceptable as good. The rest of the parents in this group believed that the best Spanish was not the one spoken in any specific country but the one used by the people who had more education.

The 104 children were also asked to respond this question to compare their answers to those provided by the parents. For the purpose. Figure 12 presents the results collected for this purpose:

Figure 12. The best spoken Spanish dialect according to the children

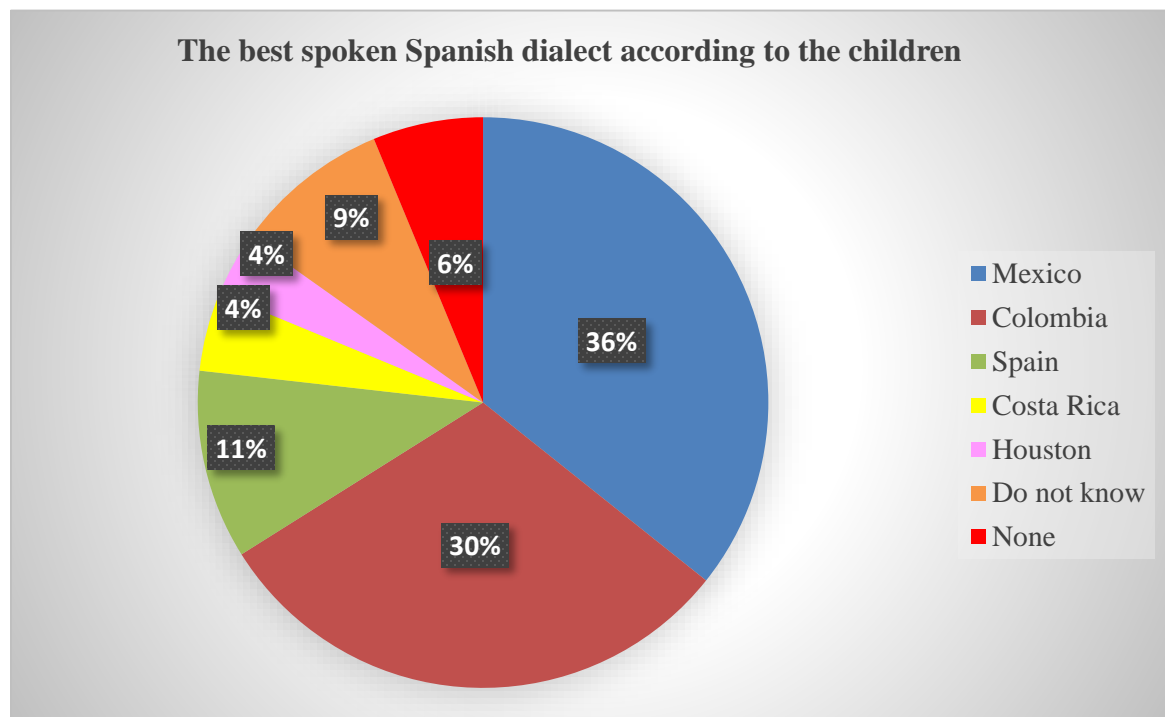


Figure 12 showed once again that children also selected the parents' native country (Mexico 36% and Colombia 30%) as the one speaking the best Spanish. However in this case the reasons for choosing them were different. First, most of these participants chose Mexico or Colombia possibly for affective reasons. Paola (12) reported: "es que es el país de donde vienen mis padres y me siento conectado con esta forma de hablar." For others, this dialect was the one that was clearer to understand. Teresa (15) explained: "pues en Colombia porque el español de Centroamérica se me hace muy difícil de entender." In addition, 10 children selected one of the two countries because they lacked knowledge about other Hispanic countries. Lorena (16) stated: "En México porque allá habla solo en español, no creo que hayan tantos lugares que hablan español."

Additionally, 4% of the participants chose Costa Rica because it was very similar to the Spanish spoken in Colombia, and there were not a lot of differences between the two dialects. However, 4% of them believed that Houston was the best spoken Spanish because of its rich variety. Leandro, one 11 year old child, stated: "En Houston porque vienen muchos inmigrantes de varios países y traen bastante variedad y formas de hablar diferentes." On the other hand, 11% of the participants indicated that Spain was the best spoken Spanish for historical reasons. Among all the children, 6% believed that none of the dialects is the best: "En ningún país, en cada país se habla perfecto para cada país." Finally, 9% did not give an opinion.

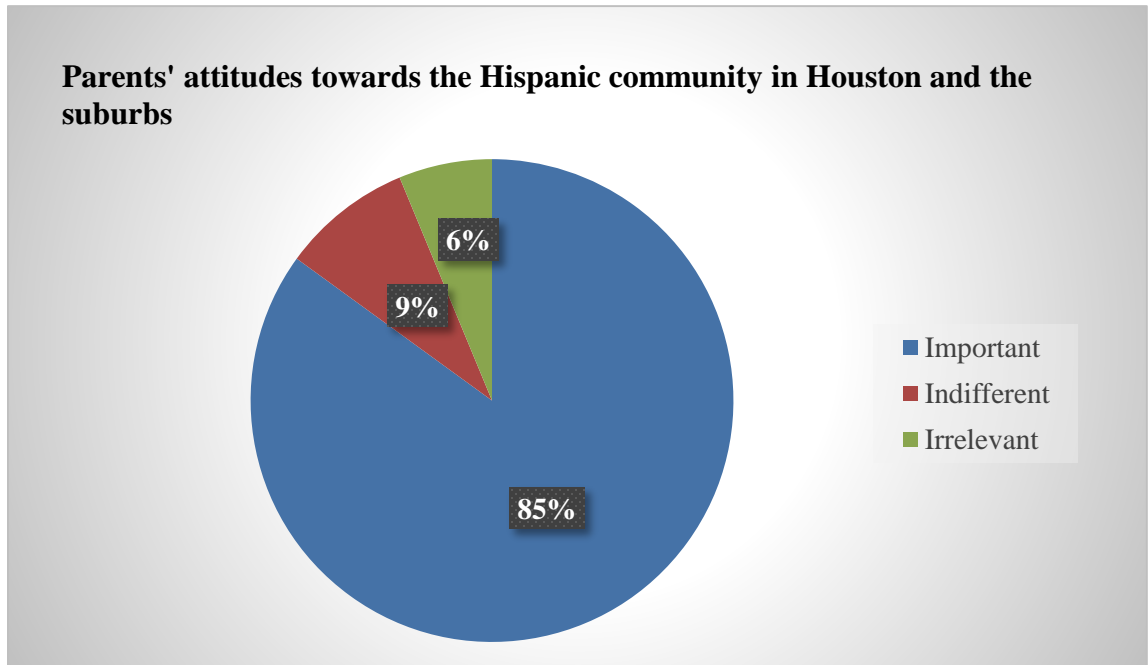
From the total participants, there was a strong preference towards the Spanish spoken in Colombia and from Mexico. However, parents had different reasons to choose the dialect from their native country than their children did. A more prescriptive attitude

towards the heritage language was perceived in the Colombian parents. The other countries chosen to have the best Spanish were Spain (from its history and origins of the language), Peru (read in an article) and Costa Rica (because of the similarity with the Colombian dialect). There were 12 children who believed that the city of Houston had the best Spanish because of the Hispanic plurality that existed in the area. Some of the parents and children believed that there was not a dialect better than any other and that every single country had people who spoke it well. Finally, 10 children were not sure of the answer.

6.2.3 The Hispanic Community in Houston and its Suburbs

In the following portion of the study, the participants were asked about their attitudes towards their own ethnicity in the area where they live. For this purpose, question 21 (part 3) from the survey and the responses obtained from the interviews that related to this topic were used to complete this section. As presented in the previous two sections of this study, I will start with the parents' perceptions about the Hispanic community in Houston and its suburbs, and then the one from the children. In Figure 13, the parents' attitudes are presented:

Figure 13. Children's attitudes towards the Hispanic community in Houston and its suburbs



There was no doubt about the positive position towards the Hispanic community in Houston and its suburbs. As seen in Figure 13, 85% of the parents (68 participants) considered relevant the presence in the area. When asked to give the reasons for their choice, they expressed that having this community helped them to maintain their roots, their identity and felt more comfortable with who they were and where they came from. Oscar (46) a Colombian father expressed her feelings towards the community:

¡Claro que sí! La comunidad hispana siempre es importante para mí... Más ahora que más latinos sobresalen en diferentes aspectos en los Estados Unidos....
Gracias a vivir en esta ciudad conviviendo con argentinos, venezolanos,

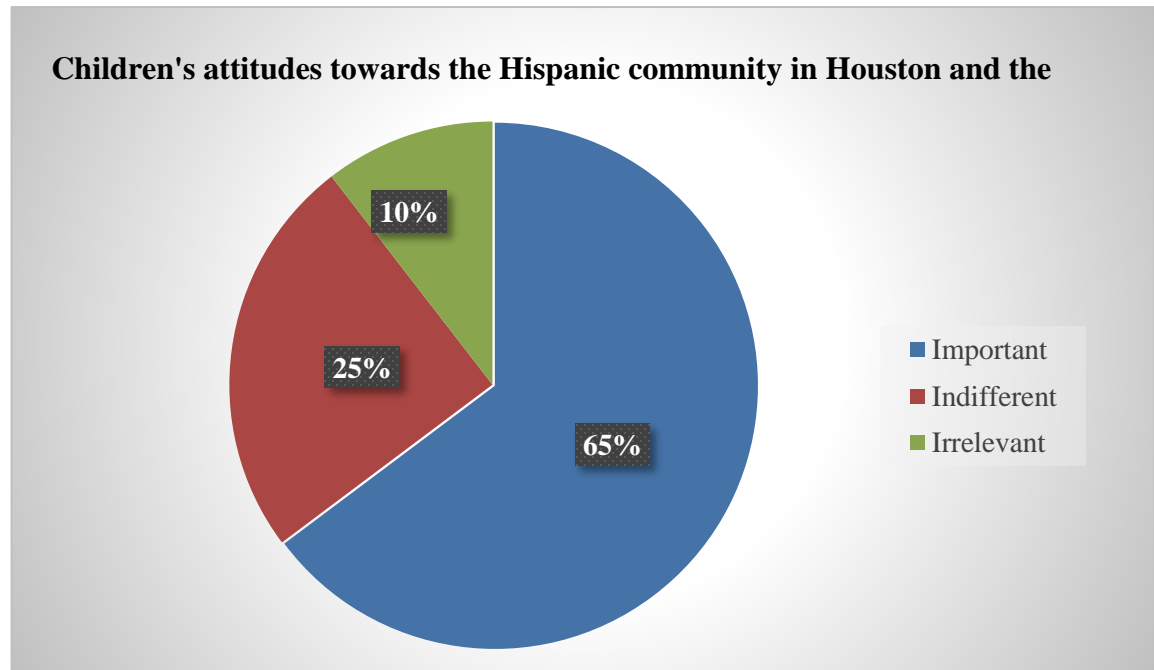
mexicanos, cubanos y otros, he aprendido a conocer mejor mi cultura y respetar las otras porque estoy en contacto con ellas y eso me enriquece.

As Oscar revealed, the varied Hispanic community enriched their own understanding of their native culture and contributed to respect and tolerance of others. Other parents stated that it was interesting to discover about different types of food, dances and other expressions of art from the Spanish speaking countries all in one city. Some believed that Hispanics have always been a vital work force for the country, and they were perceived themselves as hardworking doing all the labor that other ethnic groups did not want to do.

On the other hand, 9% of the parents (7 parents) were indifferent about the Hispanic community. They commented that their family did not have a lot of contact with Hispanics. Juan (47) indicated: “no nos relacionamos con latinos en la ciudad, casi siempre estamos en contacto con gringos o con gente de otros países, no lo necesitamos realmente.” There were 6 % of the parents (5 parents) who claimed that the presence of the Hispanic community was irrelevant. Lina (41) stated: “pos si quisiera estar con gente latina mejor me hubiera quedado en mi país donde hay muchos más... No me molestan los latinos pero si vine aquí fue a hablar inglés y ser parte de este país.” Lina explained that her desire to come to the country was to assimilate to the new culture because she could have continued relating to her own culture in her native country.

The same question was asked the children and the outcomes are revealed in Figure 14:

Figure 14. Children's attitudes towards the Hispanic community in Houston and its suburbs



Based on the results in Figure 14, the children also had a positive perception about the Hispanic community in Houston and the suburbs. However, there was a slight difference in the results. As presented in Figure 14, a 65% of the children (68 participants) considered important their presence. These participants believed that the Hispanic community was relevant in the area because they could speak Spanish and learn more about their ethnic background. Enrique (15) commented: “me siento cómodo con la comunidad aunque a veces me da como nervios por no querer decir algo mal...por lo menos me gusta ir a los festivales de diferentes países y aprender más.” Most of the

children enjoyed to have the Hispanic community because it helped them not only to enrich their cultural background but also to be tolerant about others. Josefa (20) indicated:

...para mi es importante porque uno aprende de otros países que hablan español porque hablando con otros nos damos cuenta en las cosas en común y las diferencias...es bueno porque uno soporta al otro...además nosotros como hispanos tenemos que estar unidos.

There was a 25 % of them (26 participants) who were indifferent about it and a 10% (11 participants) considered irrelevant the Hispanic population in the area. Most of them argued that they barely related with Hispanic people in the area or they did not do it at all.

In this portion of the study was seen that almost all of the participants had a positive perception of the Hispanic community. According to the results in the figures, more parents believed that this ethnic population was relevant in the area than their children. Most of the subjects believed that it was relevant because it would enrich the USA with their traditions and customs.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

The main goal of this study was to identify some of the families' attitudes towards the heritage language and its speakers and how these attitudes can affect Spanish language acquisition. Finding ways to help the maintenance of the heritage language and promoting bilingualism in the United States was one of the purposes of this research. To accomplish this purpose, a mixed qualitative and quantitative methodology was used with instruments such as the surveys and interviews. To start these final conclusions, a review of the principal findings will be presented in the following paragraphs.

7.1 Principal Findings of the Study

7.1.1 Parents' Policy and Planning at Home

When the parents' language planning and policies at home were examined, results showed that the majority of the families decided to transmit the heritage language at home but they used various policies and planning to transmit Spanish. There were 9 families who had a specific plan for their children to help them acquire the language in the house. In the group, seven chose the "one language and one parent approach" in which all the mothers spoke Spanish and the fathers English. Twenty one families only established the use of Spanish at home to maintain the language. On the other hand, there were three families who decided to just use the dominant language. These three families used only English because of the negatives experiences that parents encountered in their native country, and to avoid being marginalized. In addition, one family preferred to speak English only, since they had little contact with other Hispanic speakers. It was

surprising to find families who decided to stop transmitting Spanish, especially since parents are part of the first generation and they are all native speakers of the heritage language.

7.1.2 Family Members' Attitudes towards the Heritage Language

Similar to the results shown by studies such as Chung (2007), Martin (2009) and Hamamoto (2007), the majority of the parents had a positive attitude towards the heritage language and saw its learning as necessary. It is relevant to mention that although all the parents had different educational background, most of them supported the transmission of Spanish. They also reported their motivations behind those attitudes. Parents found Spanish important to conserve for the 6 following motivations: (1) To have better job opportunities in the job market, (2) To communicate with family and relatives, (3) To preserve the ethnic roots, (4) To travel to Hispanic countries, (5) To improve their brain development, and (6) To help others in the community. Most of the parents considered it necessary for their children to speak the language to be more successful professionally. They stated that the large Hispanic population living in the area was one of the principal motivations for maintaining Spanish.

Almost all the parents also stated that their children needed the language to communicate with them or with relatives that were inside and outside of the United States. As Barron-Hauwaert (2004) found, the parents in this study highlighted the role of the grandparents to encourage their children in the process. They reported that grandparents might devote a lot of time with the grandchildren doing several activities to stimulate a positive attitude. Parents also were interested in transmitting the language to share the traditions of their native country so their children identify with their family

ethnicity. They believed that it helped their children to be accepted and integrated in their ethnic communities.

Another reason to maintain the heritage language was to travel to Hispanic countries. Parents expressed that visiting their native countries was a way to be connected with their language and their culture. For over a third of the parents, to be bilingual would benefit their children by keeping their brain active and increasing their vocabulary. A surprising motivation was that several parents found Spanish as a tool to help others. Thirteen parents stated that they enjoyed using the language for altruist purposes.

On the other hand, the families' attitudes in two other discourse communities were discussed: the church and the school. For some parents, the church was the place to participate with people from a variety of Hispanic countries. This was the place to practice Spanish and to affirm their roots and community networks. Although a bilingual school seems to be the best option to support the acquisition of Spanish, most of the families sent their children to a monolingual one. They stated the following three motives. The first reason was to integrate their children into the dominant culture. Secondly, some parents had negative impressions of bilingual education in the area where they lived. Finally, a few preferred a monolingual program.

7.1.3 Comparing and Contrasting Family Members' Attitudes

When comparing and contrasting the parents' attitudes, in most of the cases, the mothers' positive attitudes towards the transmission of the language were more noticeable than the fathers'. Mothers were the ones spending more time at home with the children and they also had a more instructional and stricter role at home especially in the

use of the heritage language. In general, the mothers stayed at home when a new child was born taking care of him or her. Even though a few fathers were sharing the chores, the mothers were in charge of the majority of tasks at home. Most of the fathers spent time with their children at night or during the weekends when they were off from work. Parents reported that consistency was relevant to support their children in the language acquisition. Even though the transmission of Spanish seems simple, parents needed to look for ways to motivate their children to continue using it.

The changes in the children's attitudes were also presented according to their ages. For this purpose, the children were organized into 4 groups. In the first group (ages 1 to 6), all the subjects maintained a positive attitude because they spent most of their time at home with their parents. In addition, older siblings could also influence them in their learning. In general, during these years parents tended to acquire objects or bring artifacts from their native countries. In the second group (ages 7 to 11) children's interests seemed to change once they entered primary school because of a higher exposure to English. However, living in Hispanic areas and constantly travelling to Spanish speaking countries were ways for parents to encourage their children. In the third group (ages 12 to 18), taking classes in school, using new technological devices and watching programs translated in the two languages were ways to get the children involved in the acquisition. They also stated that the positive image of the Hispanic community in the United States was a trigger in their interest in learning the language. In the fourth group (ages 18 to 25), most of the subjects did not use Spanish as often because they no longer lived with their parents or spent most of their time with Anglo

speakers. Several also indicated the importance of speaking the heritage language in their jobs.

7.1.4 Colombian and Mexican Families' Comparison and Contrast

Findings from the analysis showed that most of the Colombian and Mexican parents' favored the transmission of Spanish and maintained loyalty towards their roots and native country. They also would like their children to master the two languages (English and Spanish) and to be fully bilingual. All of them recognized that their children were required to learn English well to be successful in the USA.

In the second part of this section, the families confirmed the valued of the extended family. However, Mexican families had more relatives than the Colombian families to support and motivate the maintenance of Spanish. The participants who did not have any extended family tended to find other ways to mitigate the lack of them such as by using internet to be in constant contact with the extended families or relating with other Hispanic people in the area. In the final part of this section, the Colombian families tended to use more internet than Mexican ones. The most popular media for the Mexican families was television. On the other hand, Colombian families preferred to watch television in the dominant language because they found it more helpful and the content more interesting. The less popular medium was the radio. They explained that instead of listening to the radio in Spanish, they favored other activities or they preferred listening to the radio in English.

7.1.5 Family Members' Attitudes towards Spanish and the Hispanic Community

This section was divided in three parts. In the first one, the families gave their impressions of the Spanish spoken in Houston and its suburbs. Compared with the Spanish dialect spoken in their native countries, 27% of the parents had a bad perception of the Houstonian Spanish dialect and 35% of them believed Hispanic people spoke a mediocre Spanish. They argued that the Spanish spoken in the city is mixed with English and some of them dislike the accent from other Hispanic communities. Although several children had a negative perception too, the percentages were lower than the ones from their parents; 17% of them believed that the population speaks the heritage language incorrectly and 30% who thought they speak a mediocre Spanish. Parents and children also had a positive perception of the language spoken in the area. The reasons that they offered were that people in their home countries speak it as well as they do it in Houston. Some of the children stated that the Houstonian dialect is correct because it is the one they know.

In the second part, the family members were asked for the best dialect of all the Hispanic countries. Most of them found their own ethnic dialect as the best stating that it was the one that they knew the most. Colombian parents had a more prescriptive attitude towards Spanish. Other dialects selected were the one from Spain (for origins and history), Peru (for an article), and Costa Rica (because of the similarity with their ethnic dialect). A few children argued that Houston had the best Spanish dialect for the plurality of Hispanic cultures living in the city. Some of them did not answer because they were not sure of the response.

In the third part, the perceptions of the participants towards the Hispanic community living in Houston and the suburbs was presented. For the majority of the parents (85%), its presence was relevant because it helped to maintain their identity and their roots. In addition, several found that the community offered opportunities to learn about the culture, food and traditions of other Spanish speaking countries. Although most the children also thought that the Hispanic community was important, the percentage was lower compared with the one from their parents. Some of them like to be a part of the community because they can learn more about their ethnic background and practice Spanish. In contrast, there were members of the family who found the Hispanic population indifferent or irrelevant. Several indicated that they wanted to adapt to the dominant culture easily so they preferred to relate with Anglo speakers. Others did not really have contact with Hispanics in the area where they lived because they want to immerse in the dominant culture.

7.2 Suggestions Derived from this Research

To help in the acquisition of the heritage language, it is relevant to focus in changing the negative attitudes related to the language and the culture and turn them into positive ones. As shown in this study, there are attitudes that can be harmful for the motivation of the transmission of Spanish and other minority languages in the United States. They can come from the family, friends, coworkers, or the other places the individual is in contact with.

The identity plays an essential role in the desire of the children to continue acquiring Spanish. Guardado (2002) stated that for several of the participants of her study Spanish represented history, music, affect, and more. All of these aspects of the language

have to be taught and transmitted to have children motivated and involved. Children feeling comfortable and satisfied of their ethnic culture will be more interested in acquiring Spanish and its culture. For this reason, parents are advised to recognize their children interests and hobbies to encourage them in the learning process.

One positive aspect is people being appreciative of the language and Hispanic culture and respecting the difference of others. However, the dominant language is indispensable to live in the society so it is not only necessary to transmit the heritage language but also support bilingualism (Gibbons and Ramirez, 2004). The parents are the principal promoters of the heritage language transmission at home so they are the ones who must generate the best opportunities for their children to acquire the languages. As some of the parents mentioned in the study, consistency is needed to continuously speak the minority language at home and to explore its use in various discourse communities such as the church and the school.

As reported, the lack of maintenance can bring consequences such as conflicts with members of older generations, rejection from their own ethnic group, lack of identity and separation from extended family (Kouritzin, 1997; Fishman, 1996; Baez, 2002; Cho, 2000). To avoid this situation, it is crucial to create courses or conferences in which the parents and the community learn about the positive side of protecting the cultural and linguistic background of the individuals. For this purpose, the results provided in this study can offer ideas to implement ways to help families in their decisions about the path to follow. Parents are often offered with ill- founded –advise and lack of instructions to raise their children to be bilingual (Chung 2007). These courses are needed for the parents to make better choices at the moment of guiding their children in

their language development and acquisition. These classes should offer parents several strategies to motivate children in the process. In addition, they can inform the participants about the resources and institutions that are available in Houston that support the language.

As presented in this research, the parents are not the only ones who should receive this type of education. The community should also be informed of the positive impact of the language maintenance and the consequences of its loss. Even though all the people should participate in this process, it is vital that the members of the Hispanic community are involved because they are principal beneficiaries in the maintenance of their ethnic language and culture. The implementation of these educational programs will generate a better environment for the transmission of Spanish in Houston and its suburbs. They will contribute to a better understanding of the advantages of its transmission and to comprehend the misleading perceptions that the society have towards bilingualism. These programs should also focus on the differences among the Hispanic countries. As Bill (2005) indicated and as shown in this study, there are negative attitudes among heterogeneous Hispanic communities in the USA. It is imperative to educate the community so people can have a better understanding of the various dialects and cultures of the various Spanish speaking countries and value the rich culture of each one. This type of lectures will provide opportunities to avoid linguistic prejudice and discrimination.

On the other hand, one of the limitations in the research for Spanish for heritage speakers in the classroom is the separation from the studies created for Spanish language maintenance and shift (Beaudrie & Fairclough, 2012). Examples such as the one

presented in this dissertation are relevant to contribute in the design of new curriculums and activities that can be developed in the classes and enrich the learning environment in educational settings and other domains.

It is also necessary to support institutions that can help transmit the heritage language such as universities or schools. These academic institutions offer speakers ways to participate in several cultural activities: *El Día de los Muertos* or *El Día de los Reyes*. In addition, it is also relevant to establish more programs for Spanish as a Heritage language in schools, colleges, and universities in Houston and in the United States to work together to protect the heritage languages.

7.3 Recommendations for Future Research

The relevance of the family in the transmission of the heritage language is clear, nevertheless there is not a lot of research using a mixed methodology using qualitative and quantitative methods. Although the quantitative methods have provided a lot of information about attitudes, it is also necessary to include more qualitative methods to comprehend this topic deeply.

The research on Spanish in the USA has been developed mainly towards three groups: Mexicans, Cubans and Puerto Ricans. As the Hispanic population in the United States continues growing in a variety of nationalities, doing research about Hispanic from different backgrounds such as Bolivians, Chileans or Peruvians would be needed to find different perspectives. This type of research will provide a more plural voice to the Hispanic communities that are hardly heard in the research developed in the United States. It would be interesting to present a similar study to this one but offering a plurality

of nationalities to discover how the attitudes of different Spanish speakers change according to their particular experiences. Comparisons among speakers of different heritage languages also can offer ideas of how attitudes of various cultures towards the leaning of the minority language vary. This can also provide strategies used by families of different backgrounds for the transmission of the language.

There is also a need to study the family from different perspectives. As the parents are a great influence in the acquisition of the heritage language, it is desirable to analyze them in a deeper way. From my point of view, it is pertinent to elaborate more projects in which longitudinal methods are used. This type of studies would be appropriate to see the process of acquisition of the language and the changes of attitudes of the different members of the family in a better way. The mothers' position in the family has been explored more than the fathers'. For this reason, I consider that it would be appropriate to elaborate more studies in which the fathers' role in the acquisition of the heritage language is considered. Besides, the role of various institutions such as the church, libraries, and school should be analyzed for their importance in supporting the family in motivating the conservation of Spanish.

Appendices

Appendix 1

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

PROJECT TITLE: HISPANIC FAMILIES' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THEIR
HERITAGE

LANGUAGE IN HOUSTON AND ITS SUBURBS

You are being invited to participate in a research project conducted by Edgar Vargas from the Hispanic Studies Department at the University of Houston. This project is part of a dissertation and it is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Manuel Gutiérrez.

NON-PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

Taking part in the research project is voluntary and you may refuse to take part or withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also refuse to answer any research-related questions that make you uncomfortable.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study is designed to investigate the Hispanic families' attitudes towards Spanish in the United States. This study will last 2 years but the families will just participate the first year while the researcher is collecting the data.

PROCEDURES

You will be one of approximately 120 subjects to be asked to participate in this project. You will be asked to complete a survey and have an interview in two occasions. First,

you will be asked to complete a survey. After one or two months, you will be interviewed alone for 30 minutes or one hour. The family will be contacted by e-mail for a second interview after three or four months. The second time, the family will be interviewed for one hour or one two hours in which you will participate. The interviews will be recorded; in case one of the members of the family does not feel comfortable to be recorded, the researcher will take notes instead of recording. The total time commitment for you is 3 hours.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of your participation in this project. The name of all the families will be changed using a different name that is not related to the families. The real name of the participants will be known only for the researcher. Confidentiality will be maintained within legal limits.

RISKS/DISCOMFORTS

You will complete a survey and participate in two interviews and the questions will be related to the learning of the heritage language. There won't be any risks in this research and if you feel uncomfortable answering any question, you can discontinue answering at any moment.

BENEFITS

While you and your children will not directly benefit from this study, their participation may help investigators better understand the attitudes of the families towards Spanish in the USA and the reasons why some families decide to maintain the heritage language or shift to English.

ALTERNATIVES

Participation in this project is voluntary and the only alternative to this project is non-participation.

PUBLICATION STATEMENT

The results of this study may be published in scientific journals, professional publications, or educational presentations; however, no individual subject will be identified.

AGREEMENT FOR THE USE OF AUDIO TAPES

If you consent to take part in this study, please indicate whether you agree to be audio recorded during the study by checking the appropriate box below. If you agree, please also indicate whether the audio tape can be used for publication/presentations.

- ☐ I agree to be audio taped during the interview.
 - ☐ I agree that the audio tape(s) can be used in publication/presentations.
 - ☐ I do not agree that the audio tape(s) can be used in publication/presentations.
- ☐ I do not agree to be audio taped during the interview.
 - ☐ I agree to participate but I choose not to be audio taped.

SUBJECT RIGHTS

1. I understand that informed consent is required of all persons participating in this project.

2. I have been told that I may refuse to participate or to stop my participation in this project at any time before or during the project. I may also refuse to answer any question.
3. Any risks and/or discomforts have been explained to me, as have any potential benefits.
4. I understand the protections in place to safeguard any personally identifiable information related to my participation.
5. I understand that, if I have any questions, I may contact Edgar Vargas at the University of Houston. I may also contact Dr. Manuel Gutiérrez, faculty sponsor, at (713) 743-3007.
6. ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING MY RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT MAY BE ADDRESSED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (713-743-9204).

SIGNATURES

I have read (or have had read to me) the contents of this consent form and have been encouraged to ask questions. I have received answers to my questions to my satisfaction. I give my consent to participate in this study, and have been provided with a copy of this form for my records and in case I have questions as the research progresses.

Study Subject (print name): _____

Signature of Study Subject: _____

Date: _____

I have read this form to the subject and/or the subject has read this form. An explanation of the research was provided and questions from the subject were solicited and answered to the subject's satisfaction. In my judgment, the subject has demonstrated comprehension of the information.

Principal Investigator (print name and title): _____

Signature of Principal Investigator: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 2

ADULT CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH (SPANISH VERSION)

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

CONSENTIMIENTO PARA PARTICIPAR EN INVESTIGACIÓN

TÍTULO DEL PROYECTO: LA ACTITUD DE FAMILIAS HISPANAS HACIA LA LENGUA DE HERENCIA EN HOUSTON Y EN LAS AFUERAS DE LA CIUDAD

Usted está invitado a participar en un proyecto de investigación dirigido por Edgar Vargas del Departamento de Estudios Hispanos en la Universidad de Houston. Este proyecto es parte de una disertación y es supervisado por el Dr. Manuel Gutiérrez.

DECLARACIÓN DE NO PARTICIPACIÓN

Su participación es voluntaria y usted o sus hijos pueden rehusarse a participar o salirse en cualquier momento sin ninguna penalidad o pérdida de los beneficios a los que sus usted tiene derecho. Usted puede negarse a responder cualquier pregunta que pueda ser incomoda.

PROPÓSITO DEL ESTUDIO

Este estudio está diseñado para investigar las actitudes de las familias hispanas hacia el español en los Estados Unidos. Esta investigación tardará en elaborarse dos años pero las familias solo participarán el primer año durante la recolección de los datos.

PROCEDIMIENTOS

Usted será uno de aproximadamente 120 participantes a quienes se les pedirá su participación en este proyecto, completará una encuesta y será entrevistado en dos ocasiones. Primero, usted completará una encuesta. Después de uno o dos meses, usted será entrevistado(a) de treinta minutos a una hora. La familia será contactada por correo electrónico después de tres o cuatro meses para acordar una fecha para entrevistarlos nuevamente. La segunda vez, la familia será entrevistada por una hora o dos horas en la que usted participará. Las entrevistas se grabarán; en el caso que uno de los miembros de la familia no se sienta cómodo al ser grabado, el investigador escribirá lo que usted diga en lugar de grabar. El compromiso total de usted en este proyecto es de 3 horas.

CONFIDENCIALIDAD

Se hará todo esfuerzo para mantener la confidencialidad de su participación en este proyecto. Cada nombre de los participantes será modificado por otro nombre que no está relacionado a su familia. Los nombres reales de los participantes solo serán conocidos por el investigador principal. La confidencialidad se mantendrá dentro de los límites legales.

RIESGOS/MALESTAR

Usted completará una encuesta y participará en dos entrevistas y las preguntas girarán en torno al aprendizaje de la lengua de herencia. No habrá ningún riesgo en este estudio y si usted se siente incómodo respondiendo cualquier pregunta, usted puede dejar de responder en cualquier momento.

BENEFICIOS

A pesar de que usted y sus hijos no se beneficiarán directamente de este estudio, su participación puede ayudar a investigadores para entender mejor las actitudes de las familias hacia el español en los Estados Unidos y las causas por las cuales algunas familias deciden mantener la lengua de herencia o cambian a inglés.

ALTERNATIVAS

La participación en este proyecto es voluntaria y la única alternativa para este proyecto es no formar parte en este estudio.

DECLARACIÓN DE PUBLICACIÓN

Los resultados de este estudio pueden ser publicados en revistas profesionales o científicas. Estos también pueden ser usados para propósitos educativos o presentaciones profesionales. Sin embargo, ningún individuo involucrado será identificado.

ACUERDO PARA EL USO DE GRABACIÓN DE AUDIO

Si usted acepta formar parte en este estudio, por favor indique si está de acuerdo en ser grabado durante este colocando una X al leer las frases a continuación. Si usted está de acuerdo indique si el audio puede ser usado en publicaciones/presentaciones.

Estoy de acuerdo a ser grabado durante la entrevista.

- ☐ Estoy de acuerdo que el audio grabado pueda ser usado en publicaciones/presentaciones.

- ☐ No estoy de acuerdo que el audio grabado pueda ser usado en publicaciones/ presentaciones.

No estoy de acuerdo a ser grabado durante la entrevista.

- ☐ Estoy de acuerdo en participar pero no quiero ser grabado en audio.

LOS DERECHOS DEL PARTICIPANTE

1. Entiendo que el consentimiento informado es requerido por todas las personas participando en este proyecto.
2. Se me ha dicho que puedo rehusarme a participar o parar mi participación en este proyecto en cualquier momento antes o durante el proyecto. Puedo también rehusarme a responder cualquier pregunta.
3. Se me ha explicado de cualquier riesgo y/o malestar y cualquier beneficio.
4. Entiendo las maneras como el investigador guardará cualquier información personal identificable relacionada con mi participación.
5. Comprendo que si tengo cualquier pregunta, puedo contactar a Edgar Vargas en la Universidad de Houston. Yo puedo también contactar a Dr. Manuel Gutiérrez, profesor encargado al (713) 743-3007.
6. CUALQUIER PREGUNDA CON RESPECTO A MIS DERECHOS COMO PARTICIPANTE DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN PUEDEN SER DIRIGIDA AL COMITÉ PARA LA PROTECCIÓN DE LOS PARTICIPANTES EN LA UNIVERSIDAD DE HOUSTON (713-743-9204).

FIRMAS

He leído (o se me han leído) los contenidos de este consentimiento y he sido animado a hacer preguntas. He recibido respuestas a mis preguntas con satisfacción. Doy mi consentimiento para participar en este estudio y se me ha dado una copia de este consentimiento para mí en caso de que tenga preguntas cuando la investigación progrese.

Participante en el estudio (Nombre completo): _____

Firma del participante: _____

Fecha: _____

He leído este consentimiento al participante y/o el participante lo ha leído. Se ha explicado la investigación y se ha pedido y respondido preguntas para la satisfacción del participante. Para mi juicio, el participante ha demostrado comprensión de la información.

Investigador principal (nombre completo): _____

Firma del investigador principal: _____

Fecha: _____

Appendix 3

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH
PARENTAL PERMISSION

PROJECT TITLE: HISPANIC FAMILIES' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THEIR
HERITAGE

LANGUAGE IN HOUSTON AND ITS SUBURBS

Your children are being invited to participate in a research project conducted by Edgar Vargas from the Hispanic Studies Department at the University of Houston. This project is part of a dissertation and it is being conducted under the supervision of Doctor Manuel Gutiérrez.

1. NON-PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

Your children's participation is voluntary and you or your children may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which your child is otherwise entitled. Your children may also refuse to answer any question.

2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study is designed to investigate the Hispanic families' attitudes towards Spanish in the United States. This study will last 2 years but the families will just participate the first year while the researcher is collecting the data.

3. PROCEDURES

Your children will be _____ of approximately 120 subjects to be asked to participate in this project and they will be interview in two occasions. The first time, your children will

be interviewed for 30 minutes or one hour. The family will be contacted by e-mail for a second interview after three or four months to set a date for a new interview. The second time, the family will be interviewed for one hour or two hours in which your children will participate. The interviews will be recorded; in case one of the members of the family does not feel comfortable to be recorded, the researcher will take notes instead of recording. The total time commitment for each one of your children is 3 hours.

4. CONFIDENTIALITY

Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of your children's participation in this project. The name of all the families will be changed using different name that are not related to the families. The real name of the participants will be known only for the researcher. Confidentiality will be maintained within legal limits.

5. RISKS/DISCOMFORTS

You children will participate in two interviews and the questions will be related to the learning of the heritage language. There won't be any risks in this research and if they feel uncomfortable answering any question, he/she can discontinue answering at any moment.

6. BENEFITS

While your children will not directly benefit from this study, their participation may help investigators better understand the attitudes of the families towards Spanish in the USA and the reasons why some families decide to maintain the heritage language or shift to English.

7. ALTERNATIVES

Participation in this project is voluntary and the only alternative to this project is non-participation.

8. PUBLICATION STATEMENT

The results of this study may be published in professional and/or scientific journals. It may also be used for educational purposes or for professional presentations. However, no individual subject will be identified.

AGREEMENT FOR THE USE OF AUDIO TAPES

If you consent to take part in this study, please indicate whether you agree to allow your children to be audio recorded during the study by checking the appropriate boxes below.

If you agree, please also indicate whether the audio tape can be used for publication/presentations.

1. I agree to allow my children to be audio taped during the interview.
 - a. I agree that the audio tape(s) can be used in publication/presentations.
 - b. I do not agree that the audio tape(s) can be used in publication/presentations.
2. I do not agree to be audio taped during the interview.
 - a. I agree to allow my children to participate but I choose not to be audio taped.

SUBJECT RIGHTS

- I understand that parental consent is required of all persons under the age of 18 participating in this project. I understand that my child will also be asked to agree to participate.
- All procedures have been explained to me and I have been provided an opportunity to ask any questions I might have regarding my children's participation.
- Any risks and/or discomforts have been explained to me.
- Any benefits have been explained to me.
- I understand that, if I have any questions, I may contact Edgar Vargas at the University of Houston. I may also contact Manuel Gutiérrez, faculty sponsor, at (713) 743-3007.
- I have been told that my children or I may refuse to participate or to stop their participation in this project at any time before or during the project. My children may also refuse to answer any question.

ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING MY CHILD'S RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT MAY BE ADDRESSED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (713-743-9204).

- All information that is obtained in connection with this project and that can be identified with my children will remain confidential as far as possible within legal limits. Information gained from this study that can be identified with my children may be released to no one other than the principal investigator and his faculty sponsor. The results may be published in scientific journals,

professional publications, or educational presentations without identifying my
children with their real names.

CHILDREN'S NAMES:

I agree to allow my children to participate in this research project: YES____ NO_____

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____

Appendix 4

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH- PARENTAL PERMISSION

(SPANISH VERSION)

UNIVERSIDAD DE HOUSTON

CONSENTIMIENTO PARA PARTICIPAR EN INVESTIGACIÓN

PERMISO DE LOS PADRES

TÍTULO DEL PROYECTO: LA ACTITUD DE FAMILIAS HISPANAS HACIA LA LENGUA DE HERENCIA EN HOUSTON Y EN LAS AFUERAS DE LA CIUDAD

Se invita a sus hijos a participar en un proyecto de investigación dirigido por Edgar Vargas del Departamento de Estudios Hispanos en la Universidad de Houston. Este proyecto es parte de una disertación y es supervisado por el Dr. Manuel Gutiérrez.

1. DECLARACION DE NO PARTICIPACIÓN

La participación de sus hijos es voluntaria y usted o ellos pueden rehusarse a participar o salirse en cualquier momento sin ninguna penalidad o pérdida de beneficios a los que sus hijos tienen derecho. Sus hijos pueden negarse a responder cualquier pregunta.

2. PROPÓSITO DEL ESTUDIO

Este estudio está diseñado para investigar las actitudes de las familias hispanas hacia el español en los Estados Unidos. Esta investigación tardará en elaborarse dos años pero las familias solo participarán el primer año durante la recolección de los datos.

3. PROCEDIMIENTOS

Sus hijos serán _____ de aproximadamente 120 participantes a quienes se les pedirá su participación en este proyecto y será entrevistados en dos ocasiones. La primera vez, sus hijos serán entrevistados de treinta minutos a una hora. La familia será contactada por correo electrónico después de tres o cuatro meses. La segunda vez, la familia será entrevistada por una hora o dos horas en la que sus hijos participarán. Las entrevistas se grabarán; en el caso que uno de los miembros de la familia no se siente cómodo al ser grabado, el investigador escribirá lo que sus hijos digan en lugar de grabar. El compromiso total de cada uno de sus hijos en este proyecto es de 3 horas.

4. CONFIDENCIALIDAD

Se hará todo esfuerzo para mantener la confidencialidad de la participación de sus hijos en este proyecto. Cada nombre de participante será modificado por otro nombre que no está relacionado a su familia. Los nombres reales de los participantes solo serán conocidos por el investigador principal. La confidencialidad será mantenida dentro de los límites legales.

5. RIESGOS/MALESTAR

Sus hijos participarán en dos entrevistas y las preguntas girarán en torno al aprendizaje de la lengua de herencia. No habrá ningún riesgo en este estudio y si sus hijos se sienten incómodos respondiendo cualquier pregunta, ellos pueden dejar de responder en cualquier momento.

6. BENEFICIOS

A pesar de que sus hijos no se beneficiarán directamente de este estudio, su participación puede ayudar a investigadores para entender mejor las actitudes de las familias hacia el español en los Estados Unidos y las causas por las cuales algunas familias deciden mantener la lengua de herencia o cambian a inglés.

7. ALTERNATIVAS

La participación en este proyecto es voluntaria y la única alternativa para este proyecto es no formar parte en este estudio.

8. DECLARACIÓN DE PUBLICACIÓN

Los resultados de este estudio pueden ser publicados en revistas profesionales o científicas. Estos también pueden ser usados para propósitos educativos o presentaciones profesionales. Sin embargo, ningún individuo involucrado será identificado.

ACUERDO PARA EL USO DE GRABACIÓN DE AUDIO

Si usted acepta formar parte en este estudio, por favor indique si está de acuerdo que sus hijos sean grabados durante este estudio colocando una X al leer las frases a continuación. Si usted está de acuerdo indique si el audio puede ser usado en publicaciones/presentaciones.

3. Estoy de acuerdo que mis hijos sean grabados durante la entrevista.
 - a. Estoy de acuerdo que el audio grabado pueda ser usado en publicaciones/presentaciones.

- b. No estoy de acuerdo que el audio grabado pueda ser usado en publicaciones/ presentaciones.
- 4. No estoy de acuerdo a ser grabado durante la entrevista.
 - a. ____ Estoy de acuerdo que mis hijos participen pero no quiero sean grabados en audio.

LOS DERECHOS DEL PARTICIPANTE

1. Entiendo que el consentimiento de los padres se requiere para toda persona menor de 18 años para poder participar en este proyecto. Comprendo que a mi hijo(a) se le preguntará si está de acuerdo en participar.
2. Se me han explicado todos los procedimientos y se me ha brindado una oportunidad para preguntar sobre alguna duda que pueda tener en referencia a la participación de mis hijos.
3. Se me ha explicado sobre cualquier riesgo o incomodidad.
4. Se me ha explicado cualquier beneficio que puedo recibir de este estudio.
5. Comprendo que si tengo cualquier pregunta, puedo contactar a Edgar Vargas en la Universidad de Houston. Puedo también contactar a Dr. Manuel Gutiérrez, profesor encargado, al (713) 743-3007.
6. Se me ha dicho que mis hijos o yo podemos rehusarnos a participar o parar su participación en este proyecto en cualquier momento o durante el proyecto. Mis hijos pueden también rehusarse a responder cualquier pregunta.
7. CUALQUIER PREGUNTA CON RESPECTO A LOS DERECHOS DE MIS HIJOS COMO PARTICIPANTE DE LA INVESTIGACIÓN PUEDEN SER

DIRIGIDA AL COMITÉ PARA LA PROTECCIÓN DE LOS PARTICIPANTES
EN LA UNIVERSIDAD DE HOUSTON (713-743-9204).

8. Toda la información obtenida en relación con este proyecto y que puede ser identificada con mis hijos se mantendrá confidencial hasta donde sea posible dentro de los límites legales. La información conseguida en este estudio que puede estar relacionada con mis hijos puede ser conocida solamente por el investigador principal y el profesor encargado. Los resultados pueden ser publicados por revistas científicas, publicaciones profesionales o presentaciones sin identificar a mis hijos con su nombre real.

NOMBRES DE MIS HIJOS:

Estoy de acuerdo en que mis hijos participen en este proyecto: SI_____ NO_____

Firma del padre:_____

Appendix 5

ASSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY (CHILDREN'S CONSENT)

PROJECT TITLE: HISPANIC FAMILIES' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THEIR
HERITAGE

LANGUAGE IN HOUSTON AND ITS SUBURBS

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Edgar Vargas a PhD student at the University of Houston.

You can say no if you do not want to participate in this study. Adults cannot make you participate in this study if you do not want to. If you agree to participate in the study now, but change your mind about it later, you can stop being in the study, and no one will be mad at you.

1. WHAT IS RESEARCH?

Research is a way to learn information about something. Researchers study different subjects the way you study English or math as a subject in school.

There are many reasons people choose to be in a research study. Sometimes people want to help researchers learn about ways to help people or make programs better.

You should understand why you would say yes to be a research participant. Take the time you need to decide if you want to be in this study.

2. WHY ARE WE DOING THIS RESEARCH?

In our research we want to learn about the Hispanic families' attitudes towards their heritage language. I will determine with this information the factors that help to the maintenance or shift of Spanish in the city. It will be good to know this information to offer some strategies to parents to protect the heritage language.

3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THE STUDY

In this study, I will visit your family two times. The first time, you will be recorded alone for 30 to 1 hour and in the second time you will be recorded with all your family for 1 or 2 hours. All the questions will be related to the topic of the research and the total time commitment will be maximum 3 hours.

4. COULD GOOD THINGS HAPPEN TO ME FROM BEING IN THIS STUDY?

This research can help other families to help their children to be bilingual in Spanish and English. Parents will understand better how their kids feel about their background.

5. COULD BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO ME FROM BEING IN THIS STUDY?

I am going to have an interview with you and your family about some personal information. It can be possible that you can feel uncomfortable answering some of the questions related with Spanish and the way you learn it. However, if you do not feel happy replying, you are free to discontinue the interview.

6. DO I HAVE OTHER CHOICES?

You can choose not to participate in this study, and you can decide you no longer want to be in the study at any time. You may choose to not answer any question that you are not comfortable with. If you choose not to participate at any time, you will not be penalized.

7. WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions or worries about the research, you can ask Edgar Vargas at (713) 743-3007 before, during, or after your completion of the survey. If you wish to talk to someone else or have questions about your rights as a participant, call the University of Houston Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects at (713) 743-9204.

8. AGREEMENT FOR THE USE OF AUDIO TAPES

If you consent to take part in this study, please indicate whether you agree to be audio recorded during the study by checking the appropriate box below. If you agree, please also indicate whether the audio tape can be used for publication/presentations.

- ☐ I agree to be audio taped during the interview.
 - ☐ I agree that the audio tape(s) can be used in publication/presentations.
 - ☐ I do not agree that the audio tape(s) can be used in publication/presentations.
 - ☐ I do not agree to be audio taped during the interview.
 - ☐ I agree to participate but I choose not to be audio taped.
-

DOCUMENTATION OF PARTICIPANT'S ASSENT

I agree to participate in this study called: _____.

Signature of minor participant: _____

Date: _____

ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING MY RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT MAY BE ADDRESSED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (713-743-9204). ALL RESEARCH PROJECTS THAT ARE CARRIED OUT BY INVESTIGATORS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON ARE GOVERNED BY REQUIREMENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.

Appendix 6

Survey about Parents' Attitudes towards Spanish Learning

Fill in the spaces or choose the correct answer.

Part A. Demographic information

Full name _____

Age _____ Your husband's/wife's age is _____

Birthplace _____ Your husband's/wife's birthplace is _____

Native language _____ Your husband's/wife's native language is _____

Other languages you speak _____

Other languages your husband/wife speak _____

I belong to the a) first b) second c) third Hispanic generation.

Other _____ I am not Hispanic, I am _____

My husband/wife belongs to the a) first b) second c) third Hispanic
generation.

Other _____ My husband/wife is not Hispanic, he/she is _____

I have _____ children.

My children were born in _____

They were: a) born in the United States and have lived in this country all their live

b) born in another country where? _____

They have lived in the USA for: a) 1 to 4 years b) 4 to 8 years c) 8 to 12 years

d) Other (explain) _____

I have been in the United States for: a) less than 2 years b) 2 to 4 years

c) 5 to 7 years d) 8 to 10 years e) 11 or more f) NA (I was born in the USA)

My husband/wife has been in the United States for: a) less than 2 years b) 2 to 4 years

c) 5 to 7 years d) 8 to 10 years e) 11 or more f) NA (He/she was born in the USA)

2. Education

Choose the most appropriate answer among the options or complete any information:

1). I have finished:

a) primary school b) high school c) college/university d) master's degree

e) PhD f) other explain_____

My husband/wife has finished:

a) primary school b) high school c) college/university d) master's degree

e) PhD f) other explain_____

2) My level in Spanish is a) primary school level

b) High school level c) University level other_____

3) My husband's/ wife's level in Spanish is a) primary school level

b) High school level c) University level other_____

3. Use of Spanish with the family

Select the most appropriate answer among the options:

1. I speak with my children in: a) English b) Spanish c) more English than Spanish

d) more Spanish than English e) other, explain _____

2. My husband/wife speaks with my children in: a) English b) Spanish c) more
English than Spanish

d) more Spanish than English e) other, explain _____

3. My children speak with me in: a) English b) Spanish c) more English than Spanish

d) more Spanish than English e) other, explain _____

4. My children speak with my husband/wife in: a) English b) Spanish c) more English than Spanish

d) more Spanish than English e) other, explain _____

5. My children speak with their relatives in: a) English b) Spanish c) more English than Spanish

d) more Spanish than English e) other, explain _____

6. My family a) socialize with other Hispanics b) doesn't socialize with other Hispanic

Why? _____

7. My children learn Spanish in the school: a) yes b) no

Why? _____

8. Spanish is a part of our religious practices a) yes b) no c) I am not a believer

Any comment about it _____

My family: a) prays in Spanish b) talks to other in the church using that language

c) reads the bible in Spanish

Mention any other religious activity in Spanish_____

9. You stimulate your children to speak Spanish a) yes b) no

Why? How? _____

10. You travel with your children to Hispanic countries for them to speak Spanish

a) yes where? _____ b) no why? _____

11. I prefer that my children speak a) only English b) more English than Spanish

c) more Spanish than English d) the two languages why? _____

12. My family is in contact with Spanish using

a) internet 1) always 2) occasionally 3) never

b) television 1) always 2) occasionally 3) never

c) radio 1) always 2) occasionally 3) never

13. I want my children to learn Spanish to (you can select more than one option):

- a) have more job opportunities b) socialize with their relatives
- c) know better their Hispanic heritage d) appreciate their Hispanic heritage
- e) I don't want them to learn it

other reasons _____

14. I don't want my children to learn Spanish (don't answer this question if you want your children to learn it):

- a) I don't see the need to speak that language in the United States
- b) I want them to learn English c) I don't have money to pay for Spanish clases for them

other reasons _____

15. I want that my children speak Spanish:

- a) correctly b) very well c) more or less d) I am not interested

explain your answer _____

16. Learning Spanish can cause negative consequences in my children's learning in the school

a) I agree b) I don't totally agree c) I disagree

explain your answer _____

17. I believe there is no need to speak Spanish in the United States.

a) I agree b) I don't totally agree c) I disagree

explain your answer _____

18. My children's learning of Spanish is very important to me.

a) I agree b) I don't totally agree c) I disagree

explain your answer _____

19. I want my kids to be bilingual in English and Spanish:

a) I agree b) I don't totally agree c) I disagree

explain your answer _____

20. I think Hispanic people in the United States speak Spanish:

a) Correctly b) Very well c) More or less d) badly

Why do you think that happens? _____

21. For my family and me the Hispanic community in the United States is:

a) important b) irrelevant c) other _____ Why? _____

22) The country where Spanish is spoken the best way is _____

Why? _____

Thank you very much for completing this survey that helps to the better understanding of the parents attitudes towards the learning of the Heritage Language.

Appendix 7

Survey in Spanish

Cuestionario sobre las actitudes de los padres hacia el aprendizaje del español

Responder en los espacios o escoger la respuesta adecuada.

Parte A. Información demográfica

Nombre completo _____

Edad _____ la edad de mi esposo(a) _____

Lugar de _____ lugar de nacimiento
nacimiento _____ de mi esposo(a) _____

Lengua nativa _____ la lengua nativa de mi esposo(a) _____

Otras lenguas que habla _____

Otras lenguas que habla su esposo (a) _____

Pertenezco a la a) primera b) segunda c) tercera generación hispana.

Otra _____ no soy hispano, soy _____

Mi esposo(a) pertenece a la a) primera b) segunda c) tercera generación hispana.

Otra _____ mi esposo (a) no es hispano, es _____

Tengo _____ hijos

Mis hijos nacieron en _____

Ellos han: a) vivido en Estados Unidos toda su vida

b) nacido en otro país ¿dónde? _____

Ellos han estado en los Estados Unidos por: a) 1 a 4 años b) 4 a 8 años c) 8 a 12 años

d) otro especifique _____

2) He estado en los Estados Unidos por: a) menos de 2 años b) 2 a 4 años

c) 5 a 7 años d) 8 a 10 años e) 11 o más años f) NA (nací en los Estados Unidos)

Mi esposo(a) ha estado en los Estados Unidos por: a) menos de 2 años b) 2 a 4 años

c) 5 a 7 años d) 8 a 10 años e) 11 o más años f) NA (nació los Estados Unidos)2.

Antecedentes educativos

Escoja la respuesta más apropiada dentro de las opciones:

1). Los estudios terminados que tengo son:

a) escuela primaria b) escuela secundaria c) estudios universitarios d) maestría

e) doctorado f) otros especifique _____

Los estudios terminados que tiene mi esposo(a) son:

a) escuela primaria b) escuela secundaria c) estudios universitarios d) maestría

e) doctorado f) otros especifique _____

2) El nivel de español que tengo es equivalente a: a) nivel elemental

b) nivel de la preparatoria c) nivel universitario otro _____

El nivel de español de mi esposo (a) es equivalente a: a) nivel elemental

b) nivel de la preparatoria c) nivel universitario otro _____

3. Uso del español en la familia

Seleccione la respuesta más apropiada dentro de las opciones

1. Hablo con mis hijos en: a) inglés b) español c) más en inglés que en español

d) más en español que en inglés e) otro, especifique _____

2. Mi esposa habla con mis hijos en: a) inglés b) español c) más en inglés que en

español d) más en español que en inglés e) otro, especifique _____

3. Mis hijos hablan conmigo: a) inglés b) español c) más en inglés que en español

d) más en español que en inglés e) otro, especifique _____

4. Mis hijos hablan con mi esposo(a): a) inglés b) español c) más en inglés que en español d) más en español que en inglés e) otro, especifique _____

5. Mis hijos hablan con sus familiares en: a) inglés b) español c) más en inglés que en español d) más en español que en inglés e) otro, especifique _____

6. Mi familia: a. socializa con otros hispanos b. no socializa con otros hispanos

¿por qué? _____

7. Mis hijos aprenden español en la escuela a). sí b) no

¿por qué? _____

8. El español forma parte de mis prácticas religiosas a) sí b) no c) no soy creyente

algún comentario al respecto _____

Mi familia: a) reza en español b) habla con otros feligreses en esta lengua c) lee la biblia en español d) mencione si realiza otra actividad religiosa en español _____

9. Usted estimula a sus hijos a hablar español a) sí b) no

¿por qué? _____

¿cómo? _____

10. Usted viaja con sus hijos a países hispanos para que sus hijos hablen español

a) sí ¿dónde? _____ b) no

¿por qué? _____

11. Prefiero que mis hijos hablen a) solo inglés b) más en español que en inglés

c) más en inglés que en español d) ambos idiomas ¿por qué? _____

12. Mi familia está en contacto con el español a través de:

a) internet 1) siempre 2) ocasionalmente 3) nunca

b) la televisión 1) siempre 2) ocasionalmente 3) nunca

c) la radio 1) siempre 2) ocasionalmente 3) nunca

13. Quiero que mis hijos aprendan español para (puede seleccionar más de una opción):

a) tener más oportunidades de trabajo b) relacionarse con sus familiares

c) conocer mejor su herencia hispana d) apreciar la cultura hispana

e) no quiero que lo aprendan otras razones _____

14. No me importa si mis hijos aprenden español porque (no responda esta pregunta si quiere que sus hijos aprendan español):

a) no veo la necesidad de hablar esta lengua en Estados Unidos

b) quiero que aprendan bien inglés c) no tengo dinero para que estudie este lenguaje

otras razones _____

15. Espero que mis hijos sean capaces de hablar español

a) correctamente b) muy bien c) más o menos d) no me interesa

explique su respuesta _____

16. El aprender español puede traer consecuencias negativas en el aprendizaje de mis hijos en la escuela

a) estoy de acuerdo b) no totalmente de acuerdo c) estoy en desacuerdo

explique su respuesta _____

17. Pienso que no hay necesidad de hablar español en los Estados Unidos.

a) estoy de acuerdo b) no totalmente de acuerdo c) estoy en desacuerdo

explique su respuesta _____

18. El aprendizaje de español de mis hijos es muy importante para mí.

a) estoy de acuerdo b) no totalmente de acuerdo c) estoy en desacuerdo

explique su respuesta _____

19. Quiero que mis hijos sean bilingüe en inglés y español.

a) estoy de acuerdo b) no totalmente de acuerdo c) estoy en desacuerdo

explique su respuesta _____

20. Creo que la gente hispana en los Estados Unidos habla un español:

a) correctamente b) muy bien c) más o menos d) mal ¿por qué piensa eso? _____

21. Para mi familia y para mí, la comunidad hispana en los Estados Unidos es:

a) importante b) irrelevante c) otro _____ ¿por qué? _____

22) El país donde se habla el mejor español es _____

¿por qué? _____

Muchas gracias por completar esta encuesta que permite entender mejor las actitudes de los padres frente al aprendizaje de la lengua de herencia.

Appendix 8

Interview 1 (questions for the parents)

1. What is your nationality?
2. How old are you?
3. What is your educational level?
4. What languages do you speak?
5. When did you move to the United States?
6. Why did you move to the United States?
7. Can you describe your family? Where is your husband/wife from?
8. What activities does the family do together?
9. What languages do you speak at home? Who do you speak them with? Why?
10. Are you in contact with your relatives? Where are they now?
11. Do your relatives come to visit or do you travel to visit them? What languages do you speak with them?
12. Do you have close friends visiting the family? Where are they from? What do you do with them?
13. What places do your family visit in Houston (churches, museums, restaurants and others?)

14. Where have your children studied? Have they studied in bilingual or dual schools?
Why?

15. How important is for you to teach Spanish to your children? Why is this language relevant?

16. What advantages or disadvantages are there for your children if they learn Spanish?

17. How much would you like to invest for your children to speak Spanish?

18. How relevant is for you that your kids go to bilingual or dual schools?

19. What factors help or discourage your children's learning of Spanish?

20. Do you want your kids to be bilingual?

21. What do you think about the Spanish spoken by Hispanic people in the USA?

22. Is it important for your family and you the Hispanic community in Houston?

23. In what country do people speak the best Spanish?

24. Does your family use the following medium in Spanish? How do you use this medium?

1) Internet 2) Television 3) Radio

Interview 1 (questions for the children)

1. Where were you born?

2. How old are you?

3. Where do you go to school? Do you like it? Why?
4. What languages do you speak?
5. Have you always lived in Houston?
7. Can you describe your family?
8. What activities does the family do together?
9. What languages do you speak at home? Who do you speak them with? Why?
10. Are you in contact with your relatives? Where are they now?
11. Do your relatives come to visit or do you travel to visit them? What languages do you speak with them?
12. Who are you best friends? Where are they from? What do you do with them?
13. What places do your family visit in Houston (churches, museums, restaurants and others?)
14. Do you like to speak Spanish? Why?
15. What factors help or discourage you to learn of Spanish?
16. Do you have friends who speak Spanish?
17. Do you feel comfortable with the Hispanic community in the USA? Why?
18. In what country do people speak the best Spanish?
19. Do you use the following medium in Spanish? How do you use this medium?

1) Internet 2) Television 3) Radio

Interview 2. Family interview (Questions for the family)

1. How is a normal day with the family?
2. What places do you go together?
3. Are there any places where you speak only Spanish or English? Why?
4. What Hispanic or American holidays do you celebrate?
5. How do you celebrate them?
6. What do you think about the Hispanic population in Houston?
7. Why do you live in this area of the city?
8. Do you socialize with Hispanic families or from other nationalities frequently?
9. Where do you go on vacation? Why? ¿
10. Who are the closest people related to the family?
11. What do they do?
12. Is it relevant that your kids learn Spanish? Why?
13. Do you have activities in which all the family participates?
14. Is it useful for your children to be bilingual?
15. What channels of television do you see? What newspapers do you read?

Appendix 9

Interview 1 “Spanish version” (questions for the parents)

1. ¿Cuál es su nacionalidad?
2. ¿Cuántos años tienes?
3. ¿Cuál es su nivel de educación?
4. ¿Qué lenguas habla usted?
5. ¿Cuándo se mudó a los Estados Unidos?
6. ¿Por qué se mudó a los Estados Unidos?
7. ¿Puede describir a su familia? ¿De dónde es su esposo/a?
8. ¿Qué actividades hace toda la familia?
9. ¿Qué lenguas habla en la casa? ¿Con quién las hablan? ¿Por qué?
10. ¿Están en contacto con familiares? ¿Dónde están ellos ahora?
11. ¿Sus familiares vienen a visitarlos o usted viaja a visitarlos? ¿Qué lenguas usan con ellos?
12. ¿Tienes amigos cercanos visitando la familia? ¿De dónde son? ¿Qué hace con ellos?
13. ¿Qué lugares visita su familia en Houston? (Iglesias, museos, restaurantes y otros).
14. ¿Dónde ha estudiado sus hijos? ¿Han estudiado en escuelas bilingües o duales? ¿Por qué?

15. ¿Qué tan importante es para usted la enseñanza del español a sus hijos? ¿Por qué es relevante?

16. ¿Qué ventajas y desventajas tienen sus hijos si aprenden español??

17. ¿Cuánto usted invertiría para que sus hijos aprendieran español?

18. ¿Qué relevante es para usted que sus hijos vayan a una escuela bilingüe o dual?

19. ¿Qué factores ayudan o desalientan el aprendizaje de sus hijos con respecto al español?

20. ¿Quiere que sus hijos sean bilingües?

21. ¿Qué piensa del español hablado en los Estados Unidos?

22. ¿Es importante para usted y su familia la comunidad hispana en Houston?

23. ¿En qué país se habla el mejor español?

24. ¿Su familia usa el siguiente medio en español? ¿Cómo lo usan?

1) Internet 2) Televisión 3) Radio

Interview 1 (interview for the children)

1. ¿Dónde naciste?

2. ¿Cuánto años tienes?

3. ¿Adónde vas a la escuela? ¿Te gusta? ¿Por qué?

4. ¿Qué idiomas hablas?

5. ¿Siempre has vivido en Houston?
 7. ¿Puedes describir a tu familia?
 8. ¿Qué actividades haces con tu familia?
 9. ¿Qué idiomas hablas en casa? ¿Con quién los hablas? ¿Por qué?
 10. ¿Estás en contacto con tus familiares? ¿Dónde están ellos ahora?
 11. ¿Tus familiares vienen a visitarte o vas a visitarlos? ¿Qué lenguas hablas con ellos?
 12. ¿Quiénes son tus mejores amigos? ¿De dónde son? ¿Qué haces con ellos?
 13. ¿Qué lugares tu familia visita en Houston? (Iglesias, museos, restaurants y otros)
 14. ¿Te gusta hablar español? ¿Por qué?
 15. ¿Qué factores te ayudan o te desaniman a hablar español?
 16. ¿Tienes amigos con los que hablas español?
 17. ¿Te sientes cómodo con la comunidad hispana en los Estados Unidos? ¿Por qué?
 18. ¿En qué país se habla el mejor español?
 19. ¿Usas el siguiente medio en español? ¿Cómo lo usas?
- 1) Internet 2) Televisión 3) Radio

Interview 2. Family interview “Spanish Version” (questions for the family)

1. ¿Cómo es un día normal con la familia?

2. ¿Qué lugares visitan juntos?
3. ¿Hay algunos lugares donde hablen solo español o inglés? ¿Por qué?
4. ¿Qué celebraciones hispanas o estadounidenses celebran?
5. ¿Cómo las celebran?
6. ¿Qué piensan de la comunidad hispana en Houston?
7. ¿Por qué viven en esta área de Houston?
8. ¿Socializan con familias hispanas o de otras nacionalidades frecuentemente?
9. ¿Adónde van de vacaciones? ¿Por qué?
10. ¿Quiénes son las personas más cercanas a la familia?
11. ¿Qué hacen?
12. ¿Es relevante que sus hijos aprendan español? ¿Por qué?
13. ¿Tienen actividades en las cuales toda la familia participa?
14. ¿Es útil que sus hijos sean bilingües?
15. ¿Qué canales de televisión ven ustedes? ¿Qué periódicos leen?

Appendix 10

Colombian Families

Parents	Children	
1) Ana, 39 Saúl, 42	Joel, 14	
2) Carmen, 35 Pedro, 41	Paola, 12	
3) María, 45 Juan, 47	José, 10 Joaquín, 19	
4) Dolores, 38 Camilo, 43	Sara, 6 Susana, 15	
5) Marco, 45 Juliana, 37	Carolina, 7 Peter, 13	
6) Maritza, 45 Rubén, 49	Nancy, 8 Charles, 22	
7) Danilo, 53 Mónica, 45	Allison, 12 Marta, 19	
8) Carmenza, 37 Lorenzo, 41	Kimberly, 5 Susana, 11	
9) Miranda, 34 Ronaldo, 39	Tomas, 8 Pepe, 15	
10) Marcia, 44 Víctor, 40	Víctor Jr, 6 Marisol, 22	
11) Tomasa, 43 Mario, 50	Erika, 7 Alex, 19	
12) Consuelo, 36 Freddy, 39	Freddy Jr, 2 Claudia, 13	
13) Camila, 39 Marcelo, 42	Carmelo, 4 Jhon., 20	
14) Patricia, 37 Horacio, 36	Kim, 3 Enrique, 15	Horacio Jr, 13
15) Rosario, 40 Fernando, 53	Gustavo, 9 Mercedes, 19	Carol, 11
16) Silvia, 39 Luis, 43	Laura, 4 Camila, 15	Jesús, 8
17) Valeria, 45 Oscar, 46	Paloma, 11 Guillermo, 20	Ninfa, 17
18) Julieta, 39 Pablo, 45	Lupita, 6 Constanza, 20	Marcelo, 9
19) María, 42 Hugo, 48	Ramiro, 9 Teresa, 15	Eduardo, 11 Silvina, 19
20) Gisela, 45 Mauricio, 50	Hernán, 11 Carlina, 18	Néstor, 14 Susan, 21

Mexican Families

Parents	Children	
1) Perla, 33 Gilberto, 31	Lucero, 8	
2) Constanza, 37 Julián, 42	Azucena, 3 Leandro, 12	
3) Nora, 46 Daniel, 43	Matías, 15 Mery, 19	
4) Helga, 36 Norberto, 38	Ricardo, 7 Ferdinand, 12	
5) Adriana, 39 Gabriel, 45	Delia, 10 Sonia, 17	
6) Damaris, 50 Francisco, 52	Fabio, 20 Cecilia, 22	
7) Xiomara, 34 Eliseo, 35	Israel, 11 Rosalba, 14	
8) Yaneth, 35 Josué, 38	Julio, 4 Doris, 16	
9) Lina, 41 Rodrigo, 43	Viviana, 10 Jenny, 19	Lorena, 16
10) Pepita, 31 Rodolfo, 35	Zulay, 4 Angélica, 12	Julián, 6
11) Celmira, 34 Antonio, 33	Tania, 4 Elvira, 13	Arturo, 6
12) Yolanda, 40 Elkin, 43	Miguel, 7 Julieta, 21	Javier, 13
13) Liz, 41 Jaime, 44	Felipe, 9 Erasmus, 20	Esmeralda, 11
14) Alejandra, 43 Federico, 48	Eugenio, 10 Federico Jr, 19	Álvaro, 12
15) Victoria, 45 Sabino, 48	Gabriela, 10 Josefa, 20	Fernanda, 12 Carmenza, 23
16) Úrsula, 47 Salvador, 53	Bernarda, 11 Ignacio, 21	Fabián, 19 Annie, 24
17) Verónica, 34 Edmundo, 36	Mabel, 4 Jacobo, 13	Jacinta, 6 Piedad, 15
18) Samanta, 42 Abelardo, 48	Isaac, 9 Jairo, 19	Cassandra, 11 Magdalena, 21
19) Melissa, 43 Fabricio, 51	Luis, 11 David, 20	Cesar, 19 Adam, 25
20) Vanessa, 40 Eric, 41	Jeremías, 6 Eva, 19	Heriberto, 12 Jacinto, 22

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