

LA ENTRE

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WE HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER OUR SUPERVISION BY CLAIRE ISABEL FERRARA ENTITLED "LA ENTRE" BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING, IN PART, REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ART IN NEW MEDIA PHOTOJOURNALISM.

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## **I. Abstract**

The multimedia story is a documentation of the life of a Hispanic, bilingual mother and child residing in the District of Columbia. The purpose was to visually capture the experience of a bilingual family and learn about where Spanish-English language barriers become apparent. The subjects for this project were enrolled at a local elementary school where I was employed. My discoveries revealed that despite palpable language barriers in various physical locations, the most distinct divide exists between mother and child. The multimedia story provides anthropological and visual evidence in support of the hypothesis that language development of bilingual individuals relies primarily on that which is spoken within the household.

## **II. Introduction**

According to the U.S. Census, by the year 2050, more than ten percent of the world population will speak Spanish as a dominant language. At the same time, the United States will become an entirely Spanish-speaking country. Thus, the bilingual population currently living in America will be the most advantageous leaders of our country.

After coming to this realization, educators and policy makers are now making advances to help bilingual individuals, more specifically those speaking Spanish, acquire the English language. Unfortunately, despite these efforts there are still large gaps that exist when deciding which specific techniques will advance these language skills. In regard to immigrant families and children, educational programs still lack the appropriate practices to fully develop two languages.

Immigrant families such as the Suarez family, shown in this piece, recognize the power behind language. They understand why their children need to become fluent in both English and Spanish. (See Fig. 1) Unfortunately, despite awareness and persistence, they face problems within the household and maintaining their native tongue. The unequal acquisition of language that takes place in the household is dependent on several factors and must be fully understood in the future from a cultural lens in order to make future advancements and continue to make bilingual families, such as the Suarez's, successful. (See Figs. 2-6)

## **III. Project Rationale**

*La Entre*, sprouted from of a conversation with my Italian, bilingual mother who faced several struggles as a child living between two languages. The struggles she mentioned sparked an inner-curiosity, which in turned developed into this short documentary piece.

The original purpose of the project was to use the camera as a learning tool in an attempt to create a visual story that paralleled the experiences faced by my mother. As time passed, I realized that the film also developed out of my personal experience working with bilingual children in the District of Columbia. The piece, although different from my original concept, turned into a matter-of-fact story about the universal experience one faces when living between two languages.

#### IV. Summary of Research

The research process for this project involved personal experience and the examination of academic work. In regard to practical experience, while working at a local elementary school with mostly bilingual children, I visually recorded interviews with teachers, administrators and parents who described their bilingual experience at home, in society and at school. During this hands-on research process, I was able to extract recurrent themes that each subject mentioned and capture each one when filming the Suarez family.

Additionally, in order to validate these bilingual experiences, I analyzed a variety of academic sources that supported the arguments of my subjects. For example, I utilized the website JSTOR.org, and other academic websites which publish high-end academic writings from various fields such as anthropology, economics and education.

Finally, in order to develop a visual repertoire, I watched several short documentary pieces by contemporary photojournalists on a topic of choice. These multimedia stories focused on a select few subjects and told their stories using film and audio clips. A majority of the time these pieces offered technical references, which sparked new ideas such as how to place the subject in the frame, how to include subtitles in the video, and etcetera. The culmination of these personal, academic and visual resources provided valuable references throughout the development of the project.

#### V. Professional Precedents and Goals

In regard to inspirations for this project, there were a select group multimedia stories devoted to a similar topic that I chose to reference. In the film world, there have been several movies focused on or referencing the topic of bilingualism. One documentary in particular was *Sound and Fury*, produced by Josh Aronson. The movie explores the life of a deaf child who is hard of hearing but offered the chance to conduct cochlear implant surgery, which would allow her to become monolingual. But, her family became furious and adamant that she carry out her life in the “deaf world,” refuting her right to receive hearing aides. The movie had a strong impact on my life and more importantly the purpose of this project.

Thus, my first objective was to create a multimedia video that portrayed the life of each member in the Suarez family. But, the ability to document each member of the family proved difficult and time consuming, thus I chose to only explore the lives of two people, Ana, the mother and Matias, the son. In addition, after discussing the topic more in-depth with bilingual parents, I realized that the most visible breakdown of languages within a bilingual family exists between parent and child. The piece, named *La Entre*, culminated in a five-minute documentation of Ana’s daily life and interaction with her son Matias. She addresses issues such as her experience with Spanish and English, how she teaches Matias to speak both languages, and why she believes it is important to learn both.

The second goal of the project was to create a website: [www.thebilingueproject.com](http://www.thebilingueproject.com), which includes individual portals that contain videos, writings and links related specifically to bilingualism. The video, *La Entre*, is also

included within a separate portal. In the future, the website will contain a select group of multimedia stories focused on the lives of other fellow bilingual students who are hard-of-hearing, mandarin speaking, and Hispanic.

The third goal was to create a trifold community engagement plan which raised money to purchase bilingual books for the Suarez's school, personally develop the school website, as well as create a small, afterschool program which taught children how to build websites. These projects are currently in the process of being established and will be fulfilled by June 2013.

Finally, in regard to professional goals, I plan to enroll in a dual-masters program in Childhood Education and Special Education, with a bilingual extension post-graduation, that will grant a NYS teaching certification. Once credentials are met, I look continue working in the field of education and continue to fight to help improve the lives of those similar to the Suarez family.

## **VI. Conclusion**

In conclusion, as the topic of immigration continues to be discussed, it is imperative that our country understands the importance of discussing language for immigrant families already living in the United States. By finding solutions for those who speak two languages, we will be able to create a clear pathway for these children to live up to their fullest potential and create a successful future.

“The Family: A New Force Behind Bilingualism”

By: Claire Ferrara

Washington, D.C. – The kitchen is empty. There is no one in sight.

A faint sound of video game noise floats softly from the living room faraway into the hallway.

“In the bathroom! In the baño!” exclaims Matias Suarez, a four-year-old Hispanic who fervently shakes his hand-held Nintendo.

While his Pikachu jumps over trees and escapes monsters in the bathroom, Matias has just realized that there is no way to prevent this beloved Pokémon character from an abrupt fatality.

The moment his plan fails, he swiftly turns left, away from his brother, hoping have another chance at the game.

“But, it’s my turn, Matias!” exclaims seven-year-old Sebastian, with amounts of frustration.

A few moments pass, along with two glances and a quick exchange of words, when both brothers come to an agreement.

Sebastian will play next and try to save Pikachu.

According to the US Census, in 2007 there were fifty million Spanish-speaking residents living in the United States. Several of these residents, similar to the Suarez family, were living in the District of Columbia.

These families are bilingual and most of whom have acquired English as a second language over the span of ten or more years.

A Peruvian immigrant in 2000, Miguel Suarez, Matias’ father arrived in the United States in search of financial opportunities. His friend of the time, Ana, interested in seeing the country decided to take a vacation and visit Miguel. After spending a few weeks together, both decided to remain in the country and get married.

Today, Miguel is the breadwinner and has been working in the restaurant business for over ten years. Ana, originally worked in an assisted living home, but after the birth of her two children decided to stay home and raise the children.

On one hand, you could say they are living the American dream. On the other hand, you could say they are still struggling.

Why you might ask?

Language.

Ana adamantly talks to her sons in Spanish on a daily basis, making sure that they acquire the necessary skills to converse with those who speak their native tongue. She also wants to keep a connection between her mother and her children. But, despite these efforts, the effects remain unpredictable.

“We speak Spanish at home. But, Sebastian and Matias will only speak English,” says Ana. “I tell Sebastian, please you talk to Matias in Spanish. But, he only talk to him in English.”

Their daily conversations, which usually consist of Ana or Miguel speaking to their sons in Spanish, usually result in Matias responding in English.

When asked why he speaks English, Matias responds, “Because Español only un poquito.” Ana translates, “He says, he speaks Spanish only a little bit. He loves English.”

In recent years, there have been various attempts across multiple disciplines to gain a deeper understanding of how bilingual children and families acquire two languages. Speech therapists have found that children fully attain a second language by the age of four, which is the same age as Matias.

Additionally, once these children enter school they will most likely lose their mother tongue. Having understood this information, educators and policy makers have been able to convince the United States government to invest in helping enhance the language skills of bilingual students.

In particular, the District of Columbia has seen a large bilingual community develop over the years. The District of Columbia Public School System (DCPS) has taken recognition of this mixture of languages and agreed to implement several initiatives that will advance educational opportunities.

One DCPS initiative is the implementation of the widely acclaimed International Baccalaureate (IB) school system. IB schools, which are small in number, provide students from multiple backgrounds and language to have a unique, English-immersion experience. In order to accommodate bilingual students who are struggling with the English language, they have employed numerous English as Second Language (ESL) teachers who provide one-on-one lessons with the children.

But, while documenting Matias’ experience and interviewing parents, the opportunity to speak English at school may be more of a problem than originally anticipated.

“It’s the school. More time in the school, speak only English, and coming here is a mistake,” exclaims Ana, when asked why Matias has trouble speaking Spanish at home.



Ana, is one of the many Spanish-speaking parents, determined to help her sons with their education and improve their bilingual skills. But, unless the parents are able to speak English and Spanish at home fluently, a language wall becomes invisibly constructed.

“Every time we have a meeting, parents talk about homework. They say, ‘we cannot help our children with homework because we do not understand [the language],’” exclaims America Calderon, Parent Organizer with the non-profit organization, Teaching for Change.

The organization works with local elementary schools in the District of Columbia, such as the school attended by Matias Suarez, bridging the gaps between teachers and parents.

America is extremely involved with the school and provides opportunities for parents like Ana, who are willing to improve their language skills. Ana enrolls in English classes and attends parent meetings in which she is sometimes shy to express her concerns. One of which is help with homework.

As standardized tests, such as the DC Comprehensive Assessment System (DC CAS), continue to be used to evaluate the success of schools across the district it is important that the issue of language be addressed.

“When you see the scores, you can see that all of the kids do very well in math. Why? Because you do not need language to explain math. An addition is an addition, a subtraction is a subtraction, in either language,” says Calderon.

When discussing the reading scores, Calderon mentions that students always score significantly lower in reading.

“According to statistics, in 2050, Latinos are going to be the largest number [of citizens in our population]. So, that means that Spanish is going to be one of the major languages spoken in the United States. That is why we need to [make sure to] push bilingualism with our kids,” suggests Calderon.

The hard-work attitude of bilingual parents, such as Ana Suarez, and her efforts to help their children provides the strong reason for improved efforts to help bilingual children.

One way to approach the topic may be to create a common language practice structure for bilingual families to use within the home that strengthens the native tongue and then assists in the acquisition of a second language, such as English. This, in turn, would help create successful outcomes for bilingual families and children in an academic environment and within the household.

“It is important for my sons to speak Spanish. It is important for their future, they will have better opportunities in the job, in society, [and] in the environment.” says Ana.

By improving language acquisition and understanding the lives of bilinguals, parents such as Ana will be able to watch this dream come true.

## VII. Appendices

### *Bibliography of Academic Sources:*

Caplan, Lincoln. "Colleges Value Diversity, but Will the Court?" *The New York Times* (New York, NY), October 6, 2012.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/07/opinion/sunday/colleges-value-diversity-but-will-the-court.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/07/opinion/sunday/colleges-value-diversity-but-will-the-court.html?_r=0)

Lincoln profiles a select few of profound private, liberal arts universities across the nation and pinpoints those that have taken extra steps to include minority students. The article provides valuable background information on the current status of minority students and their education, which is valuable when working with bilingual, immigrant subjects at the elementary level.

Commins, Nancy L. "Perceived and Actual Linguistic Competence: A Descriptive Study of Four Low Achieving Bilingual Students." *American Educational Research Association* 4 (1989): 443-472. Accessed November 4, 2012. doi: 116280.

The study conducted by Nancy Commins addresses the stereotype surrounding bilingual Hispanic students in today's education system. The outcome suggested that each student, with the same elementary education, developed various English language skills. Her suggestion is that most educators must look at the way in which the student access the English language in the classroom, which in regard to this project goes against the notion that the development of language skills relies on the situation at home.

Davey, Monica, "School Days Resume in Chicago as the Lessons from a Strike Are Assessed." *The New York Times* (Chicago, IN), September 19, 2012.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/20/us/chicago-strike-ends-and-schoolchildren-return-to-class.html>

In the article, Davey describes the new changes being implemented in the evaluation of teachers and schools, along with the frustrations that coincide. Being able to learn about these issues and the dialogue that is taking place across the country, will help develop new understandings of the current state of the education system and help figure out how to make a significant difference.

Hayes, Elisabeth. "Hispanic Adults and ESL Programs: Barriers to Participation." *Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc* 1 (1989): 47-63. Accessed November 4, 2012. doi: 3587507.

The purpose of Hayes' article is to understand why parents are unable to attend ESL classes. The study recognizes the importance of the language skills of parents and creates a study that allows them to input their reasons as to why the classes are difficult to attend. The largest wall faced by the parents was their schedule conflict, which was prevalent in my discussion with a subject about the walls that divide parents from their child's school.

Jimenez, Robert T. "Three Children, Two Languages, and Strategic Reading: Case Studies in Bilingual/Monolingual Reading." *American Educational Research Association* 1 (1995): 67-97. Accessed October 29, 2012. doi: 1163214.

The study, conducted by Jimenez, attempts to find new ways to teach bilingual students, especially those learning English as a second language, in a way that will promote academic success. Several suggestions focus on attracting the reader by comparing specific words in languages to their cultural practices. Bridging these gaps and allowing words to be culturally recognizable will allow the student to quickly attain new vocabulary in large masses.

Martinez, German. "Hispanic Culture and Worship: The Process of Inculturation." *U.S. Catholic Historian* 2 (1993): 79-91. Accessed November 4, 2012. doi: 25153979.

The topic of this paper, although tangent from my thesis topic, provides cultural implications, which are somewhat valuable. The author explores the liturgical enculturation of Hispanic religion across the United States, and suggests that the way in which these practices will exist peacefully is based on strengthening relationships. The communal aspect of Hispanic Catholics, explain why there might be issues involving parents at Thomson Elementary. The community does not yet feel the "solidarity" that is crucial to their religion, which is extremely important when discussing language acquisition.

Milroy, James. "Children Can't Speak or Write Properly Anymore," in *Language Myths*, edited by Laurie Bauer & Peter Trudgill (London: England, 1998), 58-65.

The entire book, *Language Myths*, is a compilation of essays written by various anthropologists focused on the topic of linguistics. The essay, significantly influential and applicable to my thesis project was called, 'Children Can't Speak or Write Properly Anymore.' It refuted the idea that due to the various languages in the younger generation, they are unable to speak "formalized" English, which was untrue and applicable to my thesis project.

Montero-Sieburth, Martha. "Immigration and Schooling: An Ethnohistorical Account of Policy and Family Perspectives in an Urban Community," in *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 22 (2009): 300-325. Accessed March 17, 2013. doi: 10.1525.

Anthropologists thrive on the use of relativity and drawing connections among people within specific cultures. The connections vary, and in this circumstance, Montero-Sieburth creates connections between the Jewish, Polish and Italian immigrant communities in a specific town in the early twentieth century with the Asian, South American and Caribbean immigrants of the late twentieth century. Being able to understand shifts in immigration and how that affects attitude towards education is a powerful tool for my project.

Pew Hispanic Center. "Characteristics of the 60 Largest Metropolitan Areas by Hispanic Population." Accessed May 8, 2013.

<http://www.pewhispanic.org/2012/09/19/characteristics-of-the-60-largest-metropolitan-areas-by-hispanic-population>.

The Pew Hispanic Center provides important facts about immigrant statistics, especially in the District of Columbia, which has the twelfth largest Hispanic metropolitan population in the country. The most popular Hispanic ethnicity group is the Salvadorans, which had increased over the decades due to the civil war taking place in their country. Being able to know the different types of Hispanic immigrants attending certain schools might help develop an approach to tightening the parental community.

The New York Times - Breaking News, World News & Multimedia. "As Hispanic Population Grows, the Education Gap May Grow, Too - NYTimes.com." Accessed May 8, 2013. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/07/us/as-hispanic-population-grows-the-education-gap-may-grow-too.html>.

Ross Ramsey discusses the need for a dialogue about the educational gaps and how the infrastructure of schools must undergo a drastic change. In regard to this project, understanding the low success rate of minority high school students provides an even more incentive to help these children develop a well-rounded attraction towards education, which will help them become successful in the long-run.

Stevenson, Harold W. "Beliefs and Achievement: A Study of Black, White, and Hispanic Children." *Society for Research in Child Development*. 2 (1990): 508-523. Accessed November 4, 2012. doi: 1131111.

By interviewing and researching the attitudes of Hispanic and African-American mothers and their responses to the outcome of their children's education, Stevenson suggests that the attitude of teachers towards the students as well as the attitude towards education directly affects the future of these students continuing their education. The article provides an interesting argument towards the outside influences on a minority student's education, which was taken into account when filming and interviewing for this project.

#### *Bibliography of Visual Sources:*

"American Universities Go Global - The New York Times > Education > Slide Show > Slide 1 of 17." *The New York Times - Breaking News, World News & Multimedia*. n.d. [http://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2008/02/01/education/20080204GLOB\\_index.html?ref=internationaleducation](http://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2008/02/01/education/20080204GLOB_index.html?ref=internationaleducation).

The photographs tell the story of American education centers across the world. In order to create a project on education, I wanted to see how other photojournalists had approached the subject. The photographs are basic, and reflective of their time, but provide some insight on how photographers in the past covered the issue, which seemed to be from a non-personal perspective.

"Luv Shtick by Lukas Augustin, Jillian Kitchener and JT Thomas." *MediaStorm*. n.d.  
<http://mediastorm.com/training/luv-shtick>.

The multimedia piece, "Luv Shtick," focuses on the life of Dani Luv, a well-known musician and comedian living in New York City. While the topic does not relate to my project there are several visual components that influenced my thesis project. For example, my project was lacking the ability to visually establish a sense of place, particularly in Washington, D.C and better understand the ways in which videographers such as Lukas Augustin, approach the idea of establishing a sense of place in a multimedia story.

Zeitlin, Benh. *Beasts of the Southern Wild*. 2012. 20th Century Fox, 2012. Film.

The Sundance Film, tells the story of Hushpuppy, a little girl living in the devastation left after Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Louisiana. After facing storm after storm, struggles with her father, and the outside world, she is forced to live in-between that which she only knows and her future. Ultimately, she comes to understand the power she has within and that which she can show to the entire universe. The movie not only offered a visual reference in regard to perspective and how to approach film, but it provided personal inspiration.

"A Thousand More by Kristina Budelis, Piotr Malecki and Jeff Rhode." *MediaStorm*. n.d.  
<http://mediastorm.com/training/a-thousand-more>.

The multimedia piece is the prime example of what I would like my story on the Suarez family to visual resemble. In regard to the goal of this project, I want to create something that touches people. Whether that by a simple comment made from Sebastian's parents, or just a simple gesture seen in the video, I want just one person to be touched by the Suarez's story, similar to that created by Budelis, Malecki and Rhode.

"A Hundred Different Ways by Chris Capozziello, Lauren Hermele and Peter Lundberg." *MediaStorm*. n.d. <http://mediastorm.com/training/a-hundred-different-ways>.

The multimedia piece, "A Hundred Different Ways," tells the story of Catherine Russell, an actress, playhouse director and established professional in the New York City area. The piece, although starkly different from my thesis project topic wise, strongly influenced the visual approach to my story.

"Six Years Gone - Video - The New York Times." *NYTimes.com - Video*. n.d.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/video/2013/01/12/us/100000001990681/six-years-gone.html>.

The five-minute multimedia piece tells the story of the Finken family, a wife and three daughters whose father and husband died while serving in Iraq in 2006. The combination of video and stills is a valuable example to look at and study in order to understand how to approach the making of my final thesis project.

Ewald, Wendy. *Secret Games: Collaborative Works with Children 1969-1999*. New York: Scalo Press. 2000.

The book, "Secret Games," by Wendy Ewald, is a physical documentation of Ewald's work with children of different culture backgrounds and the ability to tell the story of these children through images is an inspiration for this project.

"480 votes for CARE, Ripple Effect Images and Harbers Family Foundation."  
*MediaStorm*. n.d. <http://mediastorm.com/clients/480-votes-for-care>.

The multimedia story, 480 Votes for CARE, contains visual and technical elements, which directly influenced the creation of my thesis project. For example, the film focuses on the life of a Hispanic woman and is translated in English for the audience with subtitles. Similarly, my film includes the Spanish language. As a result of watching the film, I was able to understand how filmmakers and multimedia producers dealt with the inclusion of multiple languages within a visual project.

"Medicating Children - Video - The New York Times." *NYTimes.com - Video*. n.d.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/video/2010/09/01/business/1248068952581/medicating-kids.html?th&emc=th>.

The journalistic news piece focuses on the rapid distribution of medications to children attending a specific elementary school. The story focuses on the family affected, the school and other factors that attribute to this increase in the use of anti-psychotic drugs. Being able to analyze these videos, and see how stories similar to these, involving children, were told in the past tense.

"Tim Hetherington - Diary." *YouTube*. n.d.  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mdhqkNlic2g>.

The film, *Diary*, produced by Tim Hetherington looks at the mental state of photographers and soldiers in general, a constant interplay between the numerous worlds they have been exposed to over time. The creativity and use of sound is inspirational, as well as the unique thought taken into consideration when creating the movie.

"Remember These Days by Frederic Menou, Galen Clarke and Marian Liu."  
*MediaStorm*. n.d. <http://mediastorm.com/training/remember-these-days>.

The multimedia story, "Remember These Days," visually explores the life of Walter Backerman, one of a select few who have served as designated seltzer man in New York City. The piece, simple, straightforward, and extremely moving utilizes several matched-action shots as well as basic compositions that foster a moving piece which I attempted to carry out in my story.

"The Way We Get By | POV | PBS." *PBS: Public Broadcasting Service*. n.d.  
<http://www.pbs.org/pov/waywegetby/>.

The film, *The Way We Get By*, documents the lives of three Troop Greeters who serve coming and returning war veterans who arrive at Bangor Airport in Bangor, Maine. The filmmakers created a purist, more naturally shot piece that takes a few small characters with little footsteps and brings them and their stories to life through simple imagery.

Rankin, Tom. *Local Heroes Changing America*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, inc. 2000.

The book is culmination of community projects carried out by photographers across the country. The motivation and ability for these photographers to support these people with outstanding stories to make a difference in their community is what I strove to accomplish throughout this particular thesis project.

Sinclair, Stephanie & Dimmock, Jessica. *Too Young To Wed*. VII Photo Agency, United Nations Population Fund, 2010. <http://www.tooyoungtowed.org/index.html>

The video, *Too Young To Wed*, created by Stephanie Sinclair has become one of the most powerful creations of documentary and multimedia photography. The story, although intense and unrelated to my thesis project, had a large influence. Sinclair was able to tell a child's personal story, in a unique but simple way, which is key in the all-around purpose of my project. Her topic was child brides, a situation the girls were unable to escape, in a similar way language and children is almost similar. The video helped reveal how simple music, voiceover and imagery can create an eye-opening project. In addition, the follow through on the video, i.e. the creation of this new website sponsored by VII Photo Agency was extremely inspirational.

Aronson, Josh. *Sound and Fury*. 2000. New Video Group, Film.

In the movie, *Sound and Fury*, the videographer attempts to visually explore the topic of deaf culture through the experience of a deaf family on a daily basis. By using intensely emotional, and deep interviews in combination with visuals of their daily life, the Academy winning video is able to reach an understanding of the struggles faced by a deaf family. There is tension not only between the hearing world and the deaf world, but also those among the family. The video, although ten years old, provides a rare yet valuable example of work that directly influenced my thesis project.

"The Middle School Challenge - Video - The New York Times." *NYTimes.com - Video*. n.d. <http://www.nytimes.com/video/2007/03/12/nyregion/1194817103573/the-middle-school-challenge.html>.

The journalistic video focuses on the issue around the value of a child's education during the middle school years. By interviewing and focusing on one specific teacher, the filmmaker provides a personal, in-depth look at how important middle school teachers



are in shaping any child's future in education. The piece is an important source of issue related and visual information, showing past ways in which topics similar to my project have been portrayed in the news.

"Mugur Varzariu's Photos of Roma - NYTimes.com." *Lens Blog*. n.d.  
<http://lens.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/11/05/breaking-through-walls-of-bias/>.

Mugur's work on gypsies in Romania consists of still photographs, but seemed to make an attempt to use visuals to tell the story of these families. The context, composition and approach to his story were very intriguing. Moreover the ability for Mugur to make his images personal is something that I strove to exemplify in my thesis project.

Waselchuck, Lori. *Grace Before Dying*. Brooklyn: Umbridge Editions, 2011.

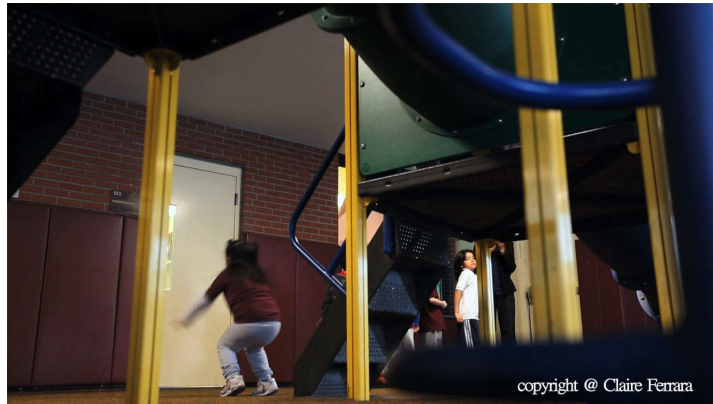
The book and project *Grace Before Dying*, tackles the Hospice program at Angola prison in Louisiana. As a visual story and community project, the way in which Lori Waselchuck used a topic to document and spread awareness about it to affect a greater area is remarkable. I look up to her work process, throwing around several ideas, and somehow struggling to make it happen. The determination and support she ended up receiving in the end is what I strove to accomplish in my project.

"The Home Front – Video – The New York Times." *NYTimes.com – Video*. n.d.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/world/battalion.html> - /NYT/Features/28.

As a visual journalist, Marcus Yam, created a multimedia piece to compliment James Dao and Catrin Einhorn's article on a family's experience during their father's deployment. The multimedia combines stills and video, along with personal interviews, to tell the story of two sons and the hardships faced while their father is gone. This piece is a reference point for what I strove to accomplish in my thesis project.

*List of Illustrations:*

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(Figure 1.) Matias waits for his teacher to line up the class after recess. The school is an International Baccalaureate School dedicated to an English-only immersive experience for the students who are mostly bilingual.

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(Figure 2.) Ana Suarez, and her son, Matias, attempt to converse in both English and Spanish, but Matias only discusses few topics fully in Spanish.

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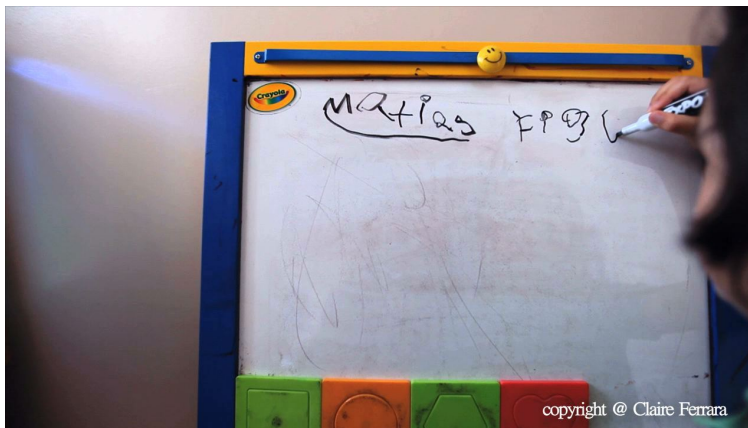
(Figure 3.) In the house, Ana speaks mostly Spanish, but when she is outside in the streets she has difficulty switching to English.

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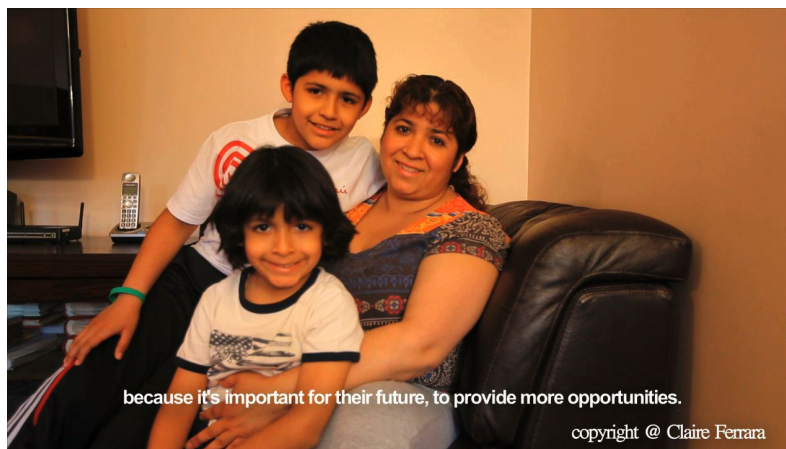
(Figure 4.) Ana's older son, Sebastian, constantly talks to his brother in English, which frustrates their parents. The ability to have a bilingual household is tainted, as are their efforts to help both children become fluent in these languages.

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(Figure 5.) Sebastian attempts to teach Matias how to spell his first and middle name in English.

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(Figure 6.) The relationship between Ana and her sons remains strong, despite the constant struggle to hold onto their native tongue.

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