

Independent Study: Spring 2024
Marhec Arreola
Life Interview Analyses

Proposal:

The paper “Because Pomegranate Doesn’t Wash Out” is an example of a style of writing where personal stories are used to convey information to a reader not just a story. The facts are accurate the information is true but the way it’s presented is through the experiences of the writer. It’s “hidden” in the story. I want to write in this style but apply it to linguistics.

The second paper titled “Life Interview” was written from a cultural anthropology perspective. It analyzes the interviewees experiences and focuses more on the cultural differences that the individual has experienced. Here, the story of an individual is being told and quotes are incorporated to guide the story, keep the reader intrigued, and engaged, and provide a deeper connection with them. Adding a human element to the story or information presented.

By pulling direct quotes from interviews and incorporating them into a story in a similar fashion for a paper written with a linguistic perspective in mind that will provide linguistic examples that will be analyzed and explained. In doing so it will bring up the opportunity to define and discuss different linguistic features and give information about linguistics while taking a more “creative approach.

Running theme for the collection of stories as a whole, is still undetermined. I am hoping that as the interviews occur and the stories progress a theme will become evident. Possible ideas are language contact, since our borderland is rich even in language, or building on the research and paper from last semester (fall 2023) “Uncertainty Expressed in the Language of Individuals from the U.S-Mexico Border Area” and look at uncertainty in language.

I would like to write 3 stories of undetermined length in addition to an introduction and conclusion that tie the stories together and discuss the purpose and importance of the work and why it was written. I can build on this paper and include it as part of the collection of stories or write three separate ones.

Introduction

Life interviews allow participants to share about their lives as they wish, leading the interviewer through the events they deem worthy of sharing. I had the opportunity to conduct several life interviews before taking on this project and my erroneous belief that people would suffer through an interview and be reluctant to share was proven wrong. On the contrary, people have much to share and a desire to do so. As humans we look for connection and thrive off community. We were made to communicate. There is a sense of importance that is gifted to an individual when someone sits with them and listens. Through a life interview both interviewer and participant are given the chance to travel through time and to learn about the past through the stories told. I took on new perspectives and put myself in the shoes of those I interviewed as they spoke, and I listened. As I sat across from each of them, I gained valuable insight into the past and even learned a thing or two from their experiences.

This project was first thought up as a creative way to study linguistics; analyzing every linguistic aspect and phenomenon I could find as I listened to the way my participants spoke. Spoken language is complex and beautiful. It only grows in complexity and beauty as one incorporates other aspects of communication. So, I also aimed to explore nonverbal communication, noting the speaker's hand gestures, postures, facial expressions, etc., as well as my own. I wanted to let readers into the world of linguistics in a subtle and hopefully engaging manner as I let them into the lives of strangers through storytelling. The world of linguistics is vast and intricate, and the topics so briefly touched here are deep and exhilaratingly interesting. I hope these stories are entertaining, but I also hope to spark interest in whoever reads them. I chose to interview women of different backgrounds; I tell their stories while highlighting some of the qualities I found most interesting in their language use. As I wrote, however, I found that there was more to talk about than just linguistics and communication, so I let the stories guide and teach me. I researched and included information on many other topics as well exploring culture, science, and history, etc.

The following papers are about two women, Ofelia Arreola and Marie Ooley whose lives have given them many interesting anecdotes to share with me and who so graciously agreed to let me share them with others. There was nothing specific that distinguished these women and made them more adept to be interviewed for this project. They were simply willing to be interviewed. They are, nonetheless, extraordinary women. I hope I've done their stories justice as I've written in hopes of celebrating simple life as it's moved by language, communication, and our endless experiences.

Analysis 1: Marie Ooley

A sporadic breeze played with the pages of my notebook as I sat outside of Grounded, a local coffee shop. With my thick winter jacket zipped up to my chin, I reviewed the interview script I'd prepared. As I look over the questions I'd be asking Marie I remembered when I met her and all that she and I had spoken about since I'd known her.

We met when she walked in the doors of Project in Motion, an old cotton gin repurposed as an aerial dance studio that allowed for dancers to climb on silks and hoops and dance in the air. The studio offered classes to the public. I was one of the instructors. The day of the first Introduction to Aerial class, she walked into the building with a wide smile and a look in her eye that told me she wasn't the least bit hesitant. She looked up at the high ceilings and I could tell she was ready to climb and flip in the air even though she'd never done anything like it before. She spoke in a lovely accent as she told me her name. Marie Ooley. As the months went by her fearlessness persisted and her enthusiasm for the aerial arts grew. She learned every skill I set out to teach the class. We all talked as we practiced, and she shared much about herself as the weeks went by. An interesting person to interview, I thought.

The street isn't busy, no people and very few cars. The sun is doing its best to warm me but the table and chair I'm sitting at are still cold from a long winter night and insist on letting me know that. I look around occasionally hoping not to miss Marie should she walk by while my attention is on my notes. Neither one of us had been to Grounded before but when I suggested it as a meeting spot she happily agreed. It's almost 9 o'clock and I see her approaching. I wave and begin to gather my things after I'm sure she's seen me. "Oh! hello!", she says to me as she reaches the table I'm at. "Aren't you cold?" she asks, looking me up and down. I found this strange since I was wearing more layers than she was. "I am!" I reply. "Aren't you?" I ask back.

“No, I don’t get cold. Not usually.”. We head inside together and catch up as we stand in line to order beverages before we sit down to begin the interview. It’d been at least five months since the session at Project in Motion ended and that was when we’d seen each other last.

The space is beautiful, we both agree. We pick a spot to sit and as we get settled, I thank her for agreeing to do the interview. I take a sip of my coffee and we begin to chat. We both quickly realize the music is quite loud. I ask her to excuse me as I get up to see if there is anything to be done about it.

“I’ll make sure I speak louder” she says after I sit down again a couple minutes later. “Yes and I, I asked them to turn it down so they, um they should.” I hesitate as I say this because I don’t believe it. The gentleman I spoke to about it had given me a dismissive answer that made me think he wouldn’t actually turn down the volume. We’d have to conduct the interview despite the noise the music presented. Communication is a system of messages that are encoded and decoded as they are sent from sender to receiver. The sender, or speaker, encodes a message and sends it to a receiver, or listener, who then decodes the message. The cycle repeats with each participant taking turns being sender and receiver, encoding and decoding messages. Noise in communication is anything that interferes with this process of communication; anything that hinders the effectiveness of the messages being sent or received. There are different types of noise, and each can present different challenges within a conversation. Four major types of noise are physiological, psychological, physical, and semantic. Physiological noise and psychological noise are both classified as types of internal noise, meaning that the barrier comes from within a participant. Being so tired or hungry that you can’t listen well enough to what is being said presents, for example, internal noise. Psychological noise includes wandering thoughts or

inability to pay attention. It is in your head and prevents you from concentrating. Physical noise is external, any disturbance from an outside source, like loud music in a coffee shop.

Interestingly however physical noise doesn't have to be auditory. A person walking late into a presentation is noise if your attention is turned to the new person in the room and no longer on the ongoing presentation. Semantic noise is when the receiver does not understand the meaning of the words due to lack of knowledge. Different dialects of the same primary language can be subject to semantic noise or the use of jargon someone may be unfamiliar with. Noise however, doesn't make communication impossible. Marie and I continue talking, both of us speaking louder, more attentive, and more with intention in our words.

As she answers my first question, I finally find out that her lovely accent is French. Marie Ooley was born in 1959 in Normandy France. Cold and humid is how she describes Normandy, recalling long winters where even their summer months experienced rather cold temperatures. "Um, it was um very cold and humid and to the point where we had to use a heater in August!" She grew up in a large family, hard working parents and seven kids. Her father worked in a furniture factory that manufactured Caribbean furniture. Her mother also worked; she sewed uniforms for a small factory. "And uh my mother she had to work even with so many kids because, because uh of a financial aspect" she tells me acknowledging how difficult it must have been for her but sharing also fond memories she still has of her mother. "She's very resourceful like I said she did the garden then she worked all day. She knitted our, our clo- you know like sweaters and then she would sew our clothes, so she was very very resourceful and extremely loving always I mean I remember her just knitting on the couch falling asleep after a long day you know just watching TV and she just, she'd fall sleep on the couch

every night.” Her mother instilled in her not only a drive for hard work but also a love of food and cooking.

Marie loves food. Simple foods. Especially vegetables. Once they moved out of the fourth-floor apartment they knew as home her mother grew a garden in the house they moved into. She was also an excellent cook using the freshest home grown ingredients. Marie learned everything she knows about cooking from watching her mother in the kitchen and cooking alongside her. “I was a little tiny girl,” she began to tell me about her love of cooking and when she started learning, “I would always like, you know, hang on to my mom's apron and she cooked all the time and uh, and I said ‘Please! Please, teach me!’”. She pleads to her mother to teach her how to cook and emphasizes her desire to learn from her by insisting. I sat across the table watching as she mimicked her younger self pretending to tug on her mother’s apron adding gestures to liven up her storytelling. Her mother would respond the same way every time a young Marie would ask. “‘Just watch.’ She would always say, ‘Just watch.’” Once Marie was old enough and after many years of watching she was finally allowed in the kitchen. “I got to cook every day with her and I grew the garden too so, it was just wonderful to be able to see, you know, go pick up some veggies and transform them in the kitchen with her.” She took what she learned from her mother even after she moved away. “Eventually I cooked alone.”, she tells me and I can see from her expression she is confident in all she learned from her mother.

Growing up, she had access to a good education and plenty of extracurriculars that opened the door to many opportunities. “In this town where I was um, where I grew up everything was free so we, we were pretty poor and even the movies, the anything recreational was free especially for children.” Even the transportation to and from the activities and events was

gratuitous. Based on what Marie told me the city had done this as a type of social experiment, a program that provided the public with many opportunities. “um that was really um a- amazing because even being- my parents couldn't afford take me any class- to pay for any classes so I, but I took clarinet.” She begins to tell me. Not only did she learn to play but she excelled at clarinet becoming a member of the Orchestra at twelve years old. I asked Marie where her love of music came from, and she smirked as she let me in on a secret. She had asthma as a child and thought playing an instrument would help her overcome it. “I had really bad asthma ‘cause it was so humid the weather and so, you know even in my little head of a kid I thought ‘if I play clarinet that will help my asthma” she laughs at her younger self for having such a thought only to quickly reveal that it was not as absurd as it sounded, “and it did! ‘Cause it was really bad asthma and by fifteen I had played for three years, no problem. It was gone. It never came back.” Music can have many health benefits. Playing woodwind instruments can be relaxing, reducing anxiety and stress. Playing instruments promotes general well-being and improves mental health. For asthma specifically there are also benefits. Woodwind instruments require the player to manipulate their breaths as they play. This strengthens the lungs as it is a form of breathing exercises similar to those doctors recommend for asthma patients.

As a part of the Orchestra Marie had the opportunity to work with talented musicians, their conductor was the youngest in all of France and took them to gigs all over Europe. Traveling with the Orchestra she acquired new experiences outside her hometown. “And I clearly remember I’ve never been to a restaurant because in France you don’t just go to a restaurant there.” She tells me this as she marks this sharp difference between France and the United States. “There was no fast food at all we didn't know what a hamburger was”. The Orchestra took them to elegant restaurants where they tried new foods and learned what it was

like to dine out. “So, when first time I went to the restaurant I remember folding my napkins my girlfriend is like “No no don't do that in the restaurant.” and she taught me everything so I learned manners”. When telling about this distinct memory we see as she restarts to add detail to her statement. “I re-” she starts about to utter the word “remember” she interrupts her speech and says “clearly remember”. By adding this word she emphasizes how impactful the memory was and how well she remembers it.

Even as she took every chance to participate and learn wonderful and unique skills she also worked. “Well, I, I just jumped from career to career to career. Job to jobs.” She started working at fourteen years old while still in France and has worked many different jobs since then. Her first job was in a shoe repair store where she started as a cashier then eventually took the opportunity to work in other areas and learn the skills. “I learned how to change like zippers for motorcycle jackets, for purses, and I learned to of course repair the shoes.” She worked in a factory on the assembly line and spent some time working for the city as a Recreational Leader. A rewarding job as she worked with kids that lived in the ghettos and provided them with activities and community. She worked so much even in her youth because she was saving. “I saved so much money. Back then that was a lot of money, \$3000 dollars.” The amount of money started turning heads and the bank began to question her family. “He thought I was dealing drugs!” she laughs recalling the bank manager’s concern. Her tone quickly changes from amused and laughing in between words at the absurdity of the accusation to a serious one as she tells me why she was so determined to save. She was motivated by a strong desire to leave. She did not want to live in Normandy, she didn’t want to live in France. “I’d always told my mom ‘I don’t want to stay in France’. The reason I didn’t want to stay in France was because um,” there is a slight pause and I can tell that she feels strongly about what she is about to share, “people were

not happy.”. To illustrate this claim she tells me about her brief time working at a factory on the assembly line. She was happy despite the monotony of the job “just on the factory just putting the top on all day long” so she sang while she worked. She had energy and tried to keep the work from becoming boring or tedious, so she sang softly to herself. “I got fired. I got fired for being happy on the line.”. She talks to me about the differences between the culture in France and here, highlighting that people in France have more opportunity to be happy yet refuse to be. “And that mentality I couldn’t take any more you know? I just couldn’t take it.” Tag questions are questions added to the end of statements that ask for agreement or reassurance. These are usually short and consist of an auxiliary verb and a pronoun (Yule, 2020). Tag questions are a common English construction and although they can mark uncertainty in language, they can also be used by a speaker out of habit or with the intention of receiving an answer. Marie adds this tag question to her speech asking to be understood in her frustration. “I didn’t, I didn’t feel like I belonged ... I don’t mean to complain about the French people, but I just always felt there was a mistake. God made a mistake to have me born from there, raise there (laughs) but that’s okay he corrected it. (laughs)”

At twenty-one she was ready to move to the United States. “Either New York or LA” she told me, sharing that she had connections in each city to help her with the move. “I had one friend in both cities. Each city.” She spoke to me about the culture shock that she felt as she arrived in Los Angeles. “It was right that weekend of Halloween and people were still wearing costumes, and it was fascinating to me.”

Her first job in the states was in the food industry. She worked at a luxurious café in Beverly Hills. “Casino Café!” she recalls the name with enthusiasm. “Anyway, first I was just serving food but then I said, “Hey I can cook!” so I worked in the back as a cook.” She is proud

to have taken what her mother taught her and applied in her new life. Sometime after she was receptionist and secretary for a real estate company and after growing bored of sitting in an office she became a waitress at a classy restaurant and eventually worked her way up to then manager. After that she worked in sales for an apparel store and later on, she became certified as a yoga instructor and taught yoga as well. After marrying her first husband they moved to Kansas where they lived for a while before moving to Oklahoma, where she worked as a nanny. “I became pregnant, so I became a nanny for a wealthy family for seven years, so I raised my son with three boys you know. It was nice. They treated me really well.”

She tells that while jumping from job to job and from city to city she went to school on and off picking up credits working towards a degree in Childhood Education. “So, I went to Santa Mocaco- Santa Monica college and then finished in um Oklahoma City.” She stutters and mispronounces “Santa Monica” interrupting her speech to correct the error. She restarts and puts a strong force of voice on the correct pronunciation of “Monica” to emphasize the correction and make herself clearly heard. Mistakes or errors in speech can be “real” or “covert”. While covert errors are only evident to the speaker and corrected before the listener becomes aware of them, the example above is a “real mistake” that comes from slip of the tongue causing the speaker to mispronounce a word the pronunciation of which is known and accessible to them. “Real mistakes” are heard by both speaker and listener. Correcting a “mistake” in speech is known as “repair”. (Gósy, 2019). It can look different depending on the speaker and context. Here Marie restarts interrupting her speech in self-initiated self-repair. She marks her correction and continues speaking sharing that after graduating she turned to teaching French as a private French tutor.

We talked about her many careers and one anecdote sent us back to when she was first getting acquainted with the United States. “I became legal by amnesty”. Marie Ooley came to the U.S on a tourist visa and became an American citizen when President Ronald Regan’s signed his 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act. That very year, Regan granted amnesty to all the people that, came in illegally. Nearly three million, according to NPR’s *A Reagan Legacy: Amnesty For Illegal Immigrants*. “I didn’t come illegally, but I was on the tourist visa working so, all the requirements was yet to work three weeks before December 31, 1981 to qualify and that’s exactly what I had! Three weeks before, because um it took me a long time to get a job in LA.”

The way she spoke English presented a little bit of a problem when she first arrived in the United States. “I was uh a speaker. A fluent speaker but I wasn’t as comfortable yet. And I had learned umm, British English, which is a little different and learned business, English.” Our conversation then turned to language as she shared with me about how she learned English. “I’ve been to England a lot. To study English. ‘Cause they would, like they would put us in families when we were middle school ... and so they put you in families, so you have to speak English. It’s good.” Learning English by being placed, through the school, with families in England allowed the children to be fully immersed in the language an excellent way to get real experience while learning a language.

From her two marriages she had two sons. From her first marriage a thirty-two-year-old son and a twenty-four-year-old from her current marriage. “And the youngest one is in um Austin Texas uh University, what do say for short? UT? I think it’s UT, University of Texas.” As defined by Finnegan in his 7th edition of *Language: Its Structure and Use*, acronyms are abbreviations formed by combining the initials of an expression into a pronounceable word.

“Scuba” or “radar” for example which stand for “self-contained underwater breathing apparatus” and “radio detection and ranging” respectively. An initialism is an acronym that is pronounced as individual letters. Examples include DNA (Deoxyribonucleic acid), USA (United States of America), NMSU (New Mexico State University), and UT (The University of Texas). These pronunciations voice the names of the letters. Both acronyms and initialisms are abbreviations of truncated words. Marie continues to talk about her son telling me how proud she is of him, as he’s finishing up law school. Then she tells me about her oldest son, who is more like her.

He moved to Germany and as Marie puts it, “And uh, he uh, never moved back. (laughs) I thought it was temporary. It’s like my mom she though it was temporary. (laughs)” He is adventurous and artist; a traveling artist known for his short films but who also paints, writes, and plays music. “He cooks really well too. I taught him.”. “You taught him?” I ask not in disbelief but happy and wanting to hear more about how she passed on what her mother had taught her. “Oh yeah.” She says as she goes on to praise her son’s cooking skills.

“Um, both of your kids are fluent in French?” I ask turning the conversation to language again. “No. Max, Maximilian is the oldest one. Christopher just fought me. He just didn’t want to learn.”. “He didn’t want to learn?” I ask, this time in disbelief. “He understands because I took him to my French classes. I took him, I mean we took our kids to France every year you know so, he understands it he just doesn’t speak it.” Learning a second language is rarely the same as acquiring our first one. Acquiring a language is the process of gradually developing our ability to use and understand a language through its practical use in real, natural, and communicative situations. Learning is a conscious process that requires the accumulation of knowledge through analysis of the features of a language in institutional settings (Yule 2020). As an adult is not as easy to pick up a new language regardless of the context one finds themselves

in. Age is a factor when it comes to learning multiple languages. During a certain period during childhood known as the critical period, the human brain is most absorbent. This period is before a child reaches puberty.

Marie tells me about how she has seen people struggle to learn French. “It is very very difficult. A lot of people give up. A lot of my friends they give up.” There are other obstacles that can arise as adults attempt to learn languages. Marie’s husband was unable to learn French. “He was, he was hard of hearing one ear and couldn’t pronounce ‘cause he couldn’t hear it well. That make sense.” Hearing is an important part of learning as one must listen to subtle differences in words and pronunciations as well as other paralinguistic aspects like pitch and intonation. Intonation conveys information like emotion, mood, but can also change the meaning of words and utterances. Certain languages are tonal languages meaning that they use pitch in language to distinguish lexical or grammatical meaning. Mandarin, Vietnamese, Thai for example are tonal languages. Even in ideal acquisition situations however few adults reach native like proficiency in the desired language (Yule 2020).

There are many reasons why we may speak the languages we do and many reasons for maintaining them. I’d only spoken to Marie in English and when I first asked Marie about French, she expressed to me quite simply and truthfully that the French language was the connection she had to family.

“And do you still speak French?”

“Yes.”

“Fluently?”

“Oh. Yeah. I have to speak to my family.”

She talks to me about her sibling both older and younger all of whom stayed in some part of Europe while she moved to the United States. And I have family all over. “I mean now I have Turkey, Greece, France, Germany, my older son lives in Germany, and I think there’s more, but I can’t remember right now. (laughs) Spain! Spain.” As she lists out places, she has temporarily called home when she visits family we see a phenomenon of uncertainty in language. She back tracks after having stated she couldn’t remember any others and incorporates additional information. We talked about traveling since it seemed like she really had traveled the world. Her favorite place out of all the ones she’s been to is France. “France. (laughs) that’s ironic. I like France without the French people. (laughs)”.

Before we conclude the interview, I ask two more questions. The first asked for a piece of advice she received in the past. “This too shall pass.” She laughs then repeats. “This too shall pass, no matter what it is.” Repeating verbal elements are frequent in natural talk (Sidtis and Wolf 2015). As she shares this advice with me, I notice that she uses a form of pragmatic repetition. Pragmatics is the study of the social use of language focusing on conversation. Repeating one’s own words can reiterate and emphasize a point. While repetition can be used to emphasize important points (Norrick 1987) repeating a co-participant’s words can serve distinct functions. “This too shall pass.” I say under my breath as I listen to her reflection on the statement. Pragmatic repetition in this case as I repeat what Marie has uttered serves as mutual affirmation. “Repetition of words and phrases between interlocutors serves a function of endorsing and validating each other.” (Sidtis and Wolf 2015).

Second, I ask her if there is anything else she’d like to add. “Umm.” She pauses as she is stringing together in her mind the words she is about to share. “Life is a, is a flash in the pan.”. She utters this idiom then pauses, lost in thought. Idioms are a group of words established by

usage as having a meaning not deducible from those of the individual words. This definition according to the Oxford dictionary. Oxford dictionary defines “a flash in the pan” as “a thing or person whose sudden but brief success is not repeated or repeatable.”. She laughs and continues “It’s true and you don’t realize it until you’re older. You know? So, appreciate every moment.”. “I definitely try too!” I tell her reflecting on my own life as she reminds me of how fleeting it is. “Good or bad,” she smiles empathetically, “everything’s a gift.”

Three short years Marie and her husband have been living here in Las Cruces. And she doesn’t think she’ll go anywhere else. She likes the culture and the weather and the people. She continues to travel and to learn anything and everything she can. Teaching herself about nutrition and alternative health and taking classes in unique arts like aerial dance and extreme sports like bungee jumping. Her sons visit her regularly and she is in contact with them year-round. She lost her mother in 2012 to cancer. The rest of her family is still in Europe, and she makes sure to visit every year if not more often.

I poured the rest of my Americano into a to-go cup and sealed the lid as Marie started gathering her things. She thanked me for the coffee and for a good interview as we walked out together. I stepped outside to the same chilly weather and put my jacket on as I walked back to my vehicle. The rhythmic sound of my steps on the sidewalk grew louder as Marie’s steps grew more distant. I quickened my pace and rushed home eager to begin writing.

Analysis 2: Ofelia Arreola

It is a nice neighborhood. The houses are large, the yards neat, and the cars impeccable as they stand parked in their respective driveways glistening under the morning sun. It was early, 7 o'clock on a Saturday, and I found myself ringing the doorbell to a house I'd been to hundreds of times. My grandmother opened the door and welcomed me into her home. It's very beautiful; everything is clean and in its place. My grandmother's house is always calm. It's always fresh and its doors and kitchen are always open. I take a second to notice the space and it feels different since today I'm here to interview her, asking question about her life. Interviewing her would be easy I thought, but as we walked in I realized I was nervous. Ofelia Arreola is a woman who spends most of her time reflecting and who knows and feels more than she lets on. Growing up I heard her tell brief anecdotes about her life. The stories she recounted and memories she recalled changed from year to year with new more interesting ones that seemed to be uncovered the older we became and the more we experienced in our own lives and shared with her. Our memories can fade or be buried only to be later uncovered with uncanny detail. The American Journal of Psychology published an article titled 'Individual Memories' where they share their findings on male vs. female memory in a plethora of contexts and subjects. An interesting conclusion they make is that females tend to have slightly higher memory capacity than males and remember more with visual, auditory, gustatory, and tactile details. (p. 236).

I specifically recalled something she had told my sisters and I about a time when she was in elementary school. It was typical of her to run barefoot to and from school and on days she didn't feel like going to school she would go out into the fields and catch snakes to sell in town and earn a little extra spending money. This was a bizarre story we never questioned and one that so vividly stands out to me when I think of my grandmother. ¹“*Tengo muchos recuerdos de mi*

vida poneso los cuento.” She would say. The way memories are stored in the brain can seem quite abstract and although research has studied memory from many different approaches and for many years, the magnitude of human memory capacity is still unknown. It seems that memories from our youth are most vibrant. Steven Zauderer from Cross River Therapy suggests that most of the memories adults recall are from when they were between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five. Zauderer calls this the “reminiscence bump” and claims it accounts for sixty percent of all memories. Other theories, however, suggest that there is consistency in brain patterns, and we hold onto more specific memories as opposed to generic ones (Resnick 2022). Still others claim that age is not as significant as the impact a certain occurrence has had. We tend to hold onto what has made us feel deeply or what we feel is most important. As research conducted at Vanderbilt University suggests. “You remember these kinds of events that we've deemed to be important milestones.” (Fazio 2022).

I thank her for agreeing to let me interview her and her response makes me smile.

²“¿Tienes hambre verdad? Yo te hago algo de desayunar.”, she says as she brushes off my thanks. We walk into the kitchen as she asks about my siblings. ³“¿Y tus hermanos? ¿Cómo estan mija?”. She strings the words ⁴“tus” and ⁵“hermanos” together almost as if they were one single word. Encadenamiento silábico or syllable chaining is a natural and unconscious linguistic process characteristic of the Spanish language. When a word that ends in a consonant and is followed by a word that begins with a vowel, the final consonant joins the initial vowel and forms a new syllable. This can be seen in either formal or informal language but is much more prominent in informal speech where speech production is fast. Other types of encadenamiento silábico exist that do not necessarily conform to the rules presented in the above definition but are still subject to the phenomenon in the same conditions and produce a similar joint word

pronunciation. Our conversation is riddled with examples of this type of syllable chaining as is our day-to-day speech. Some examples from utterances at different points of the interview include, ⁴⁶“*pablar*” from the words ⁴⁷“*para*” and ⁴⁸“*hablar*” and ⁴⁹“*queora*” from the words ⁵⁰“*que*” and ⁵¹“*hora*”.

⁵²“*¿Te marca seguido mi papá?*”

⁵³“*Bueno a veces dura mucho pablar, pero horita que anda de viaje...*”

⁵⁴“*Antes de que te vayas. ¿A queora empiezas allá?*”

I tell her how everyone is, and we catch up as she moves to prepare breakfast. The smell of coffee and food begins to fill the house as she begins to answer my questions and tell me about her life.

Ofelia Arreola was born in 1953 in a small ranch town in Chihuahua Mexico. She was born in Mexico; a place called La Pinta. ⁶“*En México. En un ranchito en México. En La Pinta.*” She first answers my question broadly stating she is from Mexico. She then provides more details narrowing her answer down to the place she was born. Her parents were humble and hardworking but weren’t always able to make enough for a family of seven children. The need for money and food pushed her and some of her other siblings to start working at a very young age. I asked how young. ⁷“*Desde que tengo hambre, porque en la casa no teníamos mucha comida y yo trabajaba para comer, para que me dieran comida.*”. This brought attention to how poverty and hunger had affected her childhood. It was at age eleven that she’d started working. She cleaned and cooked for other homes and took care of other children. Education was never on her mind. She didn’t even finish grade school and any education beyond that was never something she or other young girls from rural Mexico easily considered or hoped for. The part of Mexico she grew up in, as well as the time and her socioeconomic level all propelled her into a

life of work. Even in a life of manual labor she learned many things, ⁸“*La pobreza nos enseñó muchas cosas lindas.*” Amongst them, cooking. ⁹“*¿Quien te enseñó a cocinar?*”, I asked her as I turned over a fresh tortilla in my hands. ¹⁰“*El hambre. El hambre yo creo*” she responded with stillness in her voice. She was making scrambled plain eggs as she stirred, she tapped into another memory. ¹¹“*y el huevo lo hacíamos así con chile, cebolla y tomate pa que rindiera. Porque había nomas dos para cuatro personas y a veces uno.*”. She has been cooking all her life and one of the most important and traditional ingredients in her kitchen has always been chili. She talked to me about chili. Oddly enough her love of chili did not get passed down. Most of her grandchildren, myself included, don’t particularly like chili. To someone who loves chili and has eaten it and cooked with it all their life, this is a bit strange. ¹²“*toda la vida.*” She answered when I asked if she only recently started liking chili or if even in her youth, she’d loved it. ¹³“*Aya desde los niños chiquitos comen chile*”. She told me it’s what gives food flavor. She then told me her grandmother used to cook using chili too. ¹⁴“*Mi abuelita nos los hacía, hacía una salsa y el huevo en torta y le hechaba mucho chile colorado para que tuviera mucho sabor.*”.

As she got older, she had different jobs. She worked for many years as a seamstress making beautiful and intricate dresses. She also did odd jobs that changed with the seasons like catching snakes to sell in town.

Sixteen-year-old Ofelia Miranda met Héctor Arreola, the man she’d eventually marry, through one of her older brothers. In rural Mexico in those times, it was custom for girls to be married young. Sixteen was not as young as it seems to be today and her brothers worried about marrying her soon. When she met Héctor she pretended not to like him at first. ¹⁵“*Yo les decía que no me gustaba que no me caia bien, pero cuando se volteaban yo si lo miraba y pensaba, ‘bueno, tal vez sí.’*” She laughs as she speaks. Laughter is a form of communication. The

Research article, 'Laughter as Language' from *Glossa: a journal of general linguistics* delves into the semantics and pragmatics of laughter. Laughter adds to the meaning of words or it can stand alone. We can respond to a joke, for example, by just laughing. Expressing in this wordless manner that we are in fact amused. Laughter can express disbelief or show doubt, but it can express mockery and ridicule, or it can express joy and amusement. Laughing conveys a wide range of messages and emotions. By laughing as we speak, we communicate these emotions. *Glossa's* article states that laughing is a social activity that a speaker might invite others to join in while engaging in it (Jefferson 1977). Laughter seems to be involuntary for Ofelia as she is recollecting a memory that brings her joy. While sharing the story of it through words, she shares the emotions through laughter.

She spoke more of him with warm affection in her words. He wasn't from the same town so she would only see him when he rode in on his motorcycle. ¹⁶*"y cuando él llegó- iba en una moto y luego lo oí que venía la moto venia *rum rum*"*. She made a gesture as if accelerating an imaginary motorcycle as she mimicked the sounds that let her know he was close to her house. An onomatopoeia. An onomatopoeia or echoism is a type of word that phonetically imitates, resembles, or suggests a sound that the speaker is describing. The rev of the motorcycle here is imitated with **rum rum**. These figures of speech are more frequently used in writing. Authors use them to enrich their stories. They are however, used when a speaker is telling a story to call attention to the auditory details. Ofelia remembers the distinct sound that brought with it a person she cared for and describes it by mimicking the way it sounded in her memories.

Upon hearing that revving engine growing closer in the distance she dropped what she was doing and went out to meet him when he arrived. ¹⁷*"y venia Ci-, Ro-, Judy. No. Esta, que pendeja pos si era un niña, era una muchacha, ..."* She lists the names of her three daughters

before correcting herself as she clarifies it isn't them who are in the story since they are yet to be born. She uttered instead the correct name- her younger sister's placing extra emphasis on it to clarify who she was referring to, ¹⁸“... y venia Tencha con migo”. Misnaming or confusing people's names is quite common and can happen to anyone. This is due to the way names are categorized in the brain and because the names of family and loved ones are grouped in the same relationship category, they can be easily mistaken for one another. Here Ofelia lists the names of her daughters in place of the name of her baby sister people whom she views with the same motherly affection. Cognitive scientists call this phenomenon a normal cognitive glitch. (Deffler 2017). A news article written by Michelle Trudeau on the topic of misnaming reveals that this cognitive glitch seems to be most common in mothers (Trudeau 2017).

Ofelia and Tencha stood outside waiting for the boy who'd let them know he'd be there soon as the wind carried news of his approaching arrival. He had showed up with gifts. Not just for the girl he loved but for her little sister as well. A sweet detail Ofelia doesn't forget to mention. ¹⁹“*sacó así de la mano saco unas monedas que yo ni las conocía eran dimes. Muchos.*” He had brought with him foreign currency; our American ten cent coins- dimes. As she utters this English word, there is a change in pronunciation that suggests phonetic adaptation. She is taking the first part of the word (di-) and pronouncing it in English only with a softer initial “d” sound [daI] and taking the second part (-me) and pronouncing it in Spanish [meh]. There are two separate systems at work here as she has adopted this English word and adapted it to Spanish. ²⁰“*Él había hecho un e- una alcancía yo creo y todo los echaba as -ahí y los tría para Tencha y se los dio y a Tencha no se le olvida. y a mí me traía un collarcito muy lindo de perlititas verdes, así como los que tú haces, pero para mí era una gran cosa. Y también un peinecito y un espejo. Un espejo así bien lindo. Eso me emociono tanto que lo guarde por*

muchos años. Ese fue un regalo muy bonito que no olvido” These three objects he gave her, the necklace, comb, and compact mirror were precious to her and reminded her of him when he was away. ²¹*“yo sentía que hasta olía ese collarcito y ese peine olían a Héctor. Porque yo creo que se rasuro y se puso un este, ¿cómo se dice?, (1.0) ¿cómo se dice lo que se ponen en la barba? Algo rico.”* She hesitates ²²*“un este,”* and asks herself almost under her breath ²³*“¿cómo se dice”,* then proceeds to pause as she struggles to recall a word. Unable to remember in the brief pause she poses the question this time directed toward me. ²⁴*“¿cómo se dice lo que se ponen en la barba? Algo rico.”* She asks and begins to describe. “Mmmm” I say as I let my eyebrows crease communicating to her, I am not sure. Upon reading my response she continues to describe, ²⁵*“Tenía un olorcito rico.”* ²⁶*“¿colonia?”* I ask. ²⁷*“Ándale.”* She says and continues as if no pause had been made to figure out the word she was missing. ²⁸*“y yo creo que se le quedo en el, el espejito y en el peine y en el, en el collarcito y yo lo guarde y siempre olía a eso.”* Another type of cognitive glitch or “the tip of the tongue phenomenon” as author Yule describe in ‘The Study of Language’ occurs as in this example, when a speaker cannot remember or think of a word. “Oh, it’s on the tip of my tongue!” you might hear someone say. Describing the object or concept or event represented by the word one cannot recall is a typical way to work around the problem.

She smiles then adds, ²⁹*“Y no se me olvida. Un regalo especial.”* -She spoke more about my grandfather and described him in fond memories. ³⁰*“La manera en que caminaba...”* she started, then described to me the way he carried himself, the way he walked. Much of what we know about other people comes from what we observe. Be it consciously or subconsciously we notice certain aspects about the way people move and interact with others. Those aspects that do not involve spoken language but instead take “body language” to be communicative are a part of

nonverbal communication. Nonverbal communication has several categories or codes. Among them is kinesics, which refers to all forms of body movement from facial expressions to posture to gait— or how people walk. We are sensitive to human movement and learn to recognize the minute details in the mannerisms with which we conduct ourselves. In her article, ‘The Language of Gait’, Sarwech Shah describes how expressive and significant gait is in our intricate world of communication. There are many internal and external factors from physical to psychological that influence gait, but it is certain that the way we walk, and move is one aspect that makes us recognizable and attractive to each other.

Ofelia and Héctor Arreola immigrated into the United States from Mexico in August of 1972 with their one-month-old baby girl in the back seat and started their life together here. Once in the United States, they moved from place to place following the jobs my grandfather and his adventurous spirit found. They could’ve stayed in any one place and made a decent living, she tells me, but he wanted to go, to move around, to travel. This new country brought with it a new language. One that she had never been concerned with until she was fully immersed in it. Language barriers are barriers or obstacles to communication between people who do not speak a common language. She navigated through the language barriers, or lack of, that traveling through Texas, New Mexico, California, Colorado, and Arizona, presented. Spanish is not uncommon in these parts of the country and a person could get by with minimal English in certain parts of these states. According to statistics presented by America the Bilingual only twenty-three percent of the United States’ population is bilingual (roughly seventy-six million people). Of that percentage, sixty-six percent (a little over fifty million people) are Spanish speakers with the majority of them in the Southwest and in borderland states as Spanish is common in these

regions among Hispanic populations. California, New Mexico, and Texas are the top three states with Spanish speaking percentages of 43.4, 36.1, 34.5 respectively.

They traveled along these states and found populations where Spanish was enough. They traveled farther however, ending up in Wyoming by the time she was pregnant with her second child.³¹ “*Tu abuelo sí hablaba Inglés. Más que yo*”, she tells me, as she begins a new story with laughter lacing her voice. They lived in Torrington. She was very close to her estimated delivery date, and they were parked outside an ice cream shop. She really wanted an ice cream cone. My grandfather handed her some money insisting she go in and buy two ice cream cones, one for herself and one for him as well. She was hesitant. Her argument was that she didn’t know how to tell the vendor what she wanted, she didn’t speak English. My grandfather told her it was easy, he told her what to say, “Give me two ice cream cones please.”. She uttered that phrase clearly and confidently. One she had learned fifty years ago. She said it in a soft Mexican accent. She lacked practice and spoke a bit shyly, but so many years in this country taught her more English than she realized. She expressed to me how sacred she was to do what my grandfather presented as an easy task. But she did it anyway. She went inside the shop and somehow, she came out carrying a tray of twenty-two ice cream cones. She made it back to the car with ice cream resting on her 9-month belly and having spent significantly more money than she had intended too. My grandfather who had just gotten a minor surgery (the reason he didn’t buy the ice cream himself), forgot all the inconveniences of his recent hospital visit as they laughed together in the car with the surplus of ice cream, melting in front of them. She laughed as she told me she didn’t know what she had said or how it had happened, but she tried and failed to speak English that day. Confidence I suspect was part of the problem. Communication, especially when it comes to languages an individual is only beginning to speak, is dependent on confidence. Numerous

studies have been conducted and numerous articles written about the role and importance of self-confidence in spoken languages. The article ‘The Role of Self- Confidence Effectiveness for English Language Learners’ written by the University of Kufa states that “self-confidence is one of the most influential variables which affect the process of learning.” And without it, “no language learning activities will be carried out successfully”. On the opposite side of self-confidence is anxiety. Anxiety, according to this same article has three categories: state anxiety, trait anxiety, and situation-specific anxiety. Each of these presents distinct challenges to a speaker of a new language. Situation specific anxiety is one of the most experienced when a speaker of a new language is thrust into a situation where using their new language is required. As we see in Ofelia’s ice cream cone story, the phrase and task were seemingly simple from the outside, but the anxiety caused in the moment was substantial enough to foster the miscommunication. This is a lighthearted example. Language barriers can lead to numerous miscommunications and can present serious interference and hindrance as individuals face these barriers under more serious circumstances. They ate as much of the ice cream as they could before heading home. She gave birth to her second child the following day and my grandfather ran into town straight to the radio stations and to the newspapers so that the birth of his first son would be announced on the air and published in the papers. This was a tradition in the smaller Mexican pueblos, and for that day, in Torrington Wyoming as well.

Some months before she was on her way to drop off my grandfather’s lunch. She was driving out to the fields where he worked harvesting potatoes. My aunt, a two-year old at the time, rode next to her in the front seat. ³²“*En ese tiempo no había cinturones, eso sí te puedo decir*” she casually added as she told me it was the first time, she’d ever driven a car. She had never had the necessity to learn how to drive. She grew up in that very small village in rural

Mexico and when she left, she left in my grandfather's car as he drove. She would often get rides from neighbors or friends or relied on public transportation regardless of where they lived. My grandfather offered to teach her, but she refused. She did not see the appeal to driving and doesn't to this day. Cultural differences are perhaps a root cause of her not having learned how to drive, but they aren't the only reason. Automobiles were not as accessible as they are now and driving not as tied in with the day to day. An article by Scientific American analyzes the trends of driving over the years and claims that Americans are driving more than ever with younger and older drivers on the road. The article states that, "Many Americans are effectively tethered to their cars." (Von Kaenel, 2016). She was getting close to her destination when she flipped the car. She didn't slow down at a turn. One of my grandfather's co-workers saw the accident and communicated the news. My grandfather rushed over to find his wife and child perfectly safe only a little shaken up. They couldn't let the policeman know a driver without a license had been responsible, so she and her daughter huddled hidden in the crops as the officer took my grandfather's false statement and they flipped the car right side up. ³³ "*Y nos escondimos entre el maiz. Así bien calladitas las dos.*" She whispers this to me. Letting the words fall out of her mouth softly and slowly with her index finger pressed to her lips indicating the stillness with which she had urged her child to remain silent as they hid. Whispering is another way of speaking; it is a form of auditory communication that is well known to most every language. While we whisper, our vocal cords are held rigid and this prevents sound producing vibrations resulting in breathy speech. We can choose to whisper for many reasons and while some whisper to avoid disrupting others in a quiet room other whisper to communicate secretive information. Here as Ofelia recounts the story she whispers as she did then to enhance her story telling and better describe the situation emphasizing the importance of their being silent. As she whispered,

the gesture she made by bringing the index finger up to the face and holding it perpendicular to the lips is a well-known gesture. It is the symbol for “shhh” and is often accompanied with that soft sound urging whoever is receiving the gesture to be silent. This gesture is known as a regulator. Regulators are one of five types of hand gestures as proposed by Ekman and Friesen (1969). Regulators are used to control communication between two or more individuals. They regulate the flow of communication by managing turn taking for example or introducing or dismissing individuals from conversation. This silence seeking gesture can also be categorized as an emblem. Emblems are a second type of hand gesture. These can stand alone; they needn’t be accompanied by words in order to have meaning. They are symbolic gestures with clear meaning and direct verbal translations and are used intentionally to convey specific messages. The meanings of emblems can change across social and culture groups but there is also some universality to gestures like these. By bringing the finger up to the lips as she retells the story Ofelia reenacts that moment when she asks her toddler for silence.

Throughout the interview, she told many other stories with the same enthusiasm in her voice and genuine expression in her eyes. Our Spanish as we chat is casual. This is in part due to the nature of the interview. We were in her home with no one else around and felt comfortable. I felt relaxed and heard it reflected in how I spoke. Aspects of language like shortening words, saying ³⁴“*ta bien*”, instead of “*esta bien*”, changing the pronunciation of words, ³⁵“*pues*” turned into “*pos*”; ³⁶“*nadamas*” turned into “*nomas*”; ³⁷“*para*” turned into “*pa*”.

³⁸“*Cuento muchas historias mija. Pos ya estoy viejita ¿okay?*” she pauses then continues ³⁹“*Que no creo que se me acabe la memoria. Recuerdenme. Diganme que les cuente historias. Para despertar.*” ⁴⁰“*¿Sí sabes como?*” then quickly turns her attention and mine else where ⁴¹“*Tengo arroz. ¿Quieren arroz?*” Memory however can fade with age especially for those

victim to diseases like Alzheimer's. Alzheimer's disease or senile dementia is a brain disorder that can cause memory loss among other effects. Doña Maria, my grandmother's mother, passed away in her mid 80's after having spent the better part of a decade with no recollections, no knowledge of who she was, who her loved ones were, or what was happening around her.

She communicated as much nonverbally as she did verbally when her demeanor told me as much as her words did that, she seemed to be content with her life. I was reassured of this as she answered my final questions. ⁴²“*¿Tu vida es como la imaginaste alguna vez de niña?*”. She said, ⁴³“*Sí, mejor. Mejor. Dios me ha dado muchas bendiciones. Ustedes y todo esto.*”. She was silent for a moment and then she came back to a phrase from earlier in the interview, ⁴⁴“*la pobreza nos enseñó muchas cosas lindas.*”

After many years of moving around both across the United States and within Mexico, they finally settled longer term in Las Cruces. What made them settle down was family. Her older daughter and son found spouses and began forming their own families in New Mexico. She had four children all of whom grew up to be well educated in distinct fields and fully dominant speakers of both English and Spanish. Languages, however, are difficult to maintain when one does not actively speak them. Living in the United States with English speaking parents rules out the necessity to speak Spanish and not all her grandchildren maintained their bilingualism, having lost fluency of Spanish or never having really learned it. Of her nine grandchildren four speak it fluently and can maintain long conversations with her. Three speak well enough and understand most of what is said to them and two, the youngest, don't speak it and understand it minimally. ⁴⁵“*No, pero aunque no lo quieran hablar sí me entienden. Yo se que sí me*

entienden.” She reassures herself. Language loss across generations however is not unheard of. It is a phenomenon that only increases as each generation becomes more immersed in English. In their article, ‘Immigration & Language Diversity in the United States’, Rubén and Massey address this phenomenon and present data that shows an increase in the preferred use of English at home and decrease in proficient use of non-English language with each passing generation. Bringing English into the home makes it an all-encompassing language in the life of the individual and rules out the need for a second language. Language maintenance requires practice. Lack of practice due to lack of necessity leads to loss of languages. Additionally, an article from The Wilson Quarterly (‘In The U.S Imported Languages Are Doomed’) takes into consideration Rubén and Massey’s article and reiterates by stating the following, “The decay of native-language ability accelerated... In the third generation (those whose grandparents were foreign born), only 12 percent could speak the native language well. Among those in the fourth generation, only two percent could — and English was preferred at home for 99 percent.”

She lost her husband in March of 2006 to a heart attack, a great loss that was deeply felt by everyone but especially by her. She doesn’t speak much of him, and it is evident that still weighs heavily on her. Emotions can be significantly impactful on our physical and mental states. Speaking and verbal communication may fail as a response to strong emotions leaving only nonverbal cues to express what is being felt. An individual can express sorrow with tears, or discomfort with lack of eye contact for example. Depending on personality types a person might be more reserved and choose not to share what has emotional importance. If an individual however does speak of emotional topics there are emotional cues in speech conveyed through prosody. Prosody is vocal inflections including the relative pitch, duration, and intensity of

speech. These aspects of speech serve to show stress, intonation, and rhythm, all of which communicate emotion in the words they accompany.

Living still in a bilingual state with a large family of Spanish and English speakers Ofelia's life is still intertwined with both. And although she doesn't speak English fluently and doesn't feel the need to learn it fluently, she is exposed to it every day in the community, and within her own family dynamic. She spends her time at home. She receives her family and will cook for them daily taking those moments to converse and interact with them in mix of both languages. Spanglish is a term used to describe when bilingual Spanish-English speakers speak while using both languages within one interaction. Starting sentences in Spanish and finishing them in English. For example, Spanglish phrases can look like, "¿Puedes believe it?" or "I went to la tiendita y me vendieron 2 pounds of tortillas.". Spanglish is common in places with high populations of speakers of both English and Spanish speakers as there is in New Mexico.

Ofelia Arreola has lived a full life that has led her to today. She is calm and happy and gladly talks of the many memories she lives in, all while making new ones to look back on in the future. Our interview ended as the conversation died down. I started toward the door with my bag draped crossbody and my hands full with the food she'd packed for me. She had been making lunch during the last portion of the interview and insisted I take it home for my sisters. I thanked her for both the food and for sharing with me all that she had shared.

Translations

¹ I have lots of memories of my life that why I tell them.

² You are hungry right? I'll make you something for breakfast.

³ And your siblings? How are they, mija?

⁴ your

⁵siblings

⁶In Mexico. In a small ranch in Mexico. In La Pinta.

⁷Since I've been hungry, because at the house, we didn't have much food and I would work to eat so that they would give me food.

⁸Poverty taught us many beautiful things.

⁹Who taught you how to cook?

¹⁰Hunger. Hunger, I think.

¹¹And the eggs we would make like this with chili, onion, and tomato. So that it would be enough. Because there were only two eggs for four people and sometimes just one.

¹²All my life

¹³Over there even the little kids eat chili.

¹⁴My grandma made them for us, [she] made a salsa and the egg in an omelet, and she would add a lot of red chili sauce so that it would have lots of flavor.

¹⁵I would tell them I didn't like him, that he got on my nerves. But when they would turn around I did look at him and think 'well, maybe'.

¹⁶And when he got there- he was on a motorcycle and then I heard him that he was arriving on his motorcycle

¹⁷and Ci-, Ro-, Judy. No. Um, how dumb I was only a child, I was a teenager...

¹⁸and Tencha was with me.

¹⁹he took out in his hand, he took out some coins that I didn't even know about, they were dimes. Lots of them.

²⁰He had put together an uh- a piggy bank I think, and he would put all of them there and he brought them for Tencha he gave them to her Tencha hasn't forgotten. And for me he brought a little necklace very pretty made of little green pearls, like the ones you make, but for me it was a big deal. And also, a little comb and a compact mirror. A very pretty mirror. That made me so excited that I kept them for many many years. That was a very nice gift I haven't forgotten.

²¹I felt that that little necklace and that little comb even smelled like Hector. Because I think he had shaved and then he put on a uh- how do you say it? How do you say what they put on their face. Something good.

²² an um

²³How do you say it?

²⁴How do you say what they put on their face.

²⁵It had a good smell.

²⁶Aftershave?

²⁷That's it!

²⁸And I think that it stayed on, on the little mirror and on the comb and on, on the little necklace and I saved it and they always smelled like that.

²⁹And I won't forget it. A special gift.

³⁰The way he walked...

³¹Your grandfather dis speak English. More than I did.

³²In those times, there were not seat belts that I can tell you.

³³ And we his amongst the maize, like that the both of us very silent.

³⁴It's okay.

³⁵ Well

³⁶ Just

³⁷ For

³⁸ I tell a lot of stories mija. Well, I am already old, okay?

³⁹ I don't think I'll run out of memory. Remind me. Tell me to tell you stories. So that I wake up.

⁴⁰ Do you know what I mean?

⁴¹ I have rice. Do you want rice.

⁴² Is your life the way you imagined it would be when you were a child?"

⁴³ Yes, better. Better. God has given me many blessings. All of you and all of this.

⁴⁴ Poverty taught us many beautiful things.

⁴⁵No but even if they don't want to speak it, they do understand me. I know they do understand me.

⁴⁶To call (talk)

⁴⁷To

⁴⁸Call (talk)

⁴⁹What time

⁵⁰What

⁵¹Hour (time)

⁵²Does my dad call you often?

⁵³Well sometimes he takes a long time to call, but now that he is traveling...

⁵⁴Before you go. At what time do you start over there?

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