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Creating Social Identities through *Doctrina* Narratives

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This study describes narrative activity in a doctrina class (children's religious education class in Spanish) composed of Mexican immigrants at a Catholic parish in Los Angeles. During the telling of the narrative of the apparition of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe (Our Lady of Guadalupe) doctrina students and their teacher collaboratively construct a multiplicity of identities in an ongoing narrative version. These past and present identities are represented as Mexican, de aquí (from here), and dark-skinned against the backdrop of the description of an oppressive colonial past in Mexico. The paper compares a doctrina class with a racially mixed religious education class conducted in English (catechism) at the same parish to llustrate differences in the way social identities are created in both classes.

This study describes how teachers and students in *doctrina* class (a religious education class in Spanish) composed of Mexican immigrants at a Catholic parish in Los Angeles construct social identities in the course of telling the narrative of the apparition of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* (Our Lady of Guadalupe). During the telling of this narrative, *doctrina* teachers at the parish of St. Paul[1] employ several discursive and interactional resources to represent a multiplicity of identities within a coherent collective narrative, establishing in this way links to traditional Mexican world views. Like narratives of personal experience, this traditional narrative organizes collective experience in a temporal continuum, extending past experience into the present (Heidegger, 1962; Ricoeur 1985/1988; Polkinghorne, 1988; Bruner, 1990; Brockelman, 1992; Ochs, 1994; Ochs & Capps, 1996).

NARRATING THE COLLECTIVITY

Through narrative we relate not only events, but also stances and dispositions towards those events (Labov & Waletsky, 1968). While they emerge from experience, narratives also shape experience (Ochs & Capps, 1996); thus, we tell our stories for their potency to explain, rationalize, and delineate past, present, and possible experience. As collaborative undertakings, narratives are co-told and designed with the audience's input; addressing an audience's present and even future concerns (Duranti & Brenneis, 1986; Ochs, 1994). Stories of personal experience are told from present perspectives, from the here and now, evoking present emotions and creating present experiences for both narrator and audience (Capps & Ochs, 1995; Ochs and Capps, 1996; Heidegger, 1962; Ricoeur 1985/1988). Col-

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lective narratives, which tell the experiences of a group, organize diversity in the collectivity. And while they tend to normalize the existing status quo, Chatterjee (1993) reminds us that they can also be expressions of resistances in the face of master storylines. Morgan (1995) has noted that certain narratives of African-American experience, in particular those alluding to the times of slavery, contest and resist both past and present experience. Through indirection and linguistic "camouflage," story-tellers describe and explain a collective history of African Americans as an economically exploited and socially marginalized minority group. Like these stories of African American collective experience, *doctrina* narratives of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* also create explanations for the social worlds of *doctrina* teachers and students as a community with past experiences of oppression. This is achieved in part by *doctrina* classroom narrative activity in which narrated events are brought to bear upon ongoing class discussion, illustrating how past experience might continue to influence and shape the present. Indeed, at *doctrina*, a traditional religious narrative becomes not only a story to live by, it affirms and contests the community's past, present, and possible stories.

The Narrative

In Los Angeles, a city with a large Mexican population, one does not need to journey far before noticing the ubiquity of popular written and pictorial versions of the narrative of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* on bookmarks, greeting cards, candle vases in supermarket stores, and on city street wall murals. This narrative tells the story of a Mexican peasant, Juan Diego, who had a vision of the Virgin Mary at Mount Tepeyac, near Mexico City in the year 1531. The following excerpt, taken from the legend of a greeting card, represents one of many popular versions:

> Ten years after the bloody Spanish conquest of Mexico, the Mother of God appeared to an Aztec craftsman named Juan Diego. She appeared as an Aztec herself and addressed him in Nahuatl, the Aztec tongue, in a manner one would address a prince. She appeared several miles outside of Mexico City, which had become the center of Spanish power; she insisted, however, that a shrine in her honor be built on that spot among the conquered people. She sent Juan Diego back to the Spanish clergy to "evangelize" them—[the] ones who felt they already had all the truth. In each of these ways she restored dignity and hope to native people who had been dehumanized by foreign oppression. A shrine was built where Mary appeared, and Juan Diego spent the remaining 17 years of his life there, repeating her message of hope and liberation to all who would come. About eight million Native Americans became Christians in response to this message. (Lentz, 1987)

While the master story line remains constant across versions, there is, inevitably, elaboration of details. Indeed, in *doctrina* classes, teachers craft particular renditions of the narrative emphasizing certain events. The message, however, is perennial; a Mexican Indian (and therefore, Mexico, the place of the apparition) was chosen as the recipient of an important message. Versions of the narrative are based

on two relatively unknown written sources, one in Nahuatl and the other in Spanish, which date back to the 16th century (Rodriguez, 1994 and sources therein). Poole (1995) has most vigorously challenged the historical origins of the narrative concluding that manipulations of the narrative have served at various points in time to politically define and redefine Mexican identity. Indeed, *doctrina* narrative practices support his conclusion. Neither the Nahuatl nor the Spanish written text versions are mentioned during *doctrina* instruction; instead, a particular local version emerges from collaborative narrative activity.

LANGUAGE SOCIALIZATION IN RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

In its broadest sense, socialization is the process of becoming a competent member of society, of internalizing the norms, role expectations, and values of the community; in sum, of becoming culturally competent (Bernstein, 1970; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Within this paradigm, language socialization constitutes socialization through language and socialization to use language (Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). In this paper I concentrate on the discourse and interaction of teachers and students during religious instruction, and on the process of socialization in *doctrina* classes.

As some anthropologists have noted, a child's first exposure to literacy and other formal uses of his or her language can take place in churches. Heath (1983) described church literacy practices in the Piedmont Carolinas where interactions at church mirrored those of the home, reinforcing socialization practices learned in the home. Ethnographic research in Western Samoa has shown how Bible lessons socialize children not only to formal registers of Samoan, but also to the English language and American cultural norms (Duranti, 1994; Ochs, 1986; Duranti & Ochs, 1986). In turn, immigrant Samoan groups in the United States find the institution of the church to be an important link to their culture. Indeed, the teaching of the Samoan alphabet and numbers in a Samoan-American Sunday school in Southern California constitutes a nexus of cultural networks beyond the home and the church (Duranti, Ochs, & Ta'ase, 1995). The church in these immigrant situations is a powerful agent in the maintenance of the community's world views and language. As in the Samoan case, *doctrina* is a culturally significant space where both language and religious instruction take place. Through narrative activity enacted around the telling of the narrative of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*, teachers link their students' present experiences to the experiences evoked in the narrative.

Language Socialization at Doctrina

Early records of doctrina instruction date back to the Spanish conquest. In colonial Mexico, *doctrina* classes were offered daily and were conducted in the native languages. Indeed, students were so numerous that the term "*doctrina*" was also used to describe entire towns of newly converted indigenous groups[2]. An ethnography of the town of Mexquitic in Central Mexico notes that in the year 1680,

the number of converts was so large that a visiting bishop felt the need to declare Castillian Spanish the language of *doctrina* instruction to enforce the use of the colonizers' language. This decision, however, extended the use of Spanish to other aspects of public life in the town, concatenating linguistic and religious conversion (Frye, 1996). This move towards religious and linguistic uniformity was soon politically reinforced, and by the year 1770, a Spanish royal decree instituted the teaching of Castillian in Mexico, with the eventual goal of eliminating the native languages (Suárez, 1983). As this bit of historical background suggests, religious instruction is part of an institution which has socialized children not only to religious tenets but to dominant languages as well.

Religious Instruction at St. Paul's

In Southern California, Catholic parishes with a large Spanish-speaking Latino membership often hold *doctrina* and religious services in Spanish. At St. Paul's Catholic church, *doctrina* classes were first offered in 1979 as a parallel to religious instruction classes offered in English, called catechism. The use of Spanish by the Latino membership of the St. Paul's parish is best explained in the words of a bilingual Latina parishioner, who, upon being asked her choice of language for religious practice categorically stated: "I talk to God in the language of the heart." For her and others in this parish, that language is Spanish. And while these Latinos reside in a state where English is the official language of the public sphere[3] children in doctrina are being socialized to use Spanish for what is close to the heart: for them, religious practice. Ironically, this situation illustrates the achieved goal of colonial Spanish friars, as today in this Los Angeles parish, in what constitutes a former Spanish colony, Spanish is the local indigenous language that now needs to be eradicated.

In April 1996, amid much local debate, the parish council at St. Paul's voted to eliminate *doctrina*. The major concern expressed by the leaders of this predominantly English-speaking parish was that *doctrina* and other Spanish-speaking activities fostered an image of separate parishes within what should be perceived as a single religious unit. Yet, when interviewed regarding this proposed change, both English- and Spanish-speaking parishioners often cited poor race relations as the main reason behind the decision to eliminate *doctrina*. During these interviews, parishioners expressed varying degrees of intolerance towards the religious practices of the Spanish-speaking group. A catechism teacher, whose class will be discussed in later section of this paper, stated that Latinos were "too superstitious." Given the current race relations and conflicting perceptions of religious practice at St. Paul's, which reflect a generalized movement against multilingualism in the state of California, it comes as no surprise that English is being instituted as the language of instruction. The 1680 *doctrina* mandate of the Mexquitic town, which replaced Nahuatl with Spanish, is echoed 316 years later in the parish of St. Paul's decision to eliminate Spanish as the language of instruction in *doctrina* in favor of English.

Religious instruction classes at St. Paul's take place on Saturday mornings during the academic year in the classrooms of the St. Paul's Elementary School, the parish's private school located across the street from the main church building. Approximately 150 children participate in these religious education classes. Perhaps the most salient difference between *doctrina* and catechism can be summarized in the following terms: Whereas *doctrina* instructional policies seem to be more locally managed and community-oriented, often blending religious and cultural practice, the catechism curriculum follows a uniform format adhered to by parishes throughout the United States which concentrates on the teaching of Catholic precepts.

Doctrina

Student ages at *doctrina* range from 6-15. Most students come from working class families and attend public schools, as few can afford the costly monthly fees of the St. Paul's Elementary school[4]. *Doctrina* children are bilingual speakers of Spanish and English, and only a few seem to be more competent in English. Most are recent immigrants from Mexico, with only a few of them being U.S.-born Latinos. The *doctrina* teachers, all of Mexican descent, tend to be monolingual Spanish speakers and long-time residents of Los Angeles. At *doctrina*, all interaction is carried out in Spanish, including the religious services associated with religious instructional activities.[5]

Catechism

English catechism classes meet an hour before *doctrina* classes begin, so that by the time *doctrina* students arrive, the catechism children have left, making the interaction between these two groups of children very limited. The children enrolled in catechism represent a variety of different ethnic backgrounds, including Latino, Asian-American, and European American. While it might seem surprising to find Latinos in the English catechism classes, these children are often second- and third-generation immigrants from Mexico and South America who are more proficient in English than Spanish.

The children's ages in catechism range from 6-9 constituting a considerably younger student population than that of *doctrina*. Because Catholic children who are enrolled in parochial schools must also receive religious instruction at their local parishes, many children who attend other parish schools attend St. Paul's Saturday instruction. In general, children in catechism come from a slightly higher socio-economic level. The two catechism teachers at the time of the study were European American and conducted their classes entirely in English.

DATA BASE

Data for this paper are drawn from a corpus of video and audio recordings of *doctrina* and catechism classes, interviews, field notes, and on-going conversa-

tions with teachers, parents, and children collected over the span of twenty months of participant-observation, from September 1994 to May 1996. The *doctrina* class described here is composed of 42 students. Teresa, the teacher of the class, is a monolingual, Spanish-speaking woman who immigrated in her early twenties to the United States, and has lived in Los Angeles for over thirty years. The study also draws on one catechism class composed of 15 students. The catechism teacher, Nancy, is a monolingual, English-speaking woman in her late forties. She is a native of Los Angeles. The *doctrina* segments discussed in the next few paragraphs include transcribed[6] excerpts from the telling of the narrative of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* in Teresa's *doctrina* class and illustrate how her class collaboratively constructs the identities of dark-skinned Mexicans with a history of oppression. In constrast, the cathechism excerpt presented here is part of a lesson on the multiple apparitions of the Virgin Mary and illustrates a different ideology about Our Lady of Guadalupe[7] and ethnicity in general.

CONSTRUCTING SOCIAL IDENTITIES THROUGH *DOCTRINA* NARRATIVES

As previously noted, narratives are collaboratively told and socially organized. As such, in the course of telling a narrative version, participants take socially relevant roles as teller and listener. At *doctrina*, this activity is also highly affiliative. But the most significant characteristic of the telling of the narrative of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* is that it serves as a locus of identity construction. Classroom interaction draws children into crafting narrative renditions of the apparition of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* which encourage identification with the place of the apparition and the Virgin Mary. These classroom narratives describe the sociohistorical setting of colonial Mexico as a setting of past oppressive experience, which might reflect *doctrina* children's lives as ethnic minorities in the United States. The narration of events often spawns a great deal of questions about the students' lives. Similar to "whole language" approaches to literacy which are used in other formal classrooms, Teresa's teaching style contextualizes the narrative being presented, breaking it down into more manageable parts. She stops frequently in the course of telling the narrative to directly relate the experiences being described to those of the students in the class. This link is created both at the interactional level (through pauses, questions, and repetitions) and at the grammatical level (through predication and the temporal dynamics of tense and aspect).

The Narrative Construction of Mexican Identity

Example (1) below illustrates how Teresa and her *doctrina* class collaboratively construct a Mexican identity. As Teresa begins to recount the events of the story, she first situates these events as taking place in colonial Mexico. She does this by stopping the narration, and through questions, determining how many of her students are from Mexico, the setting of the ongoing narrative. In this way, she in-

cludes her students from Mexico as part of the narrative in progress, making the telling relevant to the students' present lives. This also constitutes a highly affiliative activity, and as we will see, students who were not born in Mexico can claim participation in this collective identity through their parents' heritage:

Example (1)

Teresa: **↑Hace (.) muchos años que se apareció**
has been many years that REFX appear-PAST-3Sg
Many years ago appeared

(0.8)

la Santísima Virgen de Guadalupe
the Blessed Virgin of Guadalupe

en el <u>cerro</u> (0.2) del Tepeyac,
in the mount of Tepeyac
at mount Tepeyac

(0.2)

en la capital de México.
in the capital of Mexico

(0.8)

>Quiénes son de México.
how many be-PRES-Pl from Mexico
who is from Mexico

Class: ((raises hands))

Teresa: **Los demás son de a↑quí**
the rest be-PRES-Pl from here
the rest are from here

(1.0)

Class: **Sí:[:**
yes

Teresa: **[Quiénes somos de México**
how many be-1Pl from Mexico
how many of us are from Mexico

Carlos: **Mis pa- mi madres son de México,**
my pa- my mothers be-3Pl from Mexico
my fa-my mothers are from Mexico

Teresa: **A-Oh ↑sí**
oh yes

(0.8)

Bueno. bajen la manita
good low-CMD the hand-DIM
good lower your little hand

As Teresa begins to tell the events of the narrative, she establishes a link from the place where the Virgin Mary appeared, *la capital de México* ("the capital of Mexico"), to present times by relating the setting to the students' place of birth. In her question *Quiénes son de México* ("who is from Mexico") she asks her Mexican students to publicly identify as Mexicans couching this affiliative interaction in present tense, in the here and now. The first time a collectivity is invoked in this class, it describes two contrasting groups: those *de México* ("from Mexico") and those who are not—those *de aquí* ("from here") understood as from the United States.

Teresa's second invocation of a collective identity as Mexican is found in the utterance *Quiénes son de México*, which now includes her, aligning with those students who first identified as *de México* ("from Mexico"). In her question *Quiénes somos de México* ("how many of us are from Mexico") Teresa uses a form of the verb to be, *somos* ("we are" the first person plural form), which in its inclusive form indexes a collective identity as Mexican. Such is the affiliative force of Teresa's question that Carlos, a student presumably *de aquí* ("from here"), states that his parents *son de México* ("are from Mexico"). Students like Carlos, whose parents come from Mexico (though we assume that he himself does not) are included in the evolving "we" as illustrated by Teresa's affirmative response *A-Oh ↑sí* ("Oh yes") .

Narrative activity at *doctrina*, thus socializes children to identify as Mexican. Through questions about the students' place of birth, a group of Mexicans and a group *de aquí* ("from here") are identified. Though Teresa begins a classroom rendition by narrating the past, the *then* of the story, locating the place where the Virgin Mary appeared in Mexico, she then switches to the moment of the telling to collaboratively redefine the setting of the story in relation to the present participants. Thus the narrative is not only about the apparition of the Virgin Mary in the Mexico of many years ago, it is also a narrative about the Mexican students in this *doctrina* class as they have been made an integral part of the story.

The Narrative Construction of Oppression

As Teresa continues to orchestrate a particular classroom narrative rendition, a history of oppression in colonial times is discursively constructed. Having identified as Mexicans, this class now collectively recounts its own colonial history. In Example (2), through temporal dynamics available in Spanish, in particular, through the use of the imperfective (IMPF) aspect, Teresa guides her class through an historical revisitation of the social landscape of colonial Mexico as she describes in more detail the setting at the time of the apparition of the Virgin Mary.

As a language that encodes tense and aspect morphologically, the imperfect in Spanish is realized in suffixation in the forms *-ía-*, *-aba*. The imperfective portrays actions as viewed from within and in progress, and stands in contrast to the perfective usually encoded in past tense, which denotes actions as completed, viewing a situation from the outside (Comrie,1976). The choice of imperfective is thus a particularly effective resource which allows for a more vivid[8] and highly affiliative use of language to describe the setting of the story, a setting depicting a series of oppressive acts carried out by Spanish conquistadores which warranted intervention (as is often the case in postcolonial histories; see Chaterjee, 1993). The following example illustrates the imperfective as the vehicle through which the class travels the oppressive landscape of Sixteenth Century Mexico; a journey that stops abruptly with a contrasting switch to past tense to explain that the entire situation, the panorama of oppression which the class has now "witnessed," was untenable:

Example (2)

Teresa: **Entonces este[9] (1.2)**
then

fíjense bien lo que les voy a decir
Attend-CMD well it that to you go-FUT to say-INF
pay attention to what I'm going to say to you

(1.2)

cuando (0.5) en México había mucha opresión, (.)
when in Mexico be-IMPF-Sg much oppression
when in Mexico there was a lot of oppression

por los españoles
by the Spaniards
by the Spaniards

(1.5)

que a-oprimían mucho al indígena.
who oppress-IMPF-Pl much to+the indian
who oppressed the Indians a lot

(1.5)

Y entonces e:ran (.) muy católicos
and then be-IMPF-Pl very catholic
and they were very catholic

>porque bueno porque nos dejaban muchas iglesias<
because well because to us leave-IMPF-Pl many churches
because well because they left us many churches

en todo el país de México
in all the country of Mexico

(0.5)

(es que) también este (0.5)
is that too
it's that too

querían. tener. sometidos, (.8) a (.) a la gente más pobre
want-IMPF-PL have-INF subjugated to the people more poor
they [Spaniards] wanted to have subjugated the poorest people

o l-la trabajaban mu:cho verdad,
or work-IMPF-Pl much right
or they worked them hard, right

>pues ellos que querían más[10]
well they that want-IMPF-PL more
well they wanted more

que (.) los indígenas
that the indians
than the Indians

(0.8)

éso no (.) le pareció a la Virgen
that no seem-PAST-Sg to the virgin
that didn't seem [right] to the Virgin

First note that the orientation to the story, the detailed description of the setting is conveyed exclusively using the imperfective:

• en México **había** opresión	• in Mexico there was(IMPF) oppresion
• los españoles **oprimían**	• the Spaniards oppressed(IMPF)
• **eran** católicos	• (they) were(IMPF) Catholic
• nos **dejaban** muchas iglesias	• they left(IMPF) us many churches
• **querían** tener sometidos	• They wanted(IMPF) to have subjugated
• la **trabajaban** mucho	• (they) worked(IMPF) (the people) hard
• ellos **querían** más	• they wanted(IMPF) more

Precisely at the end of this description, a switch to past tense, in *esto no le pareció a la Virgen* ("this didn't seem [right] to the Virgin") summarizes the previous description (indicated in *esto* "this") indicating a switch in action, the Virgin Mary's intervention. The grammatical resources in this narrative telling, including the use of the imperfective to access knowledge about the past, makes the description of Mexico's colonial setting not only more more vivid but more affiliative. The unfolding of the oppressive events which describe the indigenous Mexicans as oppressed, subjugated, and overworked, immediately after this class has publicly identified as Mexican, is a powerful means for affiliating with that past.

The oppressive acts embedded in the setting of the story are so consequential in the making of this story of redemption that the teacher quizzes her students at the end of the class period precisely on those acts which motivated the Virgin Mary's appearence in Mexico. In Example (3) below, the socio-economic inequality of colonial Mexico is emphasized again, this time co-narrated by the teacher and a student named Enrique:

Example (3)

Teresa: **Y por qué se quiso aparecer la Virgen en México**
and why REFX want-PAST-3Sg appear-INF the virgin in Mexico
and why did the Virgin want to appear in Mexico

Enrique: **Para cuidar a México↑**
To take care-INF of Mexico
to take care of Mexico

(0.5)

Teresa: **Claro. para rescatar a a los (0.5) indígenas**
of course to rescue-INF to the indians
Of course, to rescue the Indians

de la opresión de los españoles.
from the oppression of the Spaniards
from Spanish oppression.

In response to Teresa's question about the reason for the Virgin Mary's apparition in Mexico, Enrique answers that she appeared in Mexico to take care of the country; a response which Teresa accepts with *claro* ("of course") reformulating it from *para cuidar a México* ("to take care of Mexico") into *para rescatar a los indígenas* ("to take care of the Indians"). She further elaborates on Enrique's response, indicating that the Indians needed to be rescued from Spanish oppression. Recall that Teresa's class' journey to Mexico's past is a journey to a past that is now shared by the Mexicans in her class; one which has described two groups of people, the Spaniards and the Indians as actors from an unequal past. This interaction between Teresa and Enrique emphasizes one distinguishing aspect of this class' narrative: that the Virgin Mary chose to appear in Mexico not only to take care of Mexico, but also because the Indians needed to be liberated from Spanish oppression. But what is also interesting to note, is that these *doctrina* members have thus far identified as Mexican in the present (recall that Teresa asks students to publicly identify as Mexican) and as Indian in terms of a collaboratively constructed reference to an oppressive past. This blurred distinction between a Mexican present and an Indian past is emphasized again in the course of the narrative, as the class creates an identity as dark-skinned people.

The Narrative Construction of Skin Color

As Teresa continues to narrate the story of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe,* she describes the color of the Virgin Mary's skin establishing two skin colors representative of two groups of people. Example (4) below illustrates how a switch from the narrated past to the moment of the telling creates yet another collective identity for this class, this time making reference to skin color. Since current discussion in the social sciences has been problematizing the boundaries between ethnic and racial identity (Hollinger, 1995, Omi & Winant, 1993; Waters, 1990), it is particularly revealing to see how at *doctrina* ethnic identity is based on skin color. In the example below, Teresa explains to her class the physical features of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* as similar to their own:

Example (4)

Teresa: **la Santísima Virgen quiso ser (.) se**
the blessed virgin want-PAST-3Sg be-INF REFX
The Blessed Virgin wanted to be

parecerse morenita como nosotros.
look-INF-REFX dark-DIM like Pro-1Pl
to look a little dark like us

(1.0)

porque la Virgen, (.) de Guadalupe
because the Virgin of Guadalupe
because the Virgin of Guadalupe

no es blanca como (.) la Virgen del Carmen
no is white like the Virgin of Carmen
is not white like the Virgin of Carmen

que se apareció (.)
who REFX appear-PAST-3Sg
who appeared

y es la patrona de España,
and is the patroness of Spain
and is the patronness of Spain

la Virgen del Carmen es blanca.
the Virgin of Carmen is white
the Virgin of Carmen is white

(0.5)

y la Virgen de Guadalupe
and the Virgin of Guadalupe
and the Virgin of Guadalupe

es morenita como nosotros
is dark-DIM like Pro-1Pl
is a little dark like us

In this example, a particular shade of skin color, *morenita* ("a little dark"), is identified as the defining feature of the Virgin of Guadalupe, and the predicate construction *como nosotros* ("like us") embraces the *doctrina* class in a collectivity of dark-skinned peoples. By switching to the moment of the telling, the narration of past events and the description of the narrative's characters includes the dark-skinned *doctrina* people of the present. As the example illustrates, the Virgin of Guadalupe was/is (yesterday/today) dark like the people at *doctrina*.

It is also interesting to note that in this display of ethnic awareness with skin color as the most salient element of contrast, the Virgin of Guadalupe and the Virgin of Carmen co-exist in the present, that is, at the moment of the telling. Notice too that Teresa emphasizes that the Virgin of Guadalupe is not white like the Virgin of Carmen, implying that the Mexican children who look like the Virgin of Guadalupe are not white either. The description and emphasis through repetition, that the Virgin of Guadalupe is *morenita como nosotros* ("a little dark like

us"), is indexical of the class of dark Mexicans, and, by extension, the oppressed dark Indians of the past. By disaffiliating her class from the white Virgin of Carmen, Teresa disaffiliates her class from the oppressor Spaniards of colonial Mexico who share the white Virgin's skin color, while at the same time, recognizing and claiming a dark skin color for her class.

This particular *doctrina* narrative telling is an example of how variation in narrative details respond to the recipient organization and the goals of the narrative activity. Clearly, Teresa keeps the main story line, compared, for example, to the plot depicted in the greeting card example I presented before, yet she elaborates on the setting and the skin color of the Virgin Mary. As Poole (1995) has noted, the narrative has served as a means for creating a Mexican identity. Through the continuous unfolding of the narrative, Teresa and her students represent their multiple identities in temporal blends: In the past, they were dark-skinned oppressed Indians in Mexico; they are now dark-skinned Mexicans; and they can also be people *de aquí* ("from here"). This tracing of identities along a temporal and spatial continuum illustrates the diasporic potential of narrative as it creates and explains life in the "borderlands" (Anzaldúa, 1987). *Doctrina* members are linked to Mexico through place, as the birth-place of the majority of the students; they are also linked to Mexico in time, as Indians of the past; and they are also people from here (be it the United States, Los Angeles, or the parish) *both* in time and place. The narrative renditions of the apparition of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* are thus sites where doctrina children are socialized to Mexican identity.

MULTI-ETHNIC MARY

As the parish of St. Paul's moves towards its own "English Only" policy, Latino children will probably join children in other religious instruction classes in which English is the medium of instruction. The effect this multiracial environment will have on doctrina students' experiences and on the collaborative telling of particular versions of the narrative of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* remains to be assessed. As I have indicated before, English catechism classes at St. Paul's are racially diverse. On the day the classroom interaction described here was recorded, there were Latino, Asian, and Caucasian students present. A segment of classroom interaction depicted in Example (5) below, illustrates two distinct phenomena. First, the dynamics of tense and aspect are used differently, especially distinct from the *doctrina* class examples presented above. Second, Mexican ethnicity is positioned as one of many ethnicities representative of a generic model of American society. In Example (5), Nancy, the teacher, explains to her catechism class the many apparitions of the Virgin Mary:

Example (5)

Nancy: Now. (0.2) remember that Mary has appeared (0.2)
in many many countries (.) to many many people,
(0.5)
differently.
(0.2)
Our Lady of Guadalupe she appeared to the Indian.
she looked like an Indian.
°hh when she appeared over [he:re
[((walking towards cast statue on desk))
(1.5)
uh (0.5) Our Lady of Grace
(0.8) [this is Our Lady of Grace
[((touching statue))
(0.5)
she's crushing the snake, (0.5) with her ↑feet
(0.5)
cause the snake represents the ↑Devil
(0.5)
and she's standing on top of the world,
this is (.) Our Lady of Grace.
(0.5)
We have (0.5) uh (0.2) Our Lady of Mount Carmel.
We saw[11] the Pilgrim Virgin, (0.2) Our Lady of Fatima:,
(0.5)
She has appeared (.) to many many many many places.
(0.2)
She's appeared in Lourdes.
(.)
and when she was in ↑Lourdes,
she wore the costume of the
French ladies, (.) she looked like a French lady.
(0.2)
when she appears in Japa:n, (.) she appears (0.2)Japa↑nese
(0.5)
When she appears in Hawaii: (0.2)
if she does. she'd appears Hawaiian,
(0.5)
So Our Lady can (.) can change her (0.5) features,
(.) to look like (.) the country that she is appearing in.

Let's consider first the temporal organization of this list. Present perfect is initially used to state that the Virgin Mary has appeared to several people in the past, in Nancy's words: *Mary has appeared in many many countries to many many people*. Nancy's first example of the Virgin Mary's apparition is Our Lady of Guadalupe who appear*ed* (past tense) to the Indian. In all cases in which the place

(and manner) of apparition is mentioned, the past tense is used (*looked like an Indian; she wore the costume; she looked like a French lady*). Present tense variants are used to describe the different apparitions of the Virgin Mary, portraying what seem to be generic manifestations. This stands in contrast to the particularization observed in the *doctrina* narrative rendition, where the telling of the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe is embedded in a unique historical moment. Moreover, the emphasis in this catechism class seems to be on describing a generic, multi-ethnic Mary, which contrasts with the empashis of the *doctrina* narrative discussed before to create a Mexican identity and describe Spanish oppression in colonial Mexico. While Nancy notes Mary's apparitions without making reference to specific historical contexts, in fact, this generic portrayal leaves the possibility open for a future apparition in Hawaii, she does make sure that the list recognizes many ethnicities, including Mexican, French, and Japanese. This teacher's teaching style[12] is certainly inclusive, yet it denies a particular historicity and the opportunity to organize and explain past and present experience of particular ethnic groups in the class. Moreover, Nancy's recitational style does not encourage participation from the students in her class.

Even though the two classes described in this paper cannot be compared in terms of the actual telling of the narrative, there is one important difference in the way in which both teachers make reference and assign meaning to Our Lady of Guadalupe. Whereas the narrative of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* promotes affiliative activities and creates a unique Latino identity, a collective self and history, in Nancy's catechism class, Our Lady of Guadalupe is mentioned ahistorically as part of a list that becomes a representative sample of the multi-ethnic composition of the class and of society at large. Given the changes in language policy at St. Paul's, the *doctrina* children of the parish will be joining catechism classes, like Nancy's, where the opportunities to create a collective identity as Mexican are limited and where homogenizing and generic discourses pervade.

IMPLICATIONS

Doctrina teachers design collaborative narrative activities that socialize children to acquire and display knowledge of a collective class version of the narrative of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*. That is, creating a collective version of the narrative not only promotes recall of information, it legitimizes the experiences of the *then* and *now*—both the experiences narrated in the story and those which include the teacher's and students' present lives. The study of the language socialization practices of this church community sheds explanatory light on the ways in which language is a potent way to either constitute or minimize identities. We have seen how a *doctrina* teacher orchestrates an oral collaborative rendition of the narrative of the apparition of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* to socialize children to a range of social identities. We have also seen how a catechism teacher positions ethnic identities as part of a representative list.

The analysis of the practices of the doctrina community described in this article has implications for understanding the complexity of the social worlds in which the children of this community live, especially as school-aged minority children. Meaning-making in this Latino learning context is carried out differently. At *doctrina* children acquire and learn to verbally display socio-historical knowledge that is affiliative and which they share with their classmates and teachers. The language socialization practices of *doctrina* linguistically and interactionally reaffirm membership in a particular Latino community, linking children to the world views of their community. Yet these practices will become difficult to enact given the parish's mandate to use English as the medium of instruction. The practices at *doctrina* are examples of the ways in which a community not only retells its past, it affirms and claims social identities while gradually being relegated to the linguistic and cultural margins of a local parish in Los Angeles.

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NOTES

[1] All names have been changed.

[2] *VOX Diccionario Manual Ilustrado de la Lengua Española*, 8th edition. Calabria, Barcelona: Biblograf. See also Frye, 1996 for a brief description of early colonial religious practices and life in Mexico.

[3] Certain states, including California, have legally adopted "English Only" policies that restrict the use of languages other than English in public places such as the workplace and goverment offices.

[4] For the academic year of 1995-96, tuition was $200.00 per month, not including books and other school supplies.

[5] Most notably, First Communion preparation culminates with a celebratory religious service at the main church building.

[6] Transcription symbols used in this paper: ↑ Indicates sharp rising intonation; a period at the end of words marks falling intonation; > indicates speech faster than normal cadence; <u>underlining</u> represent sounds pronounced with emphasis; colons indicate elongated sounds; "•hh" indicates inhalations; numbers in parentheses indicate time elapsed in tenths of seconds, with periods indicating micropauses or noticeable pauses that are less than two tenths of a second; brackets indicate overlapping speech; information contatined in ((double parentheses)) indicates nonverbal behavior; CMD is command verbal form; DIM is diminutive suffix, often encoding affect; REFX is a reflexive pronoun; Sg denotes singular; Pl denotes plural; INF is the infinitive tense; IMPF is the imperfective (in Spanish both tense and aspect).

[7] I will be using the English name of Our Lady of Guadalupe when describing the catechism class.
[8] Silva-Corvalán (1983) has noted that certain Spanish tenses, in particular the historical present (HP), provide "vividness" and act as evaluative device. This same argument has been made for the HP in English by Schiffrin (1981). Here I extend Silva-Corvalán's claim to include the Spanish imperfective as functioning both as an evaluative and affiliative device.
[9] Similar to American English "uhm."
[10] From context it is understood that the Spaniards wanted more material goods than did the Indians.
[11] On an earlier trip to the temple that morning, the class met a woman carrying the statue of the Pilgrim Virgin.
[12] It remains unknown whether Nancy's choice of examples and descriptive attributes of the different Virgin Marys reflect more than instructional ideology; that is, whether the examples reflect personal and community attitudes towards different cultural groups.

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