The Columbus region continues to grow in cultural and linguistic diversity. It is essential for schools to respond to this growth by becoming more inclusive and supportive communities for diverse student populations, and for these communities to experience feeling valued as members of the Columbus community, as well as the state and nation. This work also involves supporting primary English-speaking students who have lived here for multiple generations in recognizing that they are part of the cultural and linguistic diversity of these communities.

**Sharing Our Stories:**
Aprendiendo de Nuestras Historias
Anakarína Hurtado
Indiana University-Purdue University Columbus
Mentor: Dr. Laura B. Liu, Ed.D.

**Bilingual Story:**
Lo Gran Aventura de Gabriel by Anakarína Hurtado

**Community Story Sharing**
Bilingual Storytime
Bartholomew County Public Library
Blackwell Park Story Walk

Richards Elementary School Multicultural Festival
Bartholomew County Public Library Bilingual Storytime

**Finding:**
Civic Creek Latinx-Spanish Immersion Academy 2nd Grade

**Teaching Reflection**
- Parents and educators tend to associate cultural differences to other countries and disregard the culture in the U.S. There are many cultural differences within the U.S., as well. The language we use when teaching about culture should be more intentional, including the diversity within different regions around the U.S.
- Students who move from a different area of the U.S. have familiar traits and feelings as those who migrate from a different country. They also are moving to a new place. Having open class discussions about this increases student empathy toward peers and acceptance of diversity.
- Students’ curiosity increased when they found that the book read was based on a real story of someone in their community. This supports the idea that kids are more receptive to real stories shared in the form of children’s books and are more engaged when we talk about them.
- Students were appreciative of what “culture” meant at the beginning of the lesson, but seemed more excited talking about their culture after we explained what it is all about. Acknowledging this may be helpful in teaching children to see more than those being different or moving from another place.

**Discussion & Implications**
- Our interpretation of culture is limited, and we often disregard US culture when teaching it.
- Culture is everywhere and in everything we do. It is important to be more conscious about it, specifically when teaching.

**Implications for Education Research**
- This study encourages future research exploring the learning impact of student sharing of stories in class, specifically if this increases empathy and understanding of diversity across other classroom contexts.
- This study encourages future research exploring the learning impact of story sharing by local authors whose stories come from the community.

**References**

**Bilingual Story:**
Lo Gran Aventura de Gabriel/Gabriel’s Great Adventure

**Study Purpose**
This study seeks to understand how 2nd graders, in a public elementary Spanish immersion program class, learn about and connect with one another’s cultural and linguistic similarities and differences through a shared and oral autobiographical project. This involves designing and implementing a lesson plan based on the autobiographical children’s books authored by the student researcher about a family member’s own cultural and linguistic background and journey to the U.S. This study will examine how students are inspired by the author’s story to explore their own and their family’s own cultural and linguistic fund of knowledge (Moll, 2019; Moel et al., 2012). Students give first-hand and authentic sharing on their own culture.

**Theoretical Framework**
**Funds of Knowledge**
This study is based on Moel et al., (1992) concept of funds of knowledge, which aims to establish “joint household research between classroom teachers and university-based researchers” leading to “ethnographically informed classroom practice” (p. 132). Moel et al. (1992) found there is great value in home visits in which teachers “assume the role of the learner, as doing so, help establish a fundamentally new, more symmetrical relationship with the parents of the students” (Moel et al., 1992, p. 130). The authors highlight that this innovative concept, “funds of knowledge”, does not “replace the concept of culture,” but emphasizes more specifically the “strategic knowledge and related activities essential in household functioning, development, and well-being,” and the “cultural, economic, and productive activities of people in local region” that may be integrated meaningfully into classrooms (p. 139).

**Methods**
**Community Engaged Research**
This study practices community engaged research (CER) shaping how data is collected and understood (Bay & Swacha, 2020). Community-engaged research is connected to “local, trans-local, and transnational” learning to “social and institutional transformation” (Berman, 2008, p. 516). This study practices community-engaged research in that a primary focus is agency-building (Berman, 2008), relationship-building (Law, in review), and “understanding the complexity of the human experience” more respectfully (Bay & Swacha, 2020, p. 134).

**Community Engaged Project**
The student researcher’s children book, an immigration story, is read and discussed among a class of 2nd graders. The children are guided through open discussions exploring the topics of diversity, immigration, and cultural values. Students will be encouraged to share and talk about their classmates’ backgrounds including family structure and values, language and linguistic practices, cultural foods and nutrition, traditions for celebrating and remembering, music and art expressions, and any other cultural or linguistic topic significant to the students. As students explore their differences and similarities, these discussions will be used to build a greater understanding of each other. As a result, the autobiographical product is used to highlight a part of their culture, as well as an art-based autobiographical product for 2nd graders who share together in a small group, to demonstrate the funds of knowledge (Moel, 2019; Moel et al., 2012) gained through learning about others. Through observations and analysis of the children’s interactions with each other and written biographies, we can gather and interpret what the students learn from this study and how their view of themselves and others’ peers are affected through open dialogue about diversity. This finding will focus on student social interactions and the influence that discussions of cultural and linguistic diversity in the classroom can have on learning and development.

**Data Sources**
The teacher gathered student culture journals from 46 students across two 2nd grade classrooms that were taught by one teacher. This study collected student culture journals from more than 46 students to ensure a larger sample. The teacher provided a list of cultural similarities and differences. These discussions will lead to an art-based project (Irwin et al., 2006), community engaged inquiry (Bay & Swacha, 2020), building (Berman, 2008), relationship-building (Law, in review), and understanding the complexity of the human experience more respectfully (Bay & Swacha, 2020, p. 134).

**Data Analysis**
**Comparative Analytic Approach**
This is an art-based (Irwin et al., 2006), community-engaged inquiry (Bay & Swacha, 2020) content comparative analysis. As defined by Moll and Torres (1994), this method uses to see 2-3 threads about their habits to identify convergent and divergent themes across student products that were created during the story lesson plan. Analysis seeks to go beyond traditional quantitative approaches by generating relationships as a meaningful research outcome, along with qualitative findings (Bay & Swacha, 2020).

**Lesson Plan Description**
**Academic Standards & Learning Outcomes**
- Language Arts: 3.2, 2.1 - Participate in collaborative conversations about grade-appropriate topics and texts with peers in small and larger groups.
- Social Studies: 2.2.4 - Describe how people of different ages, cultural backgrounds, and traditions contribute to the community and how all citizens can respect these differences.

**Community Engaged Inquiry**
- WIDA English Language Development Standard 5: English language learners are moving from a different area of the U.S. have similar fears that children may or may not practice. Sample students gave were holidays/celebrations, food they eat at home, and the language or dialect they speak at home.

**Learning Outcomes**
As a result of this lesson, students will be able to identify and compare cultural and linguistic values of peers in their classroom.

**Lesson Assessment**
**Culture Journal:** Compare and contrast cultures in the classroom. Students wrote about their own culture and traditions and如何 contribute to the community and how all citizens can respect these differences.

**Learning Activities**
- Write and/or draw pictures demonstrating similarities and differences between their cultures.

**Implementation:**
- Read “La Gran Aventura de Gabriel/Gabriel’s Great Adventure”, along with the sharing relating to the story.
- Activity: Students are placed in groups of 4-6 students. They create a guided cultural project, being as creative as they would like, responding to prompts assigned. They are then encouraged to see 2-3 threads about their cultures and write/draw about what they learn, following the assigned prompts.

**Lesson Conclusion**
- Students lead in a class discussion that highlights the meaning of cultural differences. Students classify the differences in the discussion and classify student books for awareness and understanding of student culture along with respect for peer diversity. Through sharing and discussion, students should be able to relate more with one another and value each other’s cultural and linguistic identity.