

University of Northern Colorado

Scholarship & Creative Works @ Digital UNC

Heritage Conversation Partners

Department of Anthropology

2-2-2022

Evergreen Session One Clean Transcript

Oscar Gonzalez

Liner Solarte

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digscholarship.unco.edu/hcp>



Part of the [Social and Cultural Anthropology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Gonzalez, Oscar and Solarte, Liner, "Evergreen Session One Clean Transcript" (2022). *Heritage Conversation Partners*. 3.

<https://digscholarship.unco.edu/hcp/3>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of Anthropology at Scholarship & Creative Works @ Digital UNC. It has been accepted for inclusion in Heritage Conversation Partners by an authorized administrator of Scholarship & Creative Works @ Digital UNC. For more information, please contact Jane.Monson@unco.edu.

February 2, 2022

11 am

INTERVIEWERS: Emily Dzhinenko, Miranda Bermudez, Ruby Gregory, Emiliano Villa, Katie Carter

PARTICIPANTS: Oscar Gonzalez and Liner Solarte

Transcript:

Captioning Provided by:

Partners Interpreting

www.partnersinterpreting.com

508-699-1477 (V)

508-809-4894 (VP)

* * * * *

ANT 300 class- Applied Anthropology, University of

Northern Colorado

February 2, 2022

1:00 PM - 2:15 PM (ET)

* * * * *

This text, document, or file is based on live transcription. Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART), captioning and/or live transcription are provided in order to facilitate communication accessibility and may not be a totally verbatim record of the proceedings. This text, document, or file is not to be distributed or used in any way that may violate copyright law.

* * * * *

(Captions provided by a live Captioner.)

* * * * *

1:01 PM (ET)

CAPTIONER: Standing by.

EMILY: Okay. I believe everyone is here. Let's go ahead and introduce ourselves and say our names. So, my name is Emily.

MIRANDA: I will go next. Hi, my name is Miranda Bermudez.

KATIE: My name is Katie.

LINER: My name is Liner.

EMILIANO: What's going on guys, I'm Emiliano.

OSCAR: Hi, my name is Oscar.

RUBY: Hi, my name is Ruby.

EMILY: Okay, so I think we will start with going over the letter of consent. Do any of my classmates have that pulled up?

MIRANDA: I do have it. So, let's see here. I am not sure how much of this we have to cover, just like kind of all of it?

EMILY: I will pull it up now and also look at it.

MIRANDA: Okay. So, the purpose and description of the project is trying to define Cultural Heritage, which is our goal. Cultural heritage means all aspects of a person's tradition, their language, their traditional places, foods, festivals, dress, ceremonies, beliefs, buildings, art, crafts. All of the stuff that encompasses Cultural Heritage. The primary purpose of this project is for participants to share with each other aspects of our Cultural Heritage and allow for stories and experiences to be shared on social media and with each other. And our ultimate goal with this information is going to be preserving them and saving them in a digital archive through the University's library. Sorry. I am just trying to read over what else it says. So, we are going to be meeting over the course of seven Zoom sessions and this ultimately is going to give Oscar and Liner an opportunity to practice their English in conversation with us. We are able to develop friendships, all of the students, we are all able to develop friendships and we are able to share things that you guys and we wish to share about our own Cultural Heritage. So, ultimately this consent is just making sure that you guys know and are okay with the research that we are doing,

which is essentially just recording these Zoom sessions. Then we are also going to create written, typed out versions of what is spoken in the videos. So, we are just going to type up everything that is spoken so it is in writing.

And then we are also going to look to make social media accounts to put some of this information on. We don't really know just yet what that content on the social media is going to look like. It is just going to kind of come together as the project is going. And that ultimately as I said, we are going to store the videos and the written versions of the videos into UNC's digital archive, so the library database. It is also up to you guys if you want to use your name or withhold your name when the videos are shared on social media. That is up to you two. Then you guys are also going to have an opportunity to visit those social media accounts. You will have access to everything if you would like to look at them, and with them, it is totally voluntary. You don't have to engage with the social media accounts, but it is encouraged, and we will see what that content looks like. It could be fun. We don't know yet.

Do you guys want to add anything else from this? Okay. So at the very bottom of the consent form, it says that you are not being compensated for your participation. All participation is voluntary. If you do decide that you don't want to participate at any time, it is no big deal. Just reach out to one of us or Karen Bates and we can get things moving so you don't have to participate anymore if you are uncomfortable for whatever reason. Your decision will be respected and will not result in any loss of benefits to you or any contacts that you have created or made throughout. And then if you have any concerns about your selection or treatment as a research participant, you are invited to contact the principal investigator which is Dr. Michael Kimball, the UNC point of contact and we can have the e-mail and the phone number sent over to you guys so you have access to those if you like.

Overall, it is really just making sure that you know that things are being recorded and they will be used for the project. Did I miss anything, Emily?

EMILY: No. I think you did a good job. How does that sound to the two of you? Will you give us your consent to continue and volunteer with us?

OSCAR: Yeah, I agree with it.

LINER: Me too.

EMILY: Awesome! Thank you. So, we really appreciate this, and we are excited to share information about ourselves and to learn information about you guys. I, at least, think this will be a really interesting experience. So, I think today if everyone can just start with introductions. We already shared our names, but one of the points that we could bring up is: Do our names have

any significance to us? Does it have any relation to where you are from? For example, for me, my name is Emily Dzhinenko and my last name originates from the Ukraine in Europe, which is where my birth mom is from. That is very special to me, and I am very happy that it's my last name now.

LINER: My name is Liner. And Solarte is my last name. My father and mother come from a place in Venezuela, I am Venezuelan by the way, where people used to give their children the most strange names, the most strange names. And my father's name is Ixedio and my mother's name is Ermelinda. So, my mother tried to mix both names. And that is why my name is Liner. I am glad to have that name because my sister, my big sister's name is Lixedia.

[Laughter]

Emilse, my middle name, is a name that my mother hear- my mother used to hear in soap operas. And the main character in one of the soap operas when she was pregnant with me was Emilse So, she named me Emilse like her. And that is the meaning of my names. Solarte is my last name. It comes from Spain. Actually, it means--I don't know how to say-- let me check -- banner in Spain.

OSCAR: Is it my turn? I have to do it? [laughter]. Well, my name is Oscar Rene Gonzales. I'm happy to have that name. My father has the same one. Here in the US, it used to be Oscar Rene Gonzales Junior. It had to be. But we don't use that in El Salvador. I'm from El Salvador in Central America, the smaller country America, but we have like -- how can I say that -- my father's family is from Spain. And so, Gonzales is from Spain, my last name. And so, talking about Rene, it means for me like reborn. Like when I am down, all the time I am reborn, start again. And there is a generational name because my grandfather's name is Rene, my father's name is Rene, and my name is Rene, and my older son is Rene too. So, we have four generations using the same name. And I have another son whose name is Oscar too. We do that in Latin America. I don't know why.

That is everything, right? I don't have to talk about the country?

EMILY: You can share whatever you want, but you did answer what the question was.

OSCAR: Okay, I am really nervous because there's a lot of people who speak English very well, looking at me at the same time, so. [Jokingly pretends to bite his fingernails] But I am trying to do my best.

EMILY: You are doing amazing. You both are and you have done great so far, and I want to let you guys know that the words you see at the bottom, the captions, are primarily to assist me. But everybody can see it. I have a lot of hearing loss. It is just helpful for me. So, it is going to happen for all the sessions that we are in there. So, if you are just wondering about that, that is why.

LINER: I like it. I want to know how you do it.

EMILY: So, one of the individuals on this Zoom, you will see her name is Captioner, Caryn. She has joined the call and she is live captioning right now. Everything she hears, she is captioning right now in this moment. So that is how that is working. English is not my native language. But I did grow up primarily speaking it. I know a little bit of Russian, very, very little bit. And I know American Sign Language which is what individuals who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing rely on for communication as well. So, I understand what it is like learning a second language and how anxious you may feel when speaking to somebody who is a native speaker. You are not alone, and you guys are doing amazing!

OSCAR: Thank you.

RUBY: My name isn't really significant like that. My first full name is Ruby Anne. I have older parents and my father is the kid of people who went to... like my grandpa went to World War II and stuff. There is this popular song that came out. I think it was like the '20s or '30s and it is called Ruby Anne, took the hand of a poor, poor man and my dad just fell in love with the name and decided to name me. A little bit about myself: I have been in America for about 11 years. Originally, I was born and raised in Musaka, Zambia, but my English, I guess you could say it wasn't too bad but coming over here and having to say different words and stuff like that was kind of tough. But that is a little bit about myself.

MIRANDA: I can go. My name is Miranda Bermudez. My first name is kind of similar to Liner. My mom got it off of a movie from the '80s. It was one of the lady characters. Her name was Miranda. I am not super familiar with the movie, though. I don't know if I am like her or not, but my last name, Bermudez, is Spanish, Spain origins. It is my grandpa's. He is not my blood grandfather, but he adopted my dad when my dad was a baby. And so, I resonate with this last name a lot because that is my grandpa and that is my family.

KATIE: I can go now. My name is Katie. Just like a nickname. My actual name is Catherine. And I was named after my great grandma for my first name and then my middle name,

Elizabeth, is from my other great grandma. So, I was just named after old family members. That is pretty much it, though.

EMILY: I have been and class with a couple of these other students for a year or so now and I've already learned new information about them, so thank you guys for sharing it. I'm really happy about that. I know Ruby shared about how long she has been in the United States. But how long have we all been in America, I guess? And if you are learning English or when you started, what were your ambitions? What were your goals for that? I can start. I moved to America back in 1999. I was adopted from Russia. And I had to learn English because I was becoming an American citizen and it was going to be where I lived. And my goal at such a young age was just to understand what my parents were saying in order to grow up in a household that was completely different from the Russian orphanage that I was in.

LINER: My name is -- you know, -- I come from Venezuela. I have been here for the last two-and-a-half years, more or less. I came here because my country is facing really hard times. When I was living in my country in Venezuela, I spent a lot of time, maybe two or more years without working because I didn't find a source, a place to work. I came here because I needed to help my family to survive. And my ambition is to help them. My goal is to help them to live over there. I send them money to buy food, to pay the bills. And here, I want to study again maybe because I am a nutritionist. But here, I am not licensed to work as a nutritionist. But I can work as a health coach or something like that. And right now, I am studying, getting some certifications to work in the field most related to my profession. But also, I work as a seller. I sell waterproof filters and solar panels and I choose to sell these things because in my country we used to, I used to face a shortage, energy shortage, shortages, I think. And I am very sensitive about that and trying to help people to be- to get sustainability in their lives. And that is the same way about selling waterproof filters, because that help people, help me, and I can help the people to get healthy water.

OSCAR: Well, my turn. I am here in Colorado for two years. I think yesterday was my second anniversary in Colorado. I used to travel a lot to the US because I was a commercial manager for a local company, a Shell company. They sell gas and oil and many other things, and I was a commercial manager for South America, Central America, for 20 years. And my office was in El Salvador and the political situation in our country was really difficult, in all of the regions too. When Venezuela has some problems, Venezuela was a big business for us in South America. So, the company starts to make some decisions, bad decisions. And the people are having to take many positions for four people and then I'm doing the job for four people, and they are starting to move, immigration from Brazil, to Canada, to the US. And finally, I think four years ago they decided to sell the operation in each country.

So, for local administrators they decided to -- how can I say that -- I lost my job. That is how to say that. But I lost my job. It was an amazing experience for me working in that company. I have two bachelor's degrees and two master's degree. I studied in Chile financial and in Spain marketing. So, I love to study a lot.

I decided to move here because we started a business in our family. We have a small market -- I am not so sure -- like maybe a small market -- like we have like a 7/11 more or less. It is not a gas station, but it is like a 7/11 or something like that. And then we decided to open a chicken and pupusas, pupusas is a typical food in my country. We opened some restaurants. And then the gangs started to push us, they asked for \$2000, or they would kill my family. They took some pictures of my kids and children in the school, and they said, 'hey, these are your children, and we know where you live, we know you have a lot of money. We know you are the owner of a big company', but that is not true because when you have a business and you are growing your business, it is not easy.

And at the end of the day, I did not sleep for three months or something like that. Then we applied and my children became legally as residents here. We decided to move to the US in 2019. So, we moved at the beginning, in January, two years ago.

I moved first. It was a very dramatic situation because COVID was starting to happen at that moment. So, I had some plans. I know a lot of marketing and I started working in a company but the lady who hired me don't pay me for two weeks because she had some problems. And then COVID started and then marketing was not a priority for anybody. So, I started doing direct sales -- I waited for three or four months -- because all of the airports were closed, and my family was in El Salvador while I was alone here. My older children were studying in Chicago. I don't like Chicago because there's a lot of people and when I traveled here and I saw the mountains, I started living in Colorado Springs and I said, "Wow, here is an amazing place for living!" So, we decided to stay here.

So, how can I say that -- thanks to God, because I know that God opened the doors for me- and I started working in a company selling water softeners and then solar panels. I met Liner in the company. I am really happy with what I do now because I do this on my own time. I can spend time with my family. I can go to work for a few hours, and I believe this is great for many families because sometimes we have an issue, or some communities have issues with their water. And we help them. And, with the solar panels, we help the environment. And we are trying to save the planet. That is what I can tell you about my story.

EMILIANO: That is so interesting. How did your family feel about the move to Chicago? Were they as ecstatic as you? Were there any difficulties with the children and their transition?

OSCAR: You know last year they stayed in Chicago and studied there. My other daughter graduated from high school in the middle of the year. And so, she came to visit us, to see if Colorado was a good place for living. And then she decided to move, to live with us. My wife and I have a couple of teens. One is a boy in one is a girl, Rodrigo and Gabriella. and now we

have a family of five. My older daughter is still living in Chicago. My son is also there, married and has a fiancé and 25 years old. So, they are happy to be here. At the beginning it was not easy for them because they don't speak English so fluently like everybody does here. But I saw how fast they were improving their English and everything and listening and speaking and everything. So, I am proud of them. My wife is slowly -- for example we go to a restaurant and all the time I am the one who speaks everywhere. And she has to do it herself. But maybe the next time she will join us. Or will try to.

EMILY: Ruby, Katie, Miranda, or Emiliano...do you have anything you want to share? About if you had to learn English or maybe your experiences with learning a second language and how you felt with that?

EMILIANO: I can start. Apologies, my Wi-Fi connection is kind of spotty, so if it goes out let me know that. My Dad was born in Mexico and is a fluent Spanish speaker. That was his first language. But for some reason he did not teach me or my brother Spanish. So, Oscar, it's kind of the same situation. Still, to this-day we go to Mexican restaurants and my dad is usually the one ordering the food. I understand the situation that your family is in with the language barrier. But like you said, it is important to get out there and try. That is the only way you will improve. But here and then I will throw in some Spanish, but it is still a confidence thing that you struggle with and the only way to move forward is to keep putting yourself out there. I completely understand the situation that you and your wife and your children are in.

MIRANDA: English is the only language that I speak, and I grew up in Colorado my whole life. But I am a world traveler, so I do travel a lot. I work for the airlines, for United. So, I get cheap flights, benefits through my job. And so, I try to travel as much as possible. So, I think that really helps me put other people's lives in context, from other cultures. It is really beneficial seeing other cultures and seeing other countries and getting out of your own country and just seeing what the world is like and that has been beneficial to me as a person.

KATIE: I grew up in Colorado my whole life and English is the only language that I know. I have traveled a couple of times and I have family just kind of scattered everywhere around the globe. But I have not really learned any other languages. I'm in the process of trying to learn German, but I am nowhere near as good with that as English. But that is pretty much it. English is the only language I am fluent in. And that is pretty much it.

RUBY: I was born and raised in Musaka, Zambia and it is in Africa. Moving to America was definitely like a huge culture shock for me. I feel like everything was so fast-paced. Originally I moved to California before I came to school in Colorado. That was a huge difference as well.

But English, I speak three other languages. Definitely, the only thing I had trouble with, was just like, everything is so fast paced. Like, speaking with other Americans, having to click it and be on my toes of what is happening.

MIRANDA: What are your other languages, Ruby?

RUBY: So, I speak something called Nyanja, Bemba, and Lenje. Lenje is my mom's tribe. It is a really hard language. I actually speak more of Nyanja than I do my own tribe's language because it's really complicated.

MIRANDA: That is super cool!

RUBY: Thank you!

LINER: I forgot the question. But I started to learn English. In Venezuela the second language they teach in the schools is English. But I was interested in English since I was in high school. And I used to pay a lot of attention to my English teacher. And after that, in the University I studied English also. I got some courses, English courses and when I was like 20, 23, 24 years old, I decide to move to Australia. And that was my plan. And to move to Australia, you have to take an exam and pass it. And I hired a private teacher, and she was a British teacher. And I studied English for maybe six months. After that, I sat for the exam. I pass the exam but didn't move to Australia. Because at first, I decided to visit all of my friends who used to live in Europe. And I went to Europe. I travelled, and visited maybe nine cities in just two weeks, maybe.

And after that trip, I decided don't move to Australia. Because I was very happy to visit my friends. But I still felt alone in that trip. And in Venezuela or America, South America, we are used to being very familiar-- I don't know how to say that -- the feeling for your family is very important. And that is why I decided not to move. And by that time Venezuela was not that bad. I had not been outside of my country until that moment. And I didn't know about the currency, the exchange, nothing about that. And at that moment to get 1 dollar, you would spend, my currency in Venezuela is bolivar, and you need two-and-a-half Bolivar to get 1 dollar. That is amazing. And my country is very rich. But it's badly administrated. And I had \$5000 to make that trip, but I did not know how much that trip represented to me. I thought that wasn't enough to make the trip.

I chose the cheapest flight, the cheapest food, and I almost had to live on the street because I thought it was not enough. And I returned to my country with maybe more than half of the money [laughs] and that is the moment that I understand many things.

That's why when I came to the US, that wasn't that difficult to speak with other people. I used to have, maybe I still have, British pronunciation of some words. I don't know how to say it. That is how I learned. And sometimes people don't understand me. And sometimes I am confused. But I am improving. Step-by-step.

MIRANDA: I love that your first English teacher was British, so you have both sides of the English language to pull from. That is really cool.

LINER: Yeah- I understand more British pronunciation, maybe it is because it is more alike to Spanish. I think it is. When you say water, the T is a T for us. But in American English it is W-A-D-E-R. Oh my god, wader/water... is it a t? It is really confusing.

MIRANDA: That is really cool hearing that difference. And what that means for you. And I feel like British English has more syllables because like you said, they are pronouncing things. Apparently, our English is lazy. It is very lazy.

LINER: It is a challenge to me. And I also try to learn French and Italian and Portuguese, but I gave up because every time I tried to pronounce maybe a French word, the English comes up. The English pronunciation and there is nothing -- that is opposite, English and French. So, I gave up.

MIRANDA: I did try learning Italian too. I mean I guess I still am. I have not kicked it yet. I have not given it up, but I am realizing with Italian it is very Latin-based. So, some of the Spanish that I have learned from my grandpa, I can kind of correlate to Italian, but it is still really hard.

EMILY: With learning Russian, that language draws from the characters and letters that draw from like five different languages, some English, some from the Greek. There is some from I believe like Latin and possibly German as well. I am not too sure about those. But it is difficult trying to learn it because when I am reading it, I want to say it in a very English way because there is like an X-looking character in Russian, which is not how it is pronounced at all in English. It is a struggle to switch it and to see letters that look like English symbolize something completely different sounding.

But I enjoy learning languages. And I think it is a really helpful thing. At least for me, I feel like growing up in America where you are really only forced to learn English and you don't have to learn another language, I feel like that really shelters people from the world and from other

cultures. And it makes it difficult for them to understand the perspective of individuals who are learning a second language and it kind of creates a gap between them. So, I feel like a couple of other classmates have said that they can really relate to the anxiety of speaking with a native speaker and the second-guessing that you have, which you know definitely it is familiar to me and something that I feel like everybody should have more experience with instead of just being comfortable all of the time. Like the two of you said, pushing yourself, moving to this different country, you have learned so much and you learn that the only way to proceed forward and grow is to keep trying and that is such an important characteristic that really helps you not just grow and learn your language for whatever language you are learning, but to grow into a more well-rounded person who is able to see the world in a different view. I hope that made sense.

MIRANDA: We are about 10 minutes out from noon. We kind of touched on this a little bit so if nobody feels like they have anything to add for this one, that is totally fine. What is the easiest thing about being in the US versus what is the hardest thing about being in the US?

LINER: For me the easiest thing is to -- the feeling of being safe. Here in the US, I was thinking about that yesterday night, I arrived at my apartment at almost 12:00 a.m. -- and I was not afraid of anything. And that did not happen in my country, sadly. Because every time-- even when you are inside your house, you feel fear. There is a fear that someone is going to get in, someone is trying to get in your house through the window, the door, even the ceiling because people use to steal, kidnap, many things...to everybody here, nobody is safe. With money you would hire a bodyguard to feel secure.

And the hardest thing -- I have to think about it -- it has not been easy, but I don't know. I don't know because here, things are easier. Even with the pandemic, I used to live with 10 people or more in an apartment with just two bathrooms. And even in that moment I felt secure. The food was there. That is the main thing. I have my apartment in Venezuela, my own apartment in Venezuela. I used to have an apartment but sometimes I did not have food. And here maybe the work or the jobs—when you are an immigrant, and you don't have the-- I am getting my ID and working on that. But when you don't have it, the jobs are very hard -- I got it -- they are very hard. I used to work thinking, helping people. That was mental, mental? Mental work. But here, I have to do physical work. And oh, my God! I felt like a slave. I am sorry. Because that was very hard. I started to work in the fields with marijuana, growing marijuana here, where it's legal. And I used to work eight or ten hours holding a tool with just one hour break.

And when I went to bed and got up, the next day my hands were swollen. I can barely close or open it. But I have to keep working. I think the people who work hardest in Venezuela doesn't work like that. We are not used to doing that. And that was very difficult to me. That is why I moved to sales, selling solar.

[Laughter]

OSCAR: Okay, I will share with you. For me it is the same like Liner. The easiest thing for me to be here is we felt safe. We moved here because we want to give our family better opportunities than we had there. As I told you, I have four degrees in university. And for a couple of years, I can't find a job, that is why we opened our own business, our own company. But that is easy here because I think everything is in order here. You can work on the street. The people here in Colorado are very nice. I feel very happy to be here because of that. The hard thing for me is I don't have my family. I cannot travel a lot to be with them. Last year my mom got sick with cancer. That was difficult for me not being with her. That is the only thing I want to share. Sorry. Excuse me. [Oscar gets emotional]

MIRANDA: It is okay. Thank you for sharing.

EMILIANO: I couldn't imagine not being there for a family member when they are sick or in need. That is incredibly difficult to deal with for sure.

EMILY: I really appreciate you sharing that with us. I know speaking about it cannot be easy and experiencing it must have been just incredibly difficult. It is very inspiring that you were able to get through something that difficult.

OSCAR: I can speak again. For me sometimes I feel here the people in America, the people that I have met here all the time are thinking of money. And I don't like it. Because for me I know that money is important, and I want to live in a big house. For example, back home we are rich. We have a huge house. Every year we have a new car and I work for an American company. And here when we moved here, we moved to a small apartment, and we had to share many things. And yesterday we moved to a big house here in Colorado. Now, we are living in Parker. But we don't feel bad living in an apartment because we feel love for each other. We have everything that we need.

I don't need a big space. I don't need a new car. I think the people here are all the time too ambitious. And it is not good. Because it is not easy to find good friends. All the time people try to use you to earn more and more money. For me at this moment, and I talked yesterday with Liner, what I decided to do this year is help everybody that I can. I am not thinking just of me. I would try to help people because I understand many things. We know a lot of people from Latin America that don't speak English and they don't know how to get a driver's license. They don't know how to do many things here. Sometimes people do the wrong things because they don't know the good way.

I come here and I try to do everything, and I follow the rules that the United States has established for us, and I think we have to respect that, and I will try to help everybody without thinking of money. That is part of what we were talking about.

EMILY: Well, I have said it before, but I am really thankful for all of you sharing and I learned so much about everyone here. And I am looking forward to meeting with you guys again next Wednesday. If you have any difficulties with participating, with the Zoom link not working, go ahead and just message me through WhatsApp and I should respond within a couple of hours. Thank you so much again and I don't know if any of my other classmates have anything to say or if you guys want to share, but we do need to finish. It is already 12:02.

MIRANDA: Thank you. It was so nice to meet you guys. We will talk to you next week.

LINER: Thank you.

OSCAR: It was very nice to meet everyone. Thank you. See you next week.

EMILY: You as well. Thank you.

CAPTIONER: Class dismissed.

2:02 PM (ET)