

Multi-Genre: Language, Power and Identity (Anzaldua, Salais, Espaillat)

<http://myweb.northshore.edu/users/mleavitt/rhina/bilingual.html>

In this poem, “Bilingual/Bilingue” by Rhina Espaillat, the speaker addresses how language has the power to shape experiences, memories, and how we feel about ourselves within the smaller society of family and a larger public society.

1.) Using the poems specific words as your guide, track examples of these “language moments” in the poem. What are the relationships between words, events, and feelings in this poem? How does the speaker feel about her smaller family world compared to how the speaker feels in the larger world outside as the speaker moves in and out of both?

2.) Connect the experiences of the speaker of this poem to Anzaldua and her experiences in “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” using language and the different emotions it evokes. What are the similarities? What are the differences between the narrator and the speaker of both.

3.) If you had to draw visual conceptions between language and emotions used in both Anzaldua’s essay and Espaillat’s poem, what would those connections and relationships look like?