

My experience of language shock

[Experience](#), [Personal Experience](#)



There is nothing more daunting than trying to learn and to adapt to a new language in just a minimum amount of time. Alike Malcolm X from his passage "Homemade Education", Malcolm describes his struggle to read in a straight line and within prison begins to develop his narrative skills.

One of my most difficult challenges had to learn how to speak, write and understand Spanish and English coming back from Mexico just a few days away from my birthday. I was originally born in Panorama City, where I would wake up every morning to the humming voices of the birds singing outside of my window, I would then proceed to my normal day of attending school, coming home, doing the necessary homework that was assigned that day and enjoy a wonderful bike ride along my block. It was until one daunting morning, I woke up and seen a "for sale" sign standing right next to my house. I could not believe it; my whole childhood had just come to an end as I had a flashback on my greatest memories here in my hometown.

The date was January 1, 2007, my mom had woken me up earlier than usual that day and said "make your bag, we are leaving to the airport in one hour", I was quite surprised, I asked myself where could we be possibly going? I remember getting in the car at 10:00 am and just waking up laying down next to my sister. As I quickly got off the van I looked at my surroundings and see a gigantic sign saying Los Angeles Airport, at this point, it was inevitable to go back to my lovely house. As I was approaching the security station, I discreetly asked my parents where are we going, they quickly answered, "we are going to Colima, but first we have to stop at Guadalajara to talk to your uncles". There was a lot going on through my mind, at first, I asked myself, "I hope they know English," Soon later I had

felt a hard punch struck my left shoulder blade, it wasn't just one but 2 punches that had hit me, I then realized it was my sister trying to tell me we had landed at Guadalajara. I quickly grabbed my bags and started heading out with my family to the front of the airport. Everywhere I looked there would be signs saying " Dolares a pesos", " tacos por solo 5 pesos" and the obvious sign " Bienvenido a Guadalajara" I then realized I had no clue how to read or even the less speak Spanish. Quickly later a cab had picked us from the airport and took us to my uncle's house. He greeted me saying " Hola David, como estas?" I was clueless, I was angry at myself for not knowing how to communicate with my relatives, I thought to myself, " why are we here, what is the point behind this madness".

Fast forwarding 2 days later we were in what turned out to be another house from my uncles. It was around 6: 00 am, I then started to hear an alarm going off, I thought to myself, what could possibly be going on again. I then hear a loud scream echoing through my ears saying get ready you're going to school. This was the turning point for me, I could not believe I would have to attend school here in Mexico, the worst part about it was, it was a private school which meant uniforms. Two seconds later I began to unbutton the white collard long sleeve shirt which fit somewhat loose on me, finished dressing myself, then began to head towards the car, the car ride felt as if each second was 5 minutes, the air smelled horrible as if some cars had not passed the smog check and last thing I know I had arrived at my new school. It was a 3-story school with very green and yellow walls that seemed as if they were about to fall apart any second. As I quickly approached the school with my parents, the principal told me, " go ahead, go to your first class

which will be in the second-floor room number 101(speaking in Spanish)” I quickly glanced over to my mom and asked her “ What did she say”, soon after I found myself walking up a tremendous amount of stairs that felt as if I was walking along the great wall of China.

Right before I entered upon my first class I quickly looked over my shoulder to make sure I was well groomed, checked my shoes for any type of dirt, looked over the silky red tie that my mom had given me, and made sure there was no loose fabric of my shirt hanging out my dark blue dress pants. As soon as I entered the classroom the teacher, Ms. Celeste, the professor, greeted me and told me to sit in the very front of her class. Surprisingly I felt somewhat confident in her class, it was until she told me to stand up, introduce myself to the class and say where I was from, sweat quickly started to drip down my forehead, my heart quickly started to beat and then without hesitation I introduced myself. As the day went on it was time for lunch, sitting down by myself, not knowing anyone I was eating my lunch by myself, not soon after approached me a kid who I remember was in my class. His name was Raul, he was one of the very few kids who actually spoke English. Soon after I and Raul became best friends and started to hang out. That day I went home upset, upset with myself for not knowing how to communicate with any of my friends other than Raúl. As soon as I arrived home my cousin who had just gotten his masters degree in pedagogy sat with me and gave a plethora of papers that would help me in writing in Spanish.

Day after day my cousin would make it into a habit to give me papers to practice my Spanish, he would sit with me for hours each day until I got it right, he would time me when I was reading to make sure I did not stutter, he would make me define many words from the dictionary alike Malcolm x, who is in his passage " A homemade education" narrates and explain his way of learning, which was through a dictionary as he states " I spent two days just riffling uncertainly through the dictionary pages" soon after I slowly was able to start communicating with my teachers, peers, and family.

Fast forwarding 4 years, I returned to the U. S making it more difficult to learn English once again. Starting halfway through my 6th-grade year, I struggled to communicate with my peers, I couldn't understand what they were saying, being emerged for such a long time in Mexico had made forget how to speak English. As the years filed by, 7th and 8th grade I was placed into ELD (English language development) to learn English at a basic level. Once again, I found myself in a very vulnerable position, a position I found myself 4 years ago, not being able to communicate with anyone. But in fact, that lesson taught me once again that life is quite unpredictable. It was at this moment I realized the story was repeating itself again, as you can imagine I spent numerous amounts of hours studying, reading, defining a glut of unknown words to expand my vocabulary and well the rest is history.