

# A Journey Towards Personal Cultural Heritage

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## ABSTRACT

This Creative Track presentation is a bilingual recitation in English and Spanish of my poem “The Journey.” The poem is part of the forthcoming edited volume, *Poetry in LIS*, by Drs. Bharat Mehra and Vanessa Irvin. Catalyzing my submitted chapter on oral personal cultural heritage practices that make connections to my identity as a daughter of immigrants through oral traditions like storytelling, I share insights into my family, their traditions, and their past in Havana, Cuba. These traditions reveal emotions, words, and memories expressed through joy, sorrow, and sometimes anger and fear—insights into experiences we may not have personally witnessed. Such practices have deepened my connection to my heritage, especially when physical traces of my family history are not visible, tangible, or preserved. As an archival educator, I am particularly concerned about the future of these vital personal oral artifacts that exist solely due to the age-old craft of storytelling. The risk of these stories being lost is confirmed as a daily concern. Having experienced life as a child of immigrants, witnessing my family share their stories has fostered a healing that spans generations. Oral storytelling provides an opportunity to reclaim identity and enable future generations to learn about their ancestors. Additionally, oral personal cultural heritage practices allow previously invisible family members to be seen. As a personal record keeper, I treasure these moments to listen to stories and share memories, traditions, and the resilient ways my family has lived through the narratives passed down, capturing the essence of who I am. As a child of immigrant parents, I hope this poetry recitation inspires others to seek and preserve their own stories.

The presentation begins with an introduction to my work, which will run for 2 minutes. I will introduce attendees to the context and theme of my poem. This will be followed by a 5-minute recitation of the poem in English and Spanish. After the poem is recited, the last two minutes are reserved for the conclusion.

# **ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS**

Education; Information needs; Information use; Records and information management; Specific populations.

## **AUTHOR KEYWORDS**

Cultural heritage; Family history; Identity formation; Oral history; Personal narratives.

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## REFERENCES

Reyes, V. (2026). Healing through heritage: Personal cultural identity as the daughter of immigrants. In B. Mehra & V. Irvin (Eds.), *Poetry as knowledge in library and information science: Inquiry, identity, and practices* (pp. xx–xx). Emerald Publishing.