

JOSE ESPARZA: So my name is Jose Esparza. I'm a junior in mathematics and economics. My focus is development economics, so I got to know Michel's-- Professor DeGraff's work, because of what he does with the MIT Haiti initiative. And the reason I took this course is because I thought that his efforts were very important, and that it was an opportunity to improve the world and I wanted to hear more of what he did, and the theory of why he does what he does.

After taking this course, my perspective of language and identity changed, in that now I was able to see the connection between the languages we speak, but also how that ties into cultures, in general, and more importantly to politics. And in some sense, we can see a lot of the big things that happen in society, like neocolonialism, or the effects of institutions-- a lot of these things, although they might be cloudy in some sort, language is a good way to view the world.

One of the first essays was to look our own life, or a biography through the lens of language. And in studying how institutions interact with each other through the sense of language opens up either how some cultures are not taken as seriously as others, how it tells you about the history about the world.

And it taught me to see language as something that ties a lot of things about humans together. And it was just a different way to look at the world.