

Matt de la Peña reveals Danny's struggle with his identity through the use of syntax and diction. When de La Peña mentions the homemade tortillas that Danny's grandma makes, he is using concrete diction to show how important Danny's Mexican heritage is to him and how much that culture plays in his identity. The abstract diction, "It's a subtle and unspoken ranking system" and the simple sentences, "He's always the first to eat. Even before his uncles. His dad when he was still around," demonstrate the shame Danny holds in his heart for being considered better than his Mexican relatives, when he really wants to be just like them. Danny wants his identity to be more Mexican than white and de La Pena's usage of different syntax and diction allows the reader to understand that without him saying it explicitly. (Chapter 5).

Through the use of syntax and diction, de la Peña reveals Danny's feelings of displacement. Danny is thinking about all the places where he doesn't feel like he belongs, including his school and abuela's house. The most obvious use of colloquial diction is the choice of the word "guapo," cluing the reader in on Danny's environment and painting a picture of his perspective on the world. Colloquial diction being utilized with the word "guapo," along with the complexity of the sentence, is an example of how Danny is treated differently at his grandmother's house, and in National City overall, due to his being half white, causing him to feel left out in society, wherever he may be. In addition, periodic syntax is used to put emphasis on a different part of the sentence. In this case, de la Peña wanted to pay more attention to the detail rather than the reason. " And when his grandma passes out homemade tortillas, hot off the griddle, she does it based on family rank." Matt de la Peña's mastery of syntax and diction give him the ability to take readers inside the minds of his characters and put their feelings on display. (Chapter 5)

Through the use of syntax and diction, de la Peña reveals Danny's identity as an outsider. Whenever Danny has a meal at his grandma's, he feels uncomfortable because he is always served first before his other family members. De la Peña uses abstract diction, "This is why sometimes he feels as out of place at his Grandma's as he does at Leucadia Prep," to portray Danny's feelings of being an outsider. De la Peña also incorporates colloquial diction to identify Danny as the odd one out. For example, when his grandma always tells him he is "guapo," has good grades, and lives in a good neighborhood. De la Peña conveys this when he uses abstract diction to say, "It's a subtle and unspoken ranking system," showing that Danny is held above the others from the start. Danny feels like he is an outsider from feeling out of place at his grandma's house and being half white and half Mexican.

Through the use of syntax and diction, de la Peña illustrates Danny's identity as an outcast. Danny feels that in his life he has had certain privileges and experiences that have made him different than the rest of his family. One of the first examples we see in the passage, is De La Peña's use of the colloquialism, "guapo." Simply through the use of this word, we can see Danny's attempt to fit in with his Latino family by trying to speak Spanish. De la Pena put some emphasis on how Danny eats before everyone else in his family through sentence fragments: "Even before his uncles. His dad when he was still around." De la Peña uses the syntax of an 'aside' to model out Danny's thoughts. The mind does not think in eloquent sentences but rather short bursts which ricochet off of many different ideas. This syntax and diction gives us access to how Danny's mind works, and how many feelings he really has stored up.

Through the use of syntax and diction, de la Peña conveys Danny's identity as an outsider. Danny thinks about how he is given special treatment at his grandmother's house. Danny's grandmother uses the colloquial diction "guapo," the Spanish word for handsome, making Danny feel out of place for not speaking Spanish. De la Peña also uses abstract diction such as "he feels as out of place" to imply that Danny feels isolated and different. When the author says that Danny "lives in such a better neighborhood these days" this concrete diction tells us that to him he won't ever be the same as the rest of his family, so when the author adds a "better neighborhood" in the text it is also saying his family thinks Danny is a better person. Overall, De la Peña portrays Danny's isolated self well with the use of syntax and diction.